

## When the killer is unremorseful, it's hard to say execution is wrong

Judy Gross | Apr. 12, 2012 NCR Today

Sometimes it is so difficult to be against the death penalty, even for Catholics who support this pro-life issue. Intellectually we know, as Florida Catholic Conference Director Michael McCarron says, "Killing someone to prove killing is wrong," but when we learn of a heinous crime and the murderer shows no remorse, it is hard to hold onto that truth.

Florida is set to execute 58-year-old David Gore by lethal injection, Thursday, April 12. Gore acknowledges he brutally murdered five women and has never shown any remorse for his crimes. As his death approaches, will he? Only God knows.

His case has gone through the usual appeal process and will undoubtedly be upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. Gore has been on Florida's death row for 30 years for the murder of Lynn Elliott, just 17 years old when she and a friend were kidnapped and raped by Gore. Elliott managed to free her hands and escaped, naked from the house where they were being held. Gore, also naked, ran after her and shot her in the back of the head. A neighbor boy witnessed the killing, and Gore was arrested and convicted.

The thought of what Elliott and the other four victims endured makes it hard to hold fast to Catholic teaching about taking another's life, but there are questions to answer.

Gore's attorneys have raised the issue of undue and unconstitutional influence on Florida's Governor Rick Scott, who has signed three death warrants since he took office in 2010.

His removal from society is secure. After 30 years on death row, who is his death benefitting? One of the victim's sisters has stated she would find no closure from his death? Don't you suppose a person's knowing that he will never again have freedom outside of a 9 foot by 10 foot cell be more punishing than ending it all by execution? Did anyone ask the murderer which is worse punishment?

When this man is put to death, I can't say I will mourn him. But will I or anyone else be safer for it? No. Sometimes it's hard to be Catholic or of any other faith tradition who opposes the death penalty.

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