

"GIVE YOURSELF TO THE SERVICE OF LIFE" -ST. JOHN PAUL II

COLLEGE ADVOCACY TOOLKIT



**CATHOLIC
MOBILIZING
NETWORK**

ENDING THE DEATH PENALTY.
PROMOTING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE.

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Who is Catholic Mobilizing Network?

Catholic Mobilizing Network is a national organization working in close collaboration with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and living the mission of the Congregation of St. Joseph. Through education, advocacy, and prayer, Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) proclaims the Church's pro-life teaching and prepares Catholics for informed involvement in the public debate to end the death penalty and promote restorative justice.

Follow Us on Social Media



@CMNEndtheDeathPenalty



@CMNEndtheDP



@CMNEndtheDeathPenalty



Educate



Catholic teaching offers a unique perspective on crime and punishment. It begins with the recognition that the dignity of the human person applies to both victims and offenders, even those who do great harm. We believe all life is a gift from God that must be respected from conception to natural death.

The following resources are designed to educate the faithful on Church teaching as well as the social justice issues that surround the reality of the United States death penalty system. They draw upon scripture, the catechism, statements of popes and bishops, stories of those whose lives have been touched by the death penalty and current statistics.

Catholic Social Teaching and the Death Penalty

This document examines the Death Penalty through the lens of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching. You can print this out and use it as an education tool in meetings and workshops or use it as a fact sheet to write an editorial for your college newspaper.

[Click here to download!](#)

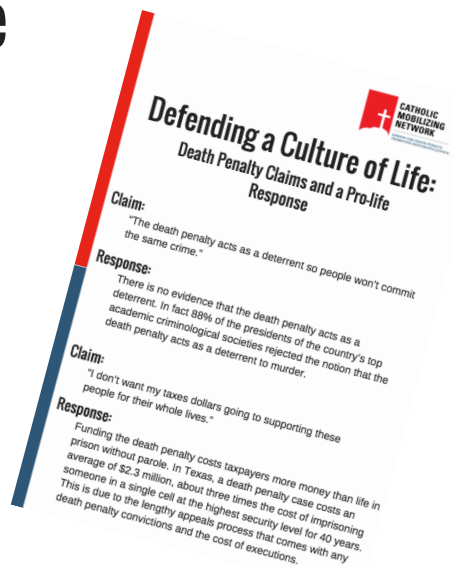




How to Defend the Culture of Life

This document contains several pro-death penalty dialogues and a pro-life response. This can help prepare you for a conversation with a peer who supports the death penalty.

[Click here to download!](#)



Death Penalty Infographics

Post these to social media or print them out to educate your campus

Safer Communities

We all benefit from a criminal justice system that creates a safe society with less crime. The death penalty fails to reduce crime because it is not an effective deterrent and does not address the root causes of crime.

Root Causes of Crime: Unemployment, Unsafe Housing, Lack of education, Lack of Mental Health Services.

The death penalty does not provide solutions to crime, leaving communities in violence.

"Experience tells us that enhancing and enforcing penalties alone often fails to resolve social problems, nor do they result in reducing the crimes rate" - Pope Francis

Northeast states have the lowest number of executions. Southern states have the highest number of executions.

90% of criminologists say the death penalty is not an effective deterrent to crime.

Northeast states have the lowest crime rates. Southern states have the highest crime rates.

The death penalty costs up to 16 times more than life in prison without the possibility of parole. Those funds could be used towards common sense solutions for public safety.

- Increased funding for much needed victim services
- Better sentencing and parole programs such as drug treatment and re-entry services
- More resources for police departments such as training, equipment, and staff salaries

Safer Communities

Standing for Life
Our Catholic Faith and the Death Penalty

"The dignity of life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil. Modern society has the means of protecting itself, without definitively denying criminals the chance to reform." -The Gospel of Life

"No matter how heinous the crime, the offender retains that God-given worth." -Pope John Paul II, January 27, 1993

"Nowadays the death penalty is inadmissible, no matter how serious the crime committed." -Pope Francis, March 20th, 2015

"Society's leaders should make every effort to eliminate the death penalty." -Pope Benedict XVI, November 19th, 2011

"By the time Shannon's murderer was captured four years later, we had learned that pursuing the death penalty would not be the way we would want to honor our daughter's life, nor would that decision have helped us deal with the painful reminders of her unfulfilled hopes and dreams... Facing the reality of her death made us realize that the sacredness of life was not an abstract concept. We took the stand to oppose the use of capital punishment for our daughter's murder." - Vicki Schieber, mother of murdered daughter, Shannon

Catholic Mobilizing Network www.catholicsmobilizing.org

Standing For Life

5 Facts about the

Death Penalty in the U.S.

1 INNOCENCE
For every 9 executions that take place one innocent person is exonerated.

2 RACIAL BIAS
African Americans make up about half of all homicide victims. But 80% of executions are cases where the victim was white.

