



Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

THE PUBLIC POLICY VOICE OF THE CHURCH

Sept. 12, 2017

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Jennifer Carr Allmon
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles
Clemency Section
8610 Shoal Creek Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78758

Re: Robert Pruett, TDCJ #999411

Dear Governor Abbott and Board Members,

On behalf of the sixteen Roman Catholic Bishops across the state of Texas, the Texas Catholic Conference urges you to grant a stay of execution for Mr. Robert Pruett, who is currently scheduled for execution on Oct. 12, 2017. As you know, the Catholic Church does not believe the use of the death penalty is needed in our society. However, in this case, Mr. Pruett has a strong claim of actual innocence that warrants additional review.

The Church has tremendous sympathy for the family of the victim, Daniel Nagle. In no way does the Church wish to diminish the horror of Mr. Nagle's death, or the suffering his family has endured since his death in 1999. Our Church fully believes that those who commit terrible, violent crimes must be incarcerated, both as just punishment and to protect society. We stand in solidarity with victims and their loved ones. However, when it comes to matters of life and death, we must maintain careful safeguards which fulfill the requirements of both justice and mercy.

In this case, there are strong reasons to believe that Mr. Pruett did not commit this murder. He has maintained that he is innocent of this crime. There was no physical evidence tying him to the murder and it appears that the State relied on false testimony provided by inmates, guards, and its forensic analyst to convince the jury Mr. Pruett was guilty of Officer Nagle's murder.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus teaches a true neighbor shows mercy (Luke 10:37). Mercy does not require us to neglect justice in the enforcement of law or the maintenance of order. Moreover, mercy moves us to exhibit compassion toward all our brothers and sisters by providing them with an opportunity for atonement and rehabilitation. Therefore, we continue to pray for everyone who has been touched by this tragic case. Because we are convinced divine mercy ultimately triumphs over human sin, we urge you to grant a stay of execution.

Yours in Christ,

Jennifer Carr Allmon
Executive Director