

# New Hampshire Faith Leaders Statements Concerning the Death Penalty

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"I urge all Catholics and people of good will, enlightened by faith in the possibility of redemption and forgiveness, to respond with justice worthy of our best nature to those who have caused terrible harm. God, Eternal and Almighty, has breathed life and spirit into each and every one of us, and the dignity of the human person, from conception to natural death, must never be taken away. Please join me in advocating for a repeal of the death penalty in New Hampshire." –*Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D., Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester*

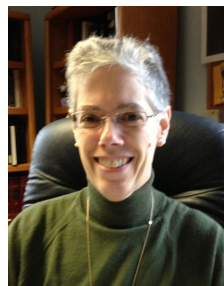


"Repealing the Death Penalty in New Hampshire is a way of saying, with our Savior, 'No more of this!' (Luke 22:51) to the violence in this world. It's a way of saying that we desire to be ruled, not by the instincts of our baser nature, even if governed by law. In our witness against the death penalty, 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."  
–*The Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire*

"It all comes down to my faith telling me that the death penalty is antithetical to God's will. The commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' is central to my under-standing of what God requires of us."  
–*Rev. Gordon Crouch, First Congregational Church, Hopkinton*



"Repeal of that ugly thing is good holy work. May it be so."  
–*The Reverend Susan Langle, Trinity Church, Claremont*



"Jews, like Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and other religious people, are not of one mind. Jews have divided ourselves into four groups – denominations – and we frequently disagree on issues. On the death penalty, however, we are united in our opposition. We believe that only God is infallible, (that) humans being human will make mistakes; as many as 300 people in the 20th century were wrongly convicted of capital offenses. (There is) 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." –*Rabbi Robin Nafshi, Temple Beth Jacob, Concord, NH*

"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." –*Sisters of Mercy, Northeast Community*





“As Christians we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26). In our human condition sin tarnishes this image; nevertheless, we believe that the promise of redemption is offered to all through repentance. Thus,

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each of us is called to respect the life and dignity of every person, even when that

person denies the dignity of others.”

—*Joint Statement on the Death Penalty, New Hampshire Council of Churches*

## National Faith Statements

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“Since 1959, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) have formally opposed the death penalty. The CCAR has resolved that capital punishment does not act as an effective deterrent to crime and the URJ notes that: We believe 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. We appeal to our congregants and to our co-religionists and to all who cherish God’s mercy and love to join in efforts to eliminate this practice [of capital punishment] which lies as a stain upon civilization and our religious conscience.”



“It is because of this church's commitment to justice, that we oppose the death penalty.” —*Taken from "A Social Statement on: The Death Penalty - Evangelical Lutheran Church of America*

“I renew the appeal...for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary.”  
 —*Pope John Paul II*

“Ending the death penalty would be one important step away from a culture of death and toward building a culture of life.”

—*US Conference of Catholic Bishops*



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