3 MENTAL ILLNESS
In 2016 at least 12 of the 20 people executed and 11 of those who received death sentences showed significant evidence of intellectual disability, mental

Death Penalty Facts

[Click on the infographic to download](#)

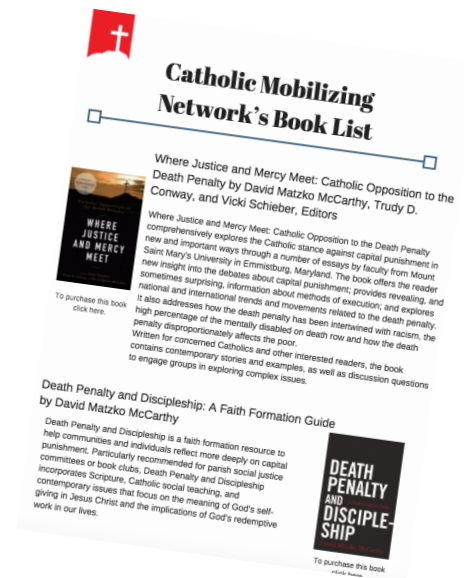


Book List

Catholic Mobilizing Network has compiled a list of books that deal with the death penalty and restorative justice. These books range from personal accounts of those who have been spiritual advisers to those on death row to factual books dealing with the Catholic Church's stance on capital punishment.

These books can be used as sources for a thesis on the death penalty, an ethics class or Catholic moral principals class, or for a book club wanting to explore the death penalty in today's world.

[Click here to download!](#)



Advocate



Advocacy is a way to promote public policy that upholds the sacredness of all life and supports the common good. The Catholic call to faithful citizenship affirms the importance of participation in our government, but how do we make our voice heard? The parish community is a great forum for organizing and making an impact.

Your voice is an important one; you do not need to be an expert to speak about the immorality of the death penalty.

Mercy in Action Project

CMN's Mercy in Action Project seeks to promote clemency for those facing imminent execution. By joining the Mercy in Action Project you will receive monthly alerts with information on upcoming executions and tools to advocate for clemency in those cases as well as prayerful resources.



[Click here to Join!](#)



Death Row Support Project

Become a pen pal with someone on death row. The Death Row Support Project provides you with the name and mailing address to someone on death row. A person confined to death row often spends up to 23 hours each day alone in a small cell. Letters can bring a ray of hope to the darkness of death row.

This is a larger, year-long, commitment so please consider your availability before committing to this action.

[Click here for more information and sign up](#)

Social Media

Social media is a great way to advocate against the death penalty and educate your fellow peers.

Share

Share CMN's Facebook and Twitter posts!

Post

Create your own posts advocating against the death penalty. Tag us at @CMNEndtheDP to join the conversation! Here are some example tweets:

#DeathPenalty denies the dignity of the human person.

*Building a culture of life means working to end the #deathpenalty
#prolife*

No human being is disposable, even those who commit grave crimes possess a dignity endowed by God. We stand for an end to the death penalty. #endtheDP





Speaker Resources

One great way to educate and advocate against the death penalty on your college campus is hosting a speaker event. Catholic Mobilizing Network compiled a list of informed, experienced, and acclaimed speakers who regularly address the issue of capital punishment in the United States. Some have addressed Members of Congress and others draw from the unique ministerial experiences of death row. Others can offer personal stories of conversion and their efforts to bring about the end of the death penalty.

[Click Here to Access the List of Speakers](#)

Pray



The culture of life we seek is built on a foundation of prayer. The following resources include vigils, guided holy hours, Bible study tools, and prayers.

Holy Hour of Mercy

This guided holy hour can be used to lead a group in prayer for an end to the Death Penalty or can be used by an individual during a personal holy hour.

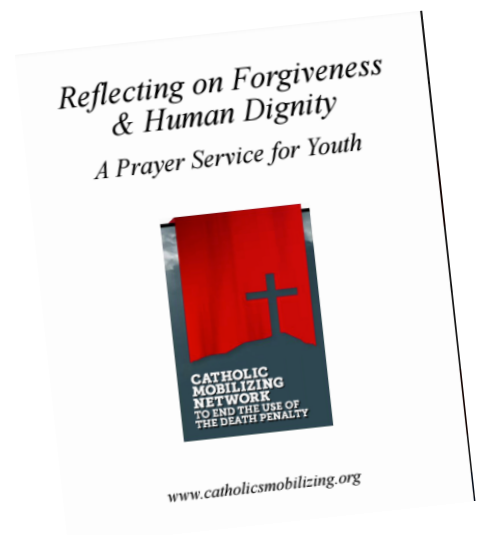
[Click Here to Download](#)



Reflecting on Forgiveness & Human Dignity

This prayer booklet can be used for a guided prayer service. By focusing on forgiveness and mercy in our own lives this prayer service helps to strengthen our resolve to restorative justice and commitment to preserving human dignity.

[Click Here to Download](#)





Bible Study

Bible Study is a great way to incorporate praying for an end to the Death Penalty with an already established prayer group on your campus. This resource contains different bible passages and guiding questions for your Bible Study to consider.



[Click Here to Download](#)

Prayer Cards

These Prayer cards contain CMN's Prayer for Mercy. They can be given away at campus pro-life events or used at a prayer service to end the death penalty.



[Click Here to Download](#)

Novena to Our Lady Undoer of Knots

A Novena is a devotion that consists of 9 days of prayer. They are usually prayed for a specific intention. The devotion to our Lady Undoer of Knots began in the 2nd century with St. Irenaeus.

This novena is to be prayed beginning 9 days before a scheduled execution to ask for Mary's intercession to undo the knot of the death penalty in our lives.



[Click Here to Download](#)