

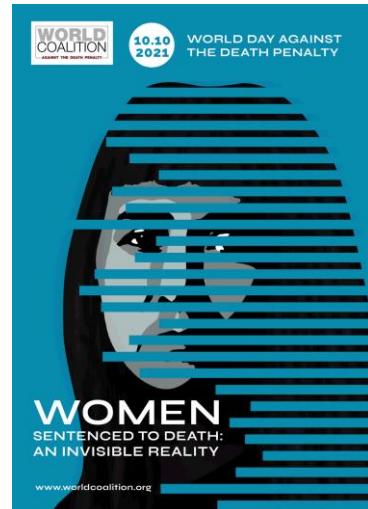
World Day Against the Death Penalty – 2021

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The [World Day Against the Death Penalty](#) is observed every October 10. It is a day that unifies the global abolitionist movement and mobilizes civil society, political leaders, lawyers, public opinion and more to support the call for universal abolition of capital punishment. The day encourages and consolidates the political and general awareness of the world-wide movement against the death penalty.

This year, the World Day was dedicated to **women** who risk being sentenced to death, who have received a death sentence, who have been executed, and who have had their death sentences commuted, exonerated, or pardoned.



Extensive discrimination based on sex and gender, often coupled with other elements of identity, such as age, sexual orientation, disability, and race, expose women to intersecting forms of structural inequalities. Such prejudices can weigh heavily on sentencing, including stereotyping women as *an evil mother*, a *witch*, or a *femme fatale*. This discrimination can also lead to critical mitigating factors not being considered during arrest and trial, such as being subjected to gender-based violence, trauma and abuse.

While working towards the complete abolition of the death penalty worldwide for all crimes, it is crucial to sound the alarm on the discrimination women face and the consequences such discrimination can have on a death sentence. The Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide estimates that there are **at least 800 women sentenced to death around the world**. In the U.S., 17 death-sentenced women have been executed since 1976. Currently there are 51 women on death row in this country.

I have no doubt that Fr Chaminade, Adele, and Marie Therese would question why execution continues today. In their time, during the Reign of Terror (1793 -1794), thousands of people were executed or murdered. A guillotine was set up in the Place de la Revolution in Paris. Although it was supposed to be a humane method of execution, its efficiency meant that hundreds were dying every day. Adele and Marie Therese most certainly would have known some of the hundreds of domestic and working-class women of Paris who were interrogated, examined, accused, denounced, arrested, and imprisoned and executed. The Anti-Death Penalty and Restorative Justice Team joins together with our MSJC Women and Justice Team to act as a force lifting up the voices of vulnerable women worldwide just as Marie Therese and Adele did so many years ago.