



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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Catholic bishops urge Governor DeSantis to spare the life of Duane Owen

TALLAHASSEE, FL – The Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops (FCCB) has requested that Gov. Ron DeSantis stay the execution of Duane Owen and commute his sentence to life without parole. Owen is scheduled to be executed on June 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. He was sentenced to death for the 1984 murders of Karen Slattery and Georgianna Worden in Palm Beach County, Florida.

In a May 31, 2023, letter to DeSantis on behalf of the bishops of Florida, Michael Sheedy, FCCB executive director, recognized that Owen’s senseless and horrific acts have caused immeasurable grief and suffering for the victims’ families, loved ones and communities.

“However, taking Mr. Owen’s life will not restore the lives of the victims. Intentionally ending his life will do nothing but perpetuate violence in a society steeped in it,” said Sheedy. “Society must be kept safe from Mr. Owen and those like him, but that can be done effectively without resorting to more violence.”

Before Owen’s scheduled execution, Floridians will gather across the state to pray for the victims and the condemned, for DeSantis as he considers the request to stay the execution, and for an end to the use of the death penalty.

[The full text of the letter to Gov. Ron DeSantis is available online.](#)

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The Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops is an agency of the Catholic Bishops of Florida. It speaks for the Church in matters of public policy and serves as liaison to the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. The archbishop and bishops of the seven (arch)dioceses in Florida constitute its board of directors.