

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE
OF **ATLANTA**
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Protocol No. 64129

Monday 21 September, 2015

Terry E. Bernard, Chairman
Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, SE
Suite 458, Balcony Level, East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-4909

Dear Chairman Barnard and members of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles:

I am writing to urge you to grant clemency to Kelly Renee Gissendaner, whose case you will consider on September 28, 2015. There are several important factors that I wish to bring to your attention in this tragic case.

First, I offer my deepest sympathy to the family of Douglas Gissendaner. I acknowledge that the State of Georgia has the right and the duty to seek justice for Mr. Gissendaner. Nevertheless, I ask for mercy for Mrs. Gissendaner simply because she is a child of God, and our Christian faith teaches us that the life of every human person has worth and dignity.

As one of the shepherds of the Catholic Church in Georgia, I seek to contribute to a civilization that promotes human dignity, by striking a balance between the demands of justice and the need for charity. Commuting the death sentence of Kelly Gissendaner to one of life without parole is compatible with that goal.

As members of the Parole Board, you alone are in the position of granting mercy to a woman who has been found guilty of taking the life of another. I pray and grieve with the family of Douglas Gissendaner, and ask you to spare the life of Kelly Gissendaner.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



‡Wilton D. Gregory,
Archbishop of Atlanta