

FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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MICHAEL B. SHEEDY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



November 7, 2025

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Re: Please stay the execution of Richard Randolph and commute his sentence

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We write to ask you to grant a stay of the execution of Richard Randolph and to commute his sentence to life without parole.

Mr. Randolph was found guilty of the sexual battery and first-degree-murder of Minnie Ruth McCollum in 1988. We mourn the tragic death of Mrs. McCollum, and we feel sorrow for the terrible suffering her loved ones have had to live with ever since. May they find comfort in God. Indeed, the Church remains available to assist them with pastoral care.

Mr. Randolph's crimes were gravely evil and merit a severe punishment by the state. Nevertheless, we ask that you spare Mr. Randolph's life. Every human life, given by God, is sacred. As Saint John Paul II wrote, "Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity" (*Evangelium Vitae*, 9).

To punish with lifelong imprisonment is not to minimize the heinousness of Mr. Randolph's crimes. It is rather to recognize with awe that God is the author of life, and to reserve to Him the taking of human life except where it is otherwise impossible to maintain the common good.

We appeal to you that it is possible both to uphold justice and to exercise mercy. We can entrust the final judgment of every individual to God. We pray for the repose of the soul of Minnie Ruth McCollum and for the consolation of her loved ones. We pray for you, too, as you consider this request.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Sheedy

cc: Jason Weida, Esq., Chief of Staff, Executive Office of the Governor
Catholic Bishops of Florida