

Everybody on

**DEATH
ROW**

needs **someone**
at their
side...

Death
Row
Support
Project

PO Box 600
Liberty Mills IN 46946
260-982-7480
drsp@brethren.org
www.brethren.org/drsp



"Everybody on death row needs someone at their side."

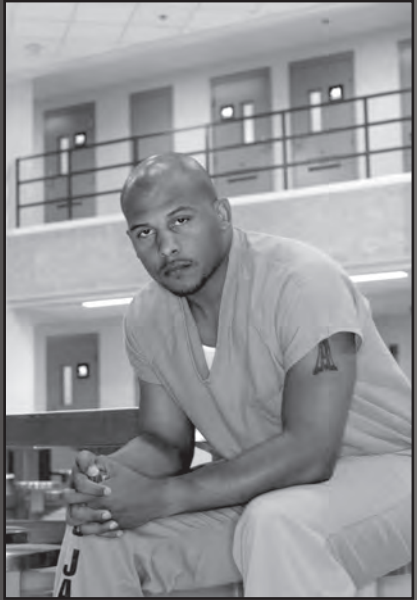
—Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ

In 1978, the Death Row Support Project was formed to facilitate one-to-one correspondence with people sentenced to death. Since then, thousands of individuals from all over the country and around the world have responded to the challenge of connecting with those on death row.

Life on death row

A person confined to death row often spends up to 23 hours each day alone in a small cell—for years and sometimes decades. Most are not allowed to work and are dependent upon the prison system for clothing, meals and reading materials. Many live in poverty and receive no visits, mail or support from the outside world.

The isolation can be crippling. Those with support systems of friends and families say that such connections are vital for maintaining physical and mental health in the stark conditions of prison. Knowing that someone thinks of them and cares can make all the difference in the world.



Why write?

Letters can bring a ray of hope to the darkness of death row. And for those on the outside, learning to know just one prisoner can dispel some of the misconceptions and fears about prisons and the people locked away inside them.

Who writes?

Letter writers from outside the walls are a diverse group of people of all ages, backgrounds, professions, motivating forces, and religious affiliations. What they share is a common dedication to writing and a desire to bring some humanity to the lives of death row prisoners.

Letter writers say:

"I have been corresponding with an inmate in Texas for several months now and I am finding it a continuous source of learning and a challenge to almost everything I have learned, mis-learned and believed in about crime and punishment, good and evil, perceptions of death row and the media and political machinations surrounding this issue. I can truly say that this correspondence has been one of the most educational and profound learning experiences in recent memory."

— Scott A. Douglas



"Corresponding with a death row inmate has taught me to develop greater gratitude for all the things I have. I am also learning that compassion knows no bounds; that those individuals who are sentenced have hope, feelings, fears, love for others, and the capacity for forgiveness, just as we do."

— Christina Rummell

"I'm not concerned with whether [my death-row pen pal is] guilty or innocent. I'm concerned with the fact that he's on death row and that anyone in that position needs a friend."

— Valerie De Pietri

"I continue to be richly blessed by my decade-plus-long friendship with Alphonso ... Honestly, he has become one of the best friends I have ever had. He continues to amaze me ... has never asked for anything, but so much appreciates anything I have been able to do for him."

— Ken C. Furman



Prisoners respond:

"I have been corresponding with Betty and her family on a regular basis, and few things in my life have given me more pleasure. It is most gratifying to realize there are people who will offer a helping hand to us who society has condemned, while knowing we have violated those standards they hold sacred. To me that is truly love for your fellow man."

— Doyle Boulware, Texas

"Writing to someone keeps me with a sound mind while faced with continued lock-down inside this cell day in and day out. Many often go nuts by not finding something to do. We are sociable by nature; to be shut off from life and those everyday normal activities sends many in this situation over that edge to insanity."

— Andre Staton, Pennsylvania

"Death Row Support Project is a great thing you're doing. I don't know if I could have made it through the past two years without the pen pal you found for me. She helped me through some hard times, and I owe it all to you. So thank you so very much!"

— Ronald W. Clark, Jr., Florida

"In a small amount of time, you have given me a sense of belonging. Being a pen pal is something special and I really appreciate your company."

— Willie Johnson, California

Become a ray of hope

The Death Row Support Project would like to help you start writing to a person on death row. When you contact us, we will send you the name and address of a prisoner along with some suggestions for how to get started. Letter writers are asked to commit to writing at least one letter each month for a year to the person they are assigned. There is no fee to participate. We ask only that you begin writing and that you enter the correspondence with an open heart and mind.

The Death Row Support Project is sponsored by the Global Mission Partnerships Office of the Church of the Brethren.

The Death Row Support Project welcomes donations, including stamps. Checks should be made payable to Church of the Brethren.

Fill out the attached form and send it to:

Death Row Support Project
PO Box 600
Liberty Mills IN 46946
drsp@brethren.org
www.brethren.org/drsp



I am ready to write to a person on death row. Please send me the name of a death row prisoner, with suggestions on how to begin writing.

Your name: _____ Your age: _____

Your address: _____ Religious affiliation, if any: _____

Would you like to write to someone in your state, if possible? Yes _____ No _____

E-mail address: _____

Please send this form to Death Row Support Project, PO Box 600, Liberty Mills IN 46946, or find the form online at www.brethren.org/drsp.

Need more information? Write to us at the above address, e-mail drsp@brethren.org, or visit www.brethren.org/drsp.