CATHOLIC MOBILIZING NETWORK
BOOK LIST

Educate. Advocate. Pray.
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**Where Justice and Mercy Meet: Catholic Opposition to the Death Penalty**

David Matzko McCarthy, Trudy D. Conway, and Vicki Schieber, Editors

*Where Justice and Mercy Meet* is a comprehensive exploration of the Catholic stance against capital punishment. The broad perspective of this award-winning book has been shaped in conversation with Catholic Mobilizing Network, as well as through the witness of family members of murder victims, and the spiritual advisors of those condemned to death.

**Death Penalty and Discipleship: A Faith Formation Guide**

David Matzko McCarthy

*Death Penalty and Discipleship* is a faith formation resource designed to help communities and individuals reflect more deeply on the issue of capital punishment. Particularly recommended for parish social justice committees or book clubs, the booklet incorporates Scripture, Catholic social teaching, and contemporary issues that focus on the meaning of God’s self-giving in Jesus Christ and the implications of God’s redemptive work in our lives.

**Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice**

David Matzko McCarthy, Vicki Schieber, and Trudy D. Conway

As CMN’s first restorative justice text, *Redemption and Restoration* develops the traditional Catholic understanding of justice, offers a theological understanding of restorative justice, and offers practical arguments for its implementation. Grounded in the stories of real people, it helps readers gain a deeper understanding of how this affects us all as a country and a church.
Harm, Healing, and Human Dignity: A Catholic Encounter with Restorative Justice
Caitlin Morneau, Adaptor

Harm, Healing, and Human Dignity is a faith formation resource designed to help parishes, small groups, and individual believers reflect on the Catholic call to restorative justice. Through Scripture, personal stories, and eye-opening statistics each chapter prompts prayerful consideration of the place of human dignity and the common good as we respond to harm, violence, and the death penalty in the United States.

Life and Death Matters: Seeking the Truth About Capital Punishment
Robert Baldwin

In this compelling memoir, Robert Baldwin discusses his health scare and his subsequent search for truth in both the Christian church and society at large. Baldwin goes on to tackle one of the most precarious moral issues of our time — the death penalty — with statistical fact and thoughtful religious sympathy. While volunteering as a prison minister, Baldwin immerses himself in this issue, proving himself to be a most thoughtful individual with an eye for social injustice and an ear for those in most need of counsel.

Executing Grace: How the Death Penalty Killed Jesus and Why It’s Killing Us
Shane Claiborne

In this thought-provoking work, Shane Claiborne explores the issue of the death penalty and the contrast between punitive justice and restorative justice, questioning our notions of fairness, revenge, and absolution. Using a historical lens to frame his argument, Claiborne draws on testimonials and examples from Scripture to show how the death penalty is not the ideal of justice that many believe. Not only is a life lost, so too, is the possibility of mercy and grace.
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**The Autobiography of an Execution**
David R. Dow

The Autobiography of an Execution is a personal memoir of Dow’s encounter with the death penalty system, as he represents defendants and witnesses their executions. Publishers Weekly called the book "sobering, gripping, and candid." Dahlia Lithwick of Slate said it is "a powerful collage of the life of a death penalty lawyer." Dow, a former death penalty supporter, is a professor of law at the University of Houston Law Center and an internationally recognized defense attorney. He is the founder and director of the Texas Innocence Network.

**Don't Kill in Our Names: Families of Murder Victims Speak Out Against the Death Penalty**
Rachel King

In this book, Rachel King weaves a third-person narrative with wrenching firsthand accounts, presenting the stories of ten family members. Each is a heartrending tale of grief, soul searching, and the challenge to oppose the death penalty instead of choosing the more socially acceptable behavior of supporting it. In fact, many people in the book have actually experienced discrimination by the state because of their opposition to the death penalty. Others have faced social ostracism from family and friends.

