



My Pal on Death Row

I am guessing most of you do not have a close relationship with someone on death row. What do you think is on their mind? What would you visit about? Would you be open to the possibility that someone on death row is prayerful, kind, and a source of encouragement?

Eric is my pal on death row. We have met only through our many letters. He is new (2014) in his Catholic faith and, initially, I thought that I might offer him some context, perspective, or guidance in his quest to draw closer to God. All he asked of me was that I provide him with people who need prayers.

His prayer requests of me are almost always prayers for others. He asks me to pray for his family, others in prison, and those who suffer. In one letter, I was humbled by his detailed request to pray for the guard who is mean to him.

His letters reveal the care and attention he devotes to my prayer requests. He sends me prayer cards, reflections, and biographies of Saints. He gave me permission to share a recent letter he sent me. Included with the letter were two pages from the humor columns of Reader's Digest. My death row pal is sending me jokes!!!

Take a moment to read his letter (maybe several times) and think about the human being who wrote it. The State of Texas is striving to execute this man on behalf of, and in the name of, all Texans—including me. It troubles me greatly that this man who joins me in prayer, shares my faith, shares my journey, and sends me encouragement and jokes, *is being executed on my behalf, and in my name, as a fellow Texan.*

We profess to respect life from conception to its natural conclusion. Is your faith strong enough to respect the life of those on death row? Is it strong enough to stand up and speak up for those who will not get a natural conclusion to life, but a needle in the arm?

Hi Doug,

Mailed Mon. 28 Aug 17

Thank you so much for your letter. They are always wonderful & inspiring to me. My Dad visited again on Tuesday August 15th - always great to see him.

I will definitely put on the special
prayer list. As I'm sure you know - major drug addiction cannot be overcome without spiritual help. Unfortunately, as that person, getting them to even recognize the need for help is a huge challenge.

Unlike a sickness such as cancer, or even being a victim of a situation - car accident - natural disaster - etc., the drug abuser has their own denial system built-in. I've been around enough drug users to know that people start taking them because of the pleasure they deliver - even if it's only a mask of their pain.

So - often - until they hit "rock bottom" - lots of folks see no reason to change. Hopefully, this friend will recognize the need to get help before terrible damage has been done. That will be my prayer.

RE: spiritual advisor - Thank you for your efforts. Still being "new" to Catholicism, I sometimes find myself wandering from topic to topic without really knowing what to focus on. I have several books - but I seem to be reading only a couple of chapters & then moving on.

All the people in this area will need extra prayers as they continue to deal with the rain & flooding from Hurricane Harvey. Here at Polunsky Unit it has rained for several days now. No flooding yet here that I know of - but

my perspective is quite limited - weekends are 24 hour solitary confinement. Sounds like between Corpus Christi, Houston, over to Austin is very bad. A year of rainfall each day?? Rumor is that we already have 500 extra inmates in the gym somewhere on the Unit.

We - on death row - would not be evacuated in any case. They were held here for Rita, Katrina & even Ike in 2008 with no power for over a week. Hopefully that won't happen this time.

Putting this in the mail now - could be delayed by the flooding.

Love will conquer hate

Compassion will conquer cruelty

Peace Will Be With You

God Bless

Your Brother in Christ

- Eric