

**ART LAFFIN, Washington, DC
Brother of Paul Laffin, murdered in
Connecticut in 1999**

Art Laffin's brother Paul was stabbed multiple times by a mentally ill homeless man, Dennis Soutar, as he was leaving the shelter where he had worked for ten years. He died shortly thereafter. Dennis was found mentally incompetent to stand trial and was sentenced to sixty years at a Connecticut prison hospital.

A long-time organizer, speaker, and writer in the faith-based movement for peace, justice, and nonviolence, Art Laffin is a member of the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker in Washington, DC. He has participated in the annual "Starvin' for Justice" fast and vigil to abolish the death penalty at the U.S. Supreme Court, taken part in the Journey of Hope in North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and Virginia, spoken in Italy during the "Cities of Life" worldwide campaign to abolish the death penalty, and testified before the Maryland State Senate Judiciary Committee. In 1997 he was arrested as part of the DC-18 for unfurling a 30-foot banner across the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court that said "Stop Executions."

"My family and I and all who knew Paul still grieve his senseless, horrific death. My brother truly gave his life for those he served. What happened to my brother is not uncommon. It is a societal disgrace that some of the mentally ill homeless, who fall through the cracks and are not properly cared for, end up committing violent lethal acts. After Paul's highly publicized death, my mother and I appealed to the public to show mercy toward Dennis and to pray for him. I also asserted that all necessary resources be made available to provide a continuum of care for Dennis, and all other mentally ill people, so that tragedies like what happened to Paul might be averted in the future."



Art Laffin