

# Death Walk

BY LYNN WALTZ  
STAFF WRITER

Chaplain Russ Ford watched the death squad put the leather straps around Albert Clozza's ankles as he sat in the electric chair. They fastened the chest bands.

Clozza smiled.

"I've discovered the gift of courage," he said.

Ford gazed into his friend's eyes, the final goodbye unspoken.

He has no words to describe what he saw in those eyes as the guards slipped the polished leather mask over Clozza's face, leaving him in darkness.

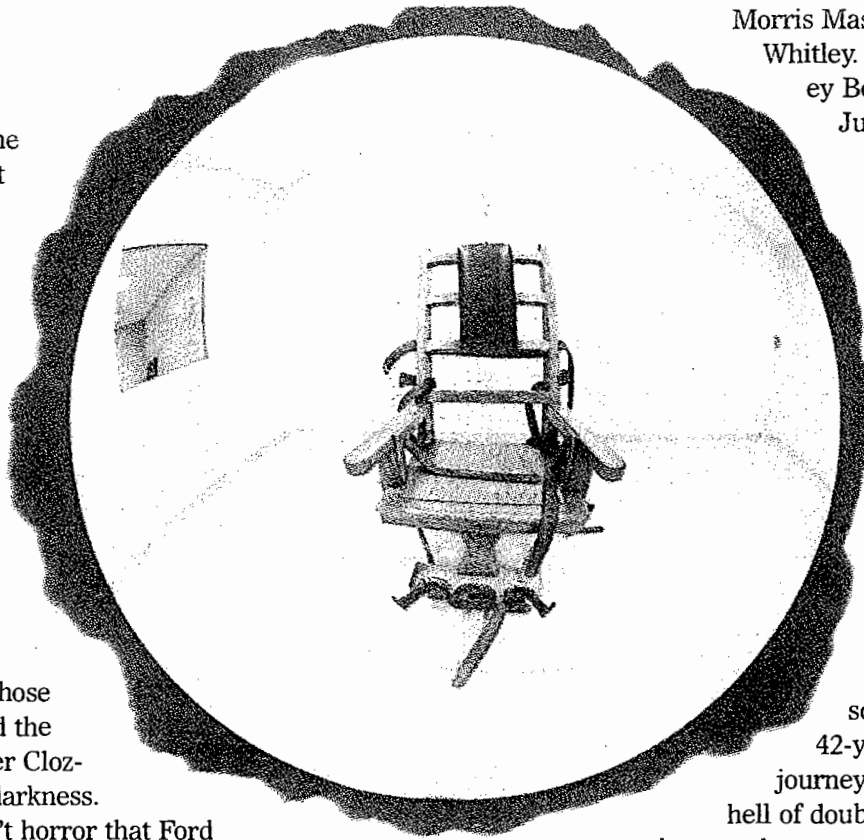
It wasn't terror. It wasn't horror that Ford saw. It was something else. Something he had never seen before.

Driving home to his wife and children, Ford again saw Albert Clozza's haunting eyes. He began to sob.

"No one should be where I was at that point," Ford said. "Somehow we were at a place that I was unworthy to be. It seemed to me a place where humans ought not to go."

**It's a short walk** from the holding cell to Virginia's electric chair. But the spiritual journey preceding it is long and treacherous.

Since 1985, Chaplain Russ Ford has taken 19 men on that walk through the valley of the shadow of death.



Morris Mason. Michael Smith. Richard Whitley. Earl Clanton. Alton Waye. Ricky Boggs. Wilbert Evans. Buddy Justus. Albert Clozza. Derrick Peterson. Roger Coleman. Edward Fitzgerald. Willie Jones. Timothy Bunch. Charles Stamper. Syvasky Poyner. Andrew Chabrol. David Pruett. Johnny Watkins.

He has counseled and befriended some, confronted and threatened others.

"We aren't coddling criminals," Ford said. "We're confronting evil, their inner darkness."