**Angel of Death Row**
Andrea Lyon

Renowned death penalty defense attorney Andrea Lyon’s book chronicles her 30 years of experience representing clients in capital murder cases. In all of the 19 cases where she represented defendants who were found guilty of capital murder, jurors spared her clients’ lives. Called the “angel of death row” by the Chicago Tribune, Lyon gives readers an inside look at what motivates her during these difficult cases and offers behind-the-scenes glimpses into many dramatic courtroom battles.
**Jesus on Death Row**

Mark Olser

What does the most infamous criminal proceeding in history — the trial of Jesus of Nazareth — have to tell us about capital punishment in the United States? Jesus Christ was a prisoner on death row. The arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus bear remarkable similarities to the American criminal justice system, especially in capital cases. How might we see capital punishment in this country differently if we realized that the system used to condemn the Son of God to death so closely resembles the system we use in capital cases today?

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**Dead Man Walking: The Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty**

Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ

In 1982, Sister Helen Prejean became the spiritual advisor to Patrick Sonnier, the convicted killer of two teenagers who was sentenced to die in the electric chair. In the months before Sonnier’s death, Prejean came to know a man who was as terrified as he had once been terrifying. She also came to know the families of the victims and the men whose job it was to execute — men who often harbored doubts about the rightness of what they were doing. Out of that dreadful intimacy comes a profoundly moving spiritual journey through our system of capital punishment.

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**The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Executions**

Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ

Sister Helen Prejean’s second book tests the moral edge of the debate on capital punishment: What if we’re executing innocent men? Two cases in point are Dobie Gillis Williams and Joseph Roger O’Dell. Both were convicted of murder on flimsy evidence. Both were executed in spite of numerous appeals. As she recounts these men’s cases and takes us through their terrible last moments, Prejean brilliantly dismantles the legal and religious arguments that have been used to justify the death penalty.
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**The Biblical Truth About America’s Death Penalty**
Dale S. Recinella

The Biblical Truth about America’s Death Penalty deals with Biblical standards of capital punishment and then compares them to the system used in America today. Whatever your persuasion on the issue, this book will teach you a great deal. Recinella is a trained lawyer and committed Christian who now volunteers part-time on Florida’s death row. He thus understands law, the Bible, and the system of execution in America.

**Now I Walk on Death Row: A Wall Street Finance Lawyer Stumbles into the Arms of A Loving God**
Dale S. Recinella

Dale Recinella was living the American dream. But on the heels of closing a huge deal for the Miami Dolphins, Dale’s life took an unfathomable turn. He heard — and heeded — Jesus’s call to sell everything he owned and follow him. Thus began a radical quest to live out the words of Jesus — no matter what the cost. In this quick-paced, well-written story, Recinella shares his amazing journey from growing up in the slums of Detroit to racing through “the good life” on Wall Street to finally walking the humble path of God — the path of ministry on death row.

**Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption**
Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn’t commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machinations, and legal brinksmanship — and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.
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**Grace and Justice on Death Row: A Race Against Time and Texas to Free an Innocent Man**
Brian Stolarz

![Image of Grace and Justice on Death Row](image)

The story of Alfred Dewayne Brown, a man who spent over twelve years in prison (ten of them on Texas’ infamous Death Row) for a high-profile crime he did not commit, and his lawyer, Brian Stolarz, who dedicated his career and life to secure his freedom. The book chronicles Brown’s extraordinary journey to freedom, overcoming unscrupulous prosecutors, corrupt police, inadequate defense counsel, and a broken criminal justice system.

**The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness**
Michelle Alexander

![Image of The New Jim Crow](image)

In this incisive critique, former litigator-turned-legal-scholar Michelle Alexander provocatively argues that we have not ended racial caste in America: we have simply redesigned it. Alexander shows that, by targeting black men and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control, even as it formally adheres to the principle of color blindness. The New Jim Crow challenges the civil rights community — and all of us — to place mass incarceration at the forefront of a new movement for racial justice in America.

**Rectify: The Power of Restorative Justice After Wrongful Conviction**
Lara Bazelon

![Image of Rectify](image)

Lara Bazelon puts a face to the growing number of men and women exonerated from crimes they did not commit — and that devastate not only the exonerees but also their families, the crime victims who mistakenly identified them as perpetrators, the jurors who convicted them, and the prosecutors who realized too late that they helped convict an innocent person. It offers a window into a future where the power it yields can be used in pursuit of healing and unity rather than punishment and blame.
Change of Heart: Justice, Mercy, and Making Peace with My Sister's Killer
Jeanne Bishop

Change of Heart follows the transformative journey undertaken by Jeanne Bishop after the murders of her sister and brother-in-law, a journey that challenged Jeanne's belief in the message of Jesus on the cross and eventually moved her beyond simple forgiveness to the deeper waters of redemption and grace. Jeanne’s authentic story will guide readers past the temptation of anger and revenge, and help them navigate the path of truly forgiving someone whose actions have hardened their heart.

