



Catholic Bishops Ask Governor to Break the Cycle of Violence Perpetuated by State Sanctioned Executions

Tallahassee – We ask you, Governor Crist, to set a new standard of decency for the State of Florida by abandoning executions and commuting death row sentences to life in prison without possibility of parole. We do not condone the actions of Wayne Tompkins, scheduled for execution February 11, that resulted in the death of Lisa DeCarr. We ask that you replace the violence of death by execution with life long imprisonment in the penal system as a way to protect society and ensure punishment for offenders.

We pray for healing for Ms. DeCarr's family and friends who have suffered the pain of losing their loved one. No punishment, no matter how severe, can ever erase the grief caused by her wrongful death.

While it is the duty of the Governor to uphold the laws, you have the singular ability to change the course of action to be taken by the state in death penalty cases. In pursuing justice for victims of violent crimes, the state must not be blinded by politics that diminish human dignity and the sacredness of all life, including that of convicted criminals.

Governor Crist, Florida should join the ranks of other states which have abandoned executions because they have not been a deterrent to crime and have raised serious concerns about fairness of sentencing in the justice system.

Please spare the life of Wayne Tompkins and allow him to be punished by life in prison without possibility of parole.

Archbishop John C. Favalora
Archdiocese of Miami

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski
Diocese of Orlando

Bishop Frank J. Dewane
Diocese of Venice

Bishop Victor Galeone
Diocese of St. Augustine

Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ
Diocese of Pensacola/Tallahassee

Auxiliary Bishop Felipe J. Estévez
Archdiocese of Miami

Bishop Robert N. Lynch
Diocese of St. Petersburg

Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito, JCL
Diocese of Palm Beach

Auxiliary Bishop John G. Noonan
Archdiocese of Miami