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AMERICA/UNITED STATES - The Bishops, concerned about the increase in death sentences in Florida, write to the governor

Miami (Agenzia Fides) - The Archbishop of Miami, His Exc. Mgr. Thomas Wenski and five Bishops of Florida sent a letter to Governor Rick Scott, asking him to stop Robert Waterhouse's execution and commute the death sentence with life imprisonment without possibility of parole. "This measure would manifest the belief in the unique dignity of each individual and the sanctity of human life. It would acknowledge God as Lord of life and be more consistent with the spirit of the Gospel," said the letter, which is dated February 13, 2012. Robert Waterhouse's execution is set for today, February 15, at 23 GMT time, the prison in the State of Starke, north of the state of Florida, according to the order that Governor Scott signed last January.
The letter expresses the Bishops' concern for the planned increase of the executions: from August 2011 one every three months. Therefore in the letter the Bishops ask the governor to refrain from signing new death sentences. "We ask to study what they do in other states where there are other options (but not the death of a prisoner) to reach the goal of protecting society and punishing the criminal," they suggested.
The defense filed an appeal last week against Waterhouse's execution, but the U.S. Supreme Court has not yet ruled. Florida has executed 71 inmates since the death penalty was restored in the State, in 1976, and this is the third signed by Governor Scott since January 2011. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 15/2/2012)

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