Face to Face: Our Story of Crime, Repentance, and Forgiveness
Kirk Blackard

Eighteen-year-old Keith Blackburn put his .25 caliber pistol to the side of Misty Wright’s head and pulled the trigger. The bullet went through her gum, through her esophagus, and severed her carotid artery. Keith was apprehended and charged with attempted murder. Misty was consumed by fear, hate, and vengeance, and suffered most of the symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Eighteen years after the shooting, Misty contacted him and forgave him. Face to Face tells their story, and in the process explores the intersection of repentance and forgiveness.

Restoring Peace: Using Lessons from Prison to Mend Broken Relationships
Kirk Blackard

Victims of brutal crimes go each week into Texas prisons to meet with inmates who perpetrated such crimes against others. Amazingly, people in both groups go beyond their mistrust and fear to establish a bond of peace and love. These victims and inmates are brought together by the Bridges to Life restorative justice program, founded in 1998 to connect communities to prisons in an effort to reduce recidivism and effect a consequent reduction in crime.
**Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship**
Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J.

Fr. Gregory Boyle reveals how compassion is transforming the lives of gang members. In a nation deeply divided and plagued by poverty and violence, Barking to the Choir offers a snapshot into the challenges and joys of life on the margins. These former gang members uplift the soul and reveal how bright life can be when filled with unconditional love and kindness. This book is guaranteed to shake up our ideas about God and about people with a glimpse at a world defined by more compassion and fewer barriers.

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**Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion**
Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J.

For twenty years, Gregory Boyle has run Homeboy Industries, a gang-intervention program located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, the gang capital of the world. In Tattoos on the Heart, he distills his experience working in the ghetto into a breathtaking series of parables inspired by faith. These essays about universal kinship and redemption are moving examples of the power of unconditional love and the importance of fighting despair. Gorgeous and uplifting, Tattoos on the Heart reminds us that no life is less valuable than another.

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**What to Do When the Police Leave: A Guide to the First Days of Traumatic Loss**
Bill Jenkins

Sixteen-year-old William Jenkins was on his second day of work when he was shot and killed during a robbery attempt in August of 1997. His father, Bill Jenkins, quickly found that there were virtually no resources which could answer his many questions as a survivor of a traumatic loss. Several months later, using the information he had collected for his own personal well-being, this experienced teacher and speaker sat down to write the book that he should have received the night he was notified of his son’s death.
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When We Visit Jesus in Prison: A Guide for Catholic Ministry
Dale S. Recinella

This comprehensive resource combines Catholic teaching, the best in current sociological and psychological thinking on incarceration, and the reflections and stories of a trained and certified Catholic lay chaplain, Dale Rencinella, who has been doing prison ministry for over twenty years. While this book is an essential guide for those entrusted with this ministry, it is also invaluable for the ordinary Catholic striving to understand the needs of incarcerated men and women and to have a deeper appreciation for the Works of Mercy and Restorative Justice.

No Future Without Forgiveness
Desmond Tutu

The establishment of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a pioneering international event. Never had any country sought to move forward from despotism to democracy both by exposing the atrocities committed in the past and achieving reconciliation with its former oppressors. At the center of this attempt at healing a nation was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whom President Nelson Mandela named as Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In this book, Archbishop Tutu offers his reflection on the profound wisdom he gained helping usher South Africa through this painful experience.

Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times
Howard Zehr

Crime victims have many needs, most of which our criminal justice system ignores. In fact, the justice system often increases the injury. Offenders are less ignored by this system, but their real needs — for accountability, for closure, for healing — are also left unaddressed. Such failures are not accidental but are inherent in the very definitions and assumptions which govern our thinking about crime and justice. Howard Zehr proposes a restorative model which is more consistent with experience, with the past, and with the biblical tradition. Based on the needs of victims and offenders, he takes into account recent studies and biblical principles.