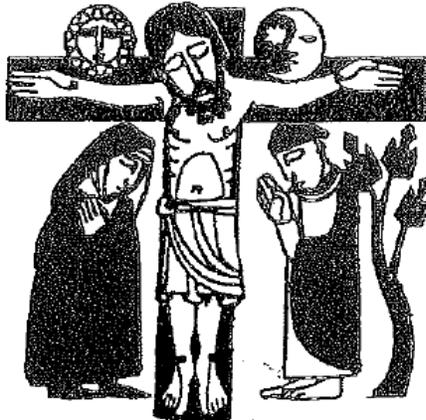


A Prayer to Abolish the Death Penalty
By Helen, Prejean, CSJ



God of Compassion,
You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.
Expand and deepen our hearts
so that we may love as you love,
even those among us
who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance
as we fill up death rows and kill the killers
in the name of justice, in the name of peace.
Jesus, our brother,
you suffered execution at the hands of the state
but you did not let hatred overcome you.

Help us to reach out to victims of violence
so that our enduring love may help them heal.
Holy Spirit of God,
you strengthen us in the struggle for justice.
Help us to work tirelessly
for the abolition of state-sanctioned death
and to renew our society in its very heart
so that violence will be no more.
Amen.