

The Execution of Troy Davis

By James Salt

[James Salt is a founder of [Catholics United](#), an advocacy group rooted in Catholic Social Teaching. More reflections on the execution of Troy Davis, and the death penalty, can be found on their blog, [Our Daily Thread](#).]

(Taken from the October 2011 J/P Alert from Conference of Major Superiors of Men)

On September 21, after a short delay, the state of Georgia strapped Troy Davis into a gurney and then killed him. He was pronounced dead at 11:08 PM.

Whenever the government intentionally takes the life of another human being, it deeply affects me. I can't help but think of the family of the executed, the victims of the crime and the unnecessary pain and suffering that each of them must have gone through.

However, the tragedy of Troy Davis' execution is compounded by the fact that he very well may have been innocent. There was no physical evidence linking Davis to the crime and 7 of the 9 witnesses who testified against him have either changed or recanted their testimony. Many now believe that another individual is responsible for the crime for which Troy Davis was executed.

Before he was put to death, Troy stated that his hope was that his execution would lead to greater awareness about the death penalty. As I waded through the wake of last night's execution, I invite you to join me in finding ways that people of faith can be more involved in ending the use of the death penalty in America.

To help get the conversation started, I've compiled a list of a few organizations that are making a difference:

The [Catholic Mobilizing Network to End the Use of the Death Penalty](#) (CMN) proclaims the Church's unconditional pro-life teaching and its application to capital punishment and restorative justice. CMN works in close collaboration with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to prepare Catholics for informed involvement in campaigns to repeal state death penalty laws and expand or inaugurate restorative justice programs.

[People of Faith Against the Death Penalty](#) (PFADP) educates and mobilizes faith communities to act to abolish the death penalty in the United States. They are headquartered in North Carolina.

[National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty](#) - NCADP is the nation's oldest organization dedicated to the abolition of the death penalty. They are comprised of an extensive network representing more than 100 state and national affiliate organizations and thousands of advocates and volunteers. Their members include families of murder victims, persons from all points on the political and religious spectrums, past and present law enforcement officials and prominent civil and racial justice organizations working to end the death penalty forever.