

# **CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO**

June 22, 2009

The Honorable Ted Strickland  
Governor of Ohio  
Riffe Center  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43266-0601

Dear Governor Strickland:

This is the first of two letters being sent today regarding executions scheduled for the month of July. On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Ohio, I urge you to commute the death sentence of John Fautenberry to life without parole. He is scheduled for execution on July 14, 2009.

Mr. Fautenberry experienced childhood abuse and neglect, but he is not innocent of the crime for which he has been convicted. His killing of Joseph Daron, the third of five murders in four states, was horrendous. We ask you to show mercy, however, because another death is not necessary to protect society or justly punish Mr. Fautenberry. Life without parole would be a morally justifiable response. It demonstrates that, in Ohio, we can rise above another killing. We can implement strong and fair alternatives to executions.

The Catholic Bishops of Ohio consistently have advocated for an end to the death penalty. We believe this form of punishment is unnecessary and systemically flawed. Viable and just alternatives, such as life imprisonment, are effectively used in other states and other countries. Establishing a non-partisan study commission, that would provide an objective review of Ohio's death penalty system, would be a helpful first step in addressing this difficult issue.

We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of Joseph Daron, as well as all victims of violent and senseless crimes. We pray for Mr. Fautenberry and his family and friends. We continue to pray for you and all who must participate in our state executions.

May God grant you His wisdom and courage. We look forward to the day when the death penalty is only remembered as part of Ohio history.

Respectfully,

Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk  
Archbishop of Cincinnati