Religion & Morality The majority of Christian denominations have joined Catholics in working to replace the death penalty with life in prison. As Pope Francis explains, the death penalty is “against the inviolability of life and dignity of human person... does not render justice to the victims but rather fosters vengeance.” Louisiana is one of the most religious states in the country, with over 70% of the state highly devout. The death penalty is out of step with our values.

Exoneration Louisiana leads the nation per capita in wrongful death sentences. Since 1973, 161 people have been released from death row after evidence revealed that they were exonerated. 11 of those exonerations come from Louisiana. There has been one exoneration for every 2.5 executions in Louisiana over the last fifty years.

Public Safety The death penalty is not a deterrent. The Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice makes clear there is no evidence that the death penalty deters crime and that the certainty of being caught is the most powerful deterrent. Many law enforcement believe that time and resources spent on the death penalty is better spent preventing crime, supporting victims, funding police efforts and catching criminals.

Expense The death penalty is exorbitantly expensive. One recent LA case involving five co-defendants cost fifteen million dollars, resulting in just two death sentences that are still under appeal. Keeping the death penalty in Louisiana for individuals charged with homicides after August 1, 2018 will cost almost ¼ billion dollars, before any death sentences is enforced.

Arbitrary Since 1961, less than 1 in a thousand of the 30,000 murders in Louisiana have resulted in an execution. Our death penalty is not reserved for the “worst of the worst” but is correlated with geography, race, mental illness, and a handful of harsh judges, deficient defense lawyers, and aggressive prosecutors.

Life in Louisiana Life in Louisiana means life without parole. A life sentence at Angola State Penitentiary is extremely severe. Choosing life keeps us safe while promoting dignity and justice, and enabling certainty in sentencing.

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