

OVERVIEW OF TOPIC

Focus Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

[The LORD] said to me, "Mortal, can these dry bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know."

Scripture Commentary and Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Diane B. Corlett, Rector, Church of the Nativity, Raleigh

Several years ago I met the mother of a condemned man who had been on death row for twenty years. We happened to be standing outside Gov. Hunt's office, waiting for our turn to appeal for clemency for her son. At that time, Gov. Hunt was willing to meet with the family of the murderer before the execution. When she was finally called into the governor's office, I remember thinking that I wasn't sure I would be able to leave that office quietly after begging for my son's life, but she did it. She walked out with dignity and hugged me hard. She was hanging on for dear life. Three days later her son died at the hands of the state.

Personal Vignette by Alan Gell

On April 14, 1995, the body of Allen Ray Jenkins was found in his residence in a decomposing state. When police talked to neighbors, the names of my two co-defendants--the 15-year-old girls--came up. So the cops went and spoke with them. Originally, they said they didn't know anything. Later, they changed their story, saying they did visit him, and that I busted into the house, shot and killed the guy, and then ran out of the house after I took his money. A few days later, I was arrested for first-degree murder, armed robbery, and conspiracy to commit both. The first thing I did was call my mom, asking her to help me and thinking that mom could solve everything. I mean, I was basically a kid.

Key Fact

On December 2, 2005 Kenneth Boyd of North Carolina became the 1,000th person executed since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976. Executions resumed in 2008 after a *de facto* moratorium was effectively lifted by the Supreme Court following its decision upholding lethal injection. But only the South returned to regular executions, accounting for 95 percent of executions carried out in the country in 2008.