



**NEW HAMPSHIRE  
COALITION TO  
ABOLISH THE  
DEATH PENALTY**  
www.nodeathpenaltyNH.org

# Faith Perspectives on the Death Penalty



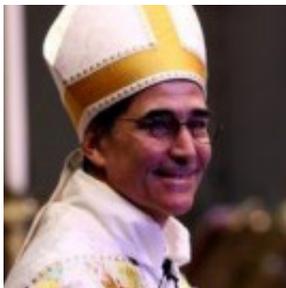
**Most Reverend  
Peter A. Libasci, D.D.,**  
*Bishop of the Roman Catholic  
Diocese of Manchester*

"The death penalty neither deters others nor brings a perpetrator to understanding but instead, publicly validates the very act of taking a human life. I urge Catholics and all people of good will to advocate for justice worthy of our best nature and to oppose government-sanctioned killing that is unnecessary in our modern society."



**The Reverend  
Charles Buck**  
*Transitional Conference Minister,  
New Hampshire Conference of  
the United Church of Christ*

"Because the death penalty goes against the creating, loving and renewing God that we find in our scriptures, the United Church of Christ has long called for abolishing the death penalty. There are better, more humane ways that we as a society can support victims and treat criminals."



**The Rt. Rev.  
A. Robert Hirschfeld**  
*Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of New  
Hampshire*

"Repealing the Death Penalty in New Hampshire is a way of saying, with our Savior, 'No more of this!' We seek instead to be guided and healed by a divine love that is stronger, and ultimately more effective in bringing justice and peace, than the violence that infects our hearts and our society."



**Rabbi Robin Nafshi**  
*Temple Beth Jacob,  
Concord, NH*

"Jews are united in our opposition to the death penalty. We believe that only God is infallible. Humans being human will make mistakes. No evidence has proven that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime and all human beings possess the power of repentance; the death penalty removes this possibility."



**Doreen Schweizer**  
*Senior Teacher,  
Valley Insight Meditation Society,  
Lebanon, NH, A Buddhist Community*

"When, even for a moment, we have the attitude in our minds and hearts that allows for the killing of one person – no matter what the reasons -- it makes possible the killing of others. The death penalty actually cultivates a culture of violence. Killing never ends by killing, but only by finding a way not to kill does killing end."



**Rev. Jason Wells**  
*Executive Director, of the  
NH Council of Churches from  
the Joint Statement on the  
Death Penalty*

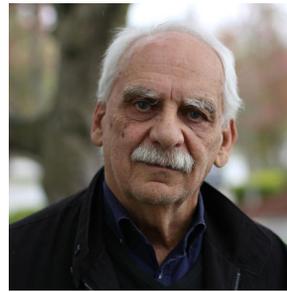
"As Christians we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26). All of our member churches agree, therefore, that the intentional taking of a human life is evil."



**Margaret Hawthorn**

*M.Div., Member of the  
Monadnock Quaker Meeting  
and Murder Victim Family  
Member for Human Rights*

"To support the state killing of a person in the name of justice is an act of faithlessness. We are called to trust a just God to discern and carry out appropriate justice in so grave a matter as the taking of a human life."



**Robert Azzi**

*Photographer and Writer  
Exeter, NH*

"I believe that God, in the Qur'an, tells people that those who forgive are higher in the sight of God. If we truly believe in the sanctity of human life then we must accept that life and death decisions are God's decisions. I believe that God has expectations of evidence and certainty far above our earthy standards - and that our Creator's levels are impossible for humans to attain. Salamaat"



**Reverend Eric Jackson**

*Senior Pastor, Brookside  
Community Church,  
Manchester and President of the  
Manchester NAACP*

"Jesus teaches us that the heart of the Gospel is the guarantee of grace and restoration. The Death Penalty is in stark contrast to this principal. We are called to love humanity and be repairers of the breach where the broken can be restored and the lost can be found."

**National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC)**

"As Christ followers, we are called to work toward justice for all. And as Latinos, we know too well that justice is not always even-handed. The death penalty is plagued by racial and economic disparities and risks executing an innocent person. Human beings are fallible and there is no room for fallibility in matters of life and death."



**Sisters of Mercy  
Northeast Community**

"As Sisters of Mercy, we oppose the death penalty because we believe in the value of human life... we recognize the need to develop ways to address the roots of violence, and believe that the death penalty is not a deterrent to crime."

**St. John Paul II**

"I renew the appeal...for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary."

**Religious Society of Friends  
New England Yearly Meeting**

"Since we believe there is in every person that of God to which the human conscience can respond, we believe that there are no circumstances in which this sanctity of life can be set aside."



**Pope Francis**

"Today capital punishment is unacceptable, however serious the condemned's crime may have been. It is an offence to the inviolability of life and to the dignity of the human person which contradicts God's plan for man and for society and his merciful justice, and it fails to conform to any just purpose of punishment. It does not render justice to the victims, but rather foments revenge."



**Religious Action Center  
of Reform Judaism**

"The Union for Reform Judaism believes that there is no crime for which the taking of human life by society is justified, and that it is the obligation of society to evolve other methods in dealing with crime."