

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Fr. Dave Brown, OSM
Assumption Church
323 W Illinois St
Chicago IL 60610-4112
312/644-0374
dbrownsm@msn.com

Sr. Mary John VanderLoop, OSM
Servants of Mary
1000 College Avenue W
Ladysmith WI 54848
715/532-3364
maryjohn@mscfs.edu

The **Servite Coalition for Justice** as a body has endorsed a resolution calling for a moratorium on the death penalty and for legislation to abolish capital punishment.

The Servite Coalition for Justice represents laity, sisters, and friars of the Servants of Mary, Servites. Its membership is primarily in the Midwest: Illinois, Wisconsin, Nebraska but with members in Arizona, Colorado, California, Florida, Massachusetts, Oregon, and West Virginia.

"This resolution highlights Pope John Paul II's opposition to the death penalty," says Fr. David Brown, O.S.M. of the Servite Coalition for Justice, "the racist manner of its application and the restricted appeals now in place." The resolution specifically asks that the moratorium remain in effect until the death penalty can be administered fairly and impartially, that the risk of its application to innocent persons be minimized and that mentally retarded persons and those under the age of 18 at the time of their offence, not be executed at all.

In endorsing this resolution, the Servite Coalition for Justice joins the growing number of church organizations and city governments calling for a moratorium on executions.

- end -



SERVITE COALITION FOR JUSTICE

"We Servites are rooted in the Scriptures, where Mary is the liberating response to oppression and poverty. Through this woman, we have an entry point for confronting injustice, beginning with the injustice to women."

The **Servite Coalition for Justice** is an inter-community group of U.S. Servants of Mary in the United States who strive to bring about a just and peaceful world by:

Sponsoring retreats to further their own conversion process:

- A series of conferences and presentations entitled "Putting Mary Back into History."
- A retreat centered on Servite Ministry in a hurting world (1994).
- An inter cultural retreat conducted by a Servite Sister from India (1998)

Organizing programs to raise consciousness, build support networks and promote social justice actions.

- As early as 1991 organizing a conference entitled "Fashioning the Servite Charism for the Third Millennium."
- Initiating and assisting Servites to experience first hand the situation in Nicaragua (1988)
- Participation in an international Servite Meeting in Montreal (1993)
- Initiating and organizing a Border Experience in El Paso in 1996 involving Servites from Canada, Britain, Ireland and Mexico and the U.S. (1996)

Establishing Networks:

- With the Communities of Secular Servites, Servite women religious of Omaha, Ladysmith, Blue Island, Plainfield and the Friars of the U.S. Province of Servites
- Indirectly with the Justice and Peace Committee of the International Union of Superiors General in Rome

History

- The coalition was formed after the joint 1983 Servite Celebration marking the 750th anniversary of the founding of the Servites, the Order of Servants of Mary. SCJ is an effort to build on the collaboration experienced in that event. Moreover the SCJ seeks to focus Servite energy towards the works of justice and peace. For further information, contact Sister Mary John Vanderloop, OSM (715-532-3364; maryjohn@mscfs.edu) or Father Dave Brown, OSM (312 644 0036; dbrownosm@msn.com)