Public Statement against the Death Penalty

February 2006

The 400 Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in the western United States took a public corporate stand in opposition to the death penalty on December 10, 1998. Along with our 150 Associates, we have committed ourselves to work for its abolition as a matter of conscience, morality and respect for the dignity of life. We believe the death penalty is immoral. We believe in the sanctity and dignity of every human life. Even when people deny the dignity of others through violence, we still must recognize their dignity is a gift from God and is not something earned or lost through their behavior. Violence is not the answer to the problem of violence. At the same time we condemn the taking of life with the death penalty, we also condemn the loss of innocent life and mourn with and reach out the families of violent crime.

We further believe that together we can create truly just and non-violent solutions that respect the human dignity of each and every member of society. Therefore, we call upon our elected leaders to put an end to state-sanctioned killing. We invite all people of good will to choose moral courage over fear and to search for creative solutions to questions of crime and punishment.