

# CATHOLIC STUDENTS FOR PEACE & JUSTICE (CSPJ)

Representatives from Catholic High Schools and Colleges in the Diocese of Cleveland dedicated to working for peace & social justice

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 2, 2006

## STUDENTS BIKING FROM CLEVELAND TO COLUMBUS DEMAND AN END TO THE DEATH PENALTY IN OHIO

### HUNDREDS FROM AROUND OHIO WILL JOIN THEM AT OHIO'S STATE HOUSE

CLEVELAND – **Twenty-four students** and twelve faculty members will **bicycle nearly 140 miles** from Cleveland to Columbus to call for an **end to the death penalty in Ohio**. The group will depart Cleveland on **Friday, April 7** (see schedule on page 2) and arrive in Columbus on **Monday, April 10**. The departure from Cleveland will include a special blessing from **Bishop Anthony Pilla** at St. Joseph Academy on Friday afternoon.

**Over 300 students** from across the state will join them in Columbus on **Monday (4/10)** to pray at the **Columbus' Catholic Cathedral** and then march to the **Ohio Statehouse** where they will deliver petitions penalty to legislators calling for an end to capital punishment in Ohio. The entire four days has been titled "**Wheels of Justice**" connecting the bikes and buses to the call for an end to Ohio's death penalty.

Students who have traveled to the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville to be a prayerful witness against state-sanctioned killing during the past 3 years have expressed a growing desire to communicate to lawmakers about changing legislation. **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops** (USCCB) recently released a document entitled "The Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death" (11/05) calling for the end of the death penalty in the United States.

Monday, April 10, is also the beginning of **Holy Week**, a time when Catholics recognize the suffering of Jesus Christ during his crucifixion and prepare to celebrate his resurrection on Easter Sunday. "Faith plays a strong role in these students' commitment to bike nearly 150 miles. They will incorporate the Stations of the Cross, depicting Jesus' death and resurrection, into their reflection times throughout the ride to Columbus", said Tim Evans, a teacher from St. Ignatius High School and co-organizer of the event.

August Pacetti, co-organizer and teacher at Padua Franciscan High School further discussed the importance of **Wheels for Justice** during Holy Week, saying:

"As Christians, during Holy Week we remember how Jesus, through an ultimate act of nonviolent love, made the cross an enduring symbol of hope and new life. In his acceptance of violence through his suffering and crucifixion, Jesus forever unmasked the illusion that violence and systems that use violence will lead to peace or healing. Rather, through our witness to the Resurrection on Easter Morning, we reaffirm Jesus' commitment to love and forgiveness as the way to justice and peace."

According to Ohio's Department of Rehabilitation and Correction there are a total of 195 inmates on Death Row in Ohio. Currently there are 193 men (97 Black, 88 White, 4 Hispanic, and 4 other) and 2 white females on Death Row. To date, Ohio has executed a total of 363 convicted murderers.

Additional information about Catholic Students for Peace & Justice (CSPJ) can be found at [www.cspj.net](http://www.cspj.net).

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## SCHEDULE FOR THE CLEVELAND TO COLUMBUS BICYCLE GROUP (AND BUS GROUPS):

### Friday, April 7

3:00 PM Prayer Service with Bishop Anthony Pilla  
St. Joseph Academy  
3430 Rocky River Drive  
Cleveland, OH 44111

3:45 PM Departure from St. Joseph Academy

6:30 PM Arrive at St. Francis Xavier Church  
St. Francis Xavier Church  
606 East Washington  
Medina, OH 44256  
Contact: Fr. Mark Hollis  
Phone: 330-725-4968

### Saturday, April 8

9:00 AM Depart Medina from St. Francis Xavier Church

6:15 PM Arrive at Resurrection Church  
Resurrection Church  
2600 Lexington Ave. (SR 42)  
Lexington, Ohio 44904  
Contact: Fr. Nelson Beaver  
Phone: 419-884-0060

### Sunday, April 9

8:00 AM Attend Palm Sunday Mass at Resurrection Church

9:30 AM Depart Lexington

7:00 PM Arrive at St. Joan of Arc Church  
St. Joan of Arc Church  
10700 Liberty Rd.  
Powell, OH 43065  
Contact: Fr. Jeff Rimelsbach  
Phone: 614-761-0905

### Monday, April 10

8:30 AM Depart Powell

9:45 AM Arrive at St. Joseph's Cathedral  
St. Joseph's Cathedral  
212 East Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

10:30 AM Hundreds of other students from across Ohio  
join group at St. Joseph's Cathedral

11:00 AM Prayer Service at St. Joseph's Catholic Cathedral

11:45 AM March to Ohio Statehouse

12:00 PM Rally and Delivery of Petitions to the Ohio Statehouse  
Ohio State House  
77 High St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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