As the men confronted their souls, Ford confronted his. The 42-year-old minister's spiritual journey has taken him through his own hell of doubt and despair into a new life of hope and peace.

And when, in July, funding problems forced Ford's employer to phase out his job, he decided to raise the money he needs to continue ministering to society's condemned.

It is the work he believes God has called him to do.

Ten years ago, when Ford first entered the death house, he was overwhelmed by the sights, smells and sounds; the electricity roaring, the skin burning, the flesh pulsating.

"The man's blood is brought to a boil almost instantly," Ford said. "His joints are fused together. It's a smelly affair for those who have to handle the body. It's a burnt, twisted and distorted physical body that the death squad and medical team have to deal with."

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Then, Ford began to doubt his ability to nurture men whose sensitivities had been deadened by their own savagery.

Sometimes he was right.

Andrew Chabrol remained remorseless to the end.

"I was disgusted," Ford said. "I could not reach him. He was beyond my grasp. He's the poster boy for capital punishment."

But Ford has emerged from those 19 walks convinced that even the most violent can find peace with their God.

"Each execution brought its own new knowledge and the wisdom within us to carry us through the trauma," he said. "I've gone from being a tourist to a pilgrim."

**Ford's first execution**, on June 25, 1985, was Morris Mason. Mason, whom Ford called a man-child, had raped a 71-year-old neighbor on the Eastern Shore, hit her in the head with an ax, nailed her to a chair and set her house on fire.

"I spent a lot of time with him," Ford said. "Then I'd go home to my daughter who was 5 and my stepson who was 7. Both of them could think abstractly better than he could."

The moment before Mason walked to the chair, he looked at Ford and said, "Russ, don't forget to tell the men back at 'row' that I was a big boy."

As Mason's knees began to buckle, Ford put his hand on the man's shoulder and said, "You'll be OK."

"Sure enough, Morris walked on in there like a big boy, sat down in the chair and was executed," Ford said. "I went in reading Psalm 23. Do you think he understood any of it? That was my first execution."

A little bit of Russ Ford died with Morris Mason.

Ford's mind replayed visions of Mason's hands as they spasmed and fluttered during the execution. He became repulsed by it. The hands raised up, straight up, with a little movement back and forth, like a vibration.

Dark doves fluttering, Ford called it later.

Every time he remembered Mason's hands, Ford would begin to sweat and panic. He still was seeing those hands when Michael Smith came to the death

house 13 months later. Smith, who carried a tattered Bible and used scripture as a shield, would die a hard death.

Two more executions followed — Richard Whitley, who had raped his own mother, and Earl Clanton, a sexual predator on death row. They sent Ford further into despair.

"I couldn't help them," Ford said. "Who's got the magic words at that point?"

**The shadow of the Virginia State Penitentiary** fell across the window of Ford's aunt's house on Spring Street in Richmond, near where he and his sister grew up in the 1950s.

From the age of 3, even before he knew what the penitentiary was all about, Ford remembers the power of the place and the darkness surrounding it.

"At night, we'd look out the window and watch the guards and you could see the cell bars. It was a horrible place — a dark, scary place. I had no idea I'd end up walking these halls," Ford said.

Violent death was part of life in Richmond's Oregon Hill and the Southside where his parents eventually moved, ironically, to get away from crime. Three cousins were murdered by the time Ford married, one in a racial fight, one by mistake during a professional drug hit, another by her husband in a domestic fight.

"You never heal fully," Ford said.

Despite a Southern Baptist upbringing, Ford did not expect to personally experience God's power. He wasn't religious when he went to a Baptist camp in

Lynchburg at the age of 18.

"I just walked out on that patio and my life was changed."

Ford called it a "conversion." The moment seemed to last a long time. "I saw the light," he said.

Ford graduated from Southeastern Seminary in 1977. At 24, he took a job with Chaplain Services of the Churches of Virginia as an intern prison chaplain. At 27, he went full-time. In 1982, the state reimposed the death penalty after a 20-year hiatus. In 1985, Ford witnessed his first execution.

"I didn't choose death row. I arrived there," Ford said. "We thought we would rotate through. But the other chaplains weren't connecting with the men and weren't as effective, so I wound up being the lead. My gifts matched in that sense. It wasn't so much a choice as that I was chosen."

**Ford was not looking forward** to his fifth execution in August 1989: Alton Waye. Waye had a reputation with death row inmates and guards alike of being one of the nastiest men there, not a small accomplishment considering the competition.

So when Ford was greeted warmly with open arms by a man who had been singing spirituals in his cell, he was surprised.

"He'd gone from being nasty to being somewhat wholesome and embracing, with an inviting kind of spirit about him," Ford said. "It was a complete shock."

Whatever changed Waye had happened while he was alone in his cell one night. Waye called it an old-fashioned born-again salvation experience.

It would turn Ford's ministry upside down.

"It was very similar to Acts 16 with Paul and Silas in the jail," Ford said.

"They were singing and the walls came tumbling down."

Ford joined Waye in singing. By the time they took "The Walk," Ford's voice was hoarse. But Waye was at peace.

This was not the same Alton Waye who, drunk on moonshine, went to a Lunenburg County farmhouse eight years earlier. Waye stabbed an elderly woman with a butcher knife, bit her repeatedly then dragged her nude body to a bathtub and doused it with bleach.

The night before his execution, Waye asked to be baptized. The entire death squad had to be mobilized to move him to the chapel.

"It was real, genuine worship," Ford said. "When he

came up out of the water, there was this transcendent moment when you just saw this glow."

Everyone stood in a circle as Ford gave communion, Waye standing between his executioner and the captain of the death squad. They joined hands, sang "Amazing Grace" and said the Lord's Prayer.

"These correctional officers hugged this man and blessed him, and he walked away saying, 'You know, they don't really want to kill me, Russ.' It was a marvelous, wondrous experience."

Ford had found the magic word. It was hope.

Hope for God's forgiveness. For reconciliation. For remorse. Even for joy.

"We knew that not everybody could have that kind of experience. We knew how the others died hard, really disconnected, lost, somewhat floundering at the end. Alton was the first that walked in the light."

Ford rolled up his sleeves. He and the men on death row had work to do.

**Russ Ford carries no agenda** with him to the death house.

"You can't bring answers to death row. They've got to arrive at the answers themselves," he said.

"You have to understand, most of these men never went to church unless Grandma took them on Easter. Jesus has been a curse word."

The reality of the death house has turned this Southern Baptist into a spiritual pragmatist. If it works, use it.

The floor-to-ceiling bookshelves in Ford's Chesterfield County home are filled with volumes on scripture, Taoism, Jungian psychology and Zen Buddhism. Dante's "Inferno" sits next to "On Death and Dying" and books by pop philosopher Joseph Campbell.

In talking with the men on death row, Ford will call on any of Death's cast of characters to make his point. The angel of death. The grim reaper. The hounds of hell. Charon the boatman.

But the 6-foot-2 Ford is more than just a minister quoting passages of scripture and conjuring dark imagery.

"There's an animal magnetism about Russ," said death-row inmate advocate Marie Deans, who has worked closely with Ford in the death house.

"Russ has been known to — if things get too somber in the death house — sort of howl and make everybody stop and look."

Ford is charismatic, intense, emotional, intuitive.

And dramatic.

"He's a preacher," Deans said.

A preacher doing a delicate balancing act few are willing to attempt.

"Execution is so ghastly, so inhuman, so horrific, that most people don't want to get in the middle of it," Deans said. "It's very near the vortex. You feel like at any moment you'll be sucked down."

"Russ has the courage to stand right on the edge of that and confront that. I think very, very few people do."

Russ Ford calls it confronting "The Monster." And he does it through what he calls "shadow work, dungeon work."

It's the one part of the death-house journey that's required.

"The men can come out empowered with integrity and dignity, but the only way to get there is to deal with their inner darkness," Ford said. "When the men were unable to do that, they were hard and cold and distant and alone when they died."

But if they choose to do the work, they must be energized.

He tells them: Do not stop living until you die. Do not give your heart and soul to the state until they take it.

"The death is the punishment, not the journey to the chair," Ford said. "I tell them to walk alive in the death house, to stay alive, to be alive. To not die before your time. And be alive as you're walking to the chair. Be alive as you're sitting in the chair."

**There would be three more** executions in 1990 before Albert Clozza came to the death house in July 1991.

But for a moment's notice, it would have been four.

On July 19, 1990, Ricky Boggs was strapped into the chair. Outside, 50 death-penalty opponents held candles and softly sang "Someone's Grieving, Lord." Neighbors across Richmond's Spring Street cheered. Inmates banged on their bars and yelled, unintelligible in the din.

Inside, Ford was upset.

The execution had been delayed and no one could tell him why. He asked to speak to Boggs, to help him through. He put his hand on the back of Boggs' head and leaned forward, offering comfort.

"Go past it," he told Boggs, urging him to move ahead into the next life.

Boggs gripped Ford's hand tightly.

Then Ford heard an administrator yell out, "Russ!" The warden shouted, "No! Russ!"

Ford let go and pulled back, turning away. As he did, he saw the execution light signal.

It was green.

Before Ford had taken a second step away from the chair, the electricity was coursing through Boggs' body.

"It scared me. It really scared me. I immediately walked out that door to get out of there. It was enough to make a preacher cuss."

Within three months, Ford was back in the execution chamber, this time with

Wilbert Evans. Evans had tried frantically to save his life, hopeful until the final hours.

"Chaplain Ford, if I'd have known they were really going to kill me down here, I'd never have let them bring me," Evans said.

When Ford told him that there was a part of him that would never die, Evans closed his eyes and began to cry and pray.

"I love you, Chaplain Ford. God bless you," Evans said.

By this time Ford no longer was watching the executions. He turned his back. As the roar of electricity filled the room, he heard a witness screaming and saw a guard grimacing.

"Blood was pouring down onto his shirt and his body was making the sound of a pressure cooker ready to blow," Ford said during a walk-through of the death chamber.

Ford paused. His eyes traveled over the sterile gray walls and settled on the antique oaken chair.

"I detest what goes on here."

**Ford begins preparing condemned** men for The Walk months ahead of time, a process he calls "demythologizing the death house."

He starts with them on death row at Mecklenburg, where 48 men now wait in musty cells.

When they are assigned execution dates, Ford's relationship with them intensifies. The men peer from food-tray slots in solid cell doors while Ford peers back, his legs spasming as he moves from cell to cell, hour after hour.

It is there he gives them the concrete information they will need for their journey.

He tells them about the van ride from Mecklenburg to the death house at Greenville . . . the changing of the guards 24 hours before execution . . . the shaving of the head three hours before . . . The Walk.

He no longer tells them it won't hurt.

"Roger Coleman is the one who straightened me out on that," Ford said. "He asked me the night of his execution if it was painful. I gave him my standard answer — that I didn't think so, that it was quick and you were unconscious."

"He said, 'That's easy for you to say, Russ. Nobody knows. Nobody comes

back, so we really just don't know.' So now, whenever anybody asks, I just tell them what Roger Coleman said."

Whatever they ask, Ford tells them.

Some men want to know everything.

That their muscles will contract, causing the body to lunge forward. That the heat will literally make their blood boil. That the electrode contact points will burn their skin. The joints will fuse, leaving them in a sitting position. Their bodies will be straightened out later with sand bags.

If they ask, Ford tells them about the bad executions when there is blood or burning. He tells of the man who wheezed and moaned during a 12-minute pause after the first jolt failed to kill him.

Some want to know all the players: the death team, administrators, dietitians.

Each piece of equipment: the metal helmet that looks like a vegetable colander; the smooth leather mask; the black back pad that will hold them upright; the worn black leather straps; the Velcro fasteners used on their clothes because metal buttons would melt.

Once they get their date, the passage of time on death row is marked in events; the last birthday, the last Christmas, the last NCAA tournament, the last Super Bowl.

After the move to the death house 15 days before the execution, it becomes the last Friday, the last weekend, the last night.

Twenty-four hours before the execution, the uniformed guards who have been on death watch for two weeks — playing chess, delivering meals, making small talk — leave. They are replaced by the death team.

The death house is filled with different sounds as the activity speeds up. The chair is tested in the next room.

Over and over again.

They practice takedowns in case the man fights. They swing batons in case he is too violent to control. They rehearse carefully to ensure a smooth presentation for the media and witnesses who will gather in the chamber overlooking the electric chair.

The last afternoon, the man has his final "contact visit" with family, then orders his last meal. Personal belongings are boxed, inventoried and removed, leaving the cells bare.

At about 8:30, the lawyers and chaplains leave and the death team "preps" the man. The head-shaving is a critical

time psychologically, potentially humiliating and demeaning, Ford said.

"The man really does come to grips with the fact that he is owned. He doesn't belong to himself, he belongs to the state," Ford said. Death squads have been known to say, as they shave a man's head before the execution, "Now we've got his heart in our pocket."

Don't let them have it, Ford tells the man. Keep it until you die.

A few minutes before the assigned hour — 11 p.m. — a guard gives the signal that the warden is on the way in. He reads the death notice in front of the cell.

The Walk begins.

**Albert Clozza was the first** to be executed at Greenville Correctional Center in Jarrett, after the death chamber was moved from Richmond in 1991. He was the first to take the eight short steps across the polished gray linoleum floor at the new death house.

It was July 1991 when Ford first met Clozza in the death house. Clozza was waiting, sitting cross-legged and composed in a chair.

"He knew who I was and he was expecting me to come," Ford said. "He said, 'Russ, I'm here on a journey to find myself and God.' And he wasn't playing with those words."

Two oriental symbols had been shaved on the sides of his head. Tattoos covered his arms. Dragons and a pink Tazmanian devil marked the stages of his life.

"The symbols on his head set the character and tone for his days in the death house," Ford said. "They stood for the peaceful warrior as opposed to the violent warrior. The peaceful warrior doesn't fight outside but goes inward."

The two formed an unlikely friendship; the short, wiry killer and the tall, broad-shouldered, clean-cut Baptist preacher.

Clozza was 23 when he raped and murdered 13-year-old Patricia Beth Bolton on Jan. 13, 1983, in Virginia Beach as she walked home from a bookmobile.

A newspaper headline read, "Neighborhood mourns for slain tomboy." Articles described a girl who wore a baseball cap to school and played alongside the boys on the Yankees Little League team.

Clozza confessed to beating Bolton, sodomizing her, penetrating her with a stick, then tearing her upper lip with a twig to keep her quiet.

Before he met Ford, Clozza knew *what* he had done. But he couldn't believe *he* had done it.

Clozza saw himself as a coward, weak,

unlovable, unredeemable. His crime was the unexplainable mutilation of a young innocent girl.

"There was a sense of being torn from the inside out and being turned inside out as he relived it and how he arrived at that point in his life, how he had killed in such a heinous way," Ford said.

Midway in the 15-day countdown, Clozza sat in his chair, finally able to write about the murder and the deep emotional wounds he had inflicted.

He looked like a little monk, his legs crossed, his head close-shaven.

"Bert was still sitting writing, and when he turned around and looked at me he glowed," Ford said. "He was receiving forgiveness and forgiving himself. He was experiencing grace."

Clozza said, "I can write. Something's changed."

Something had. It was Clozza.

"There was a sense of light that comes when you're able to maybe, maybe, maybe admit that God loves you, even you the wretched murderer," Ford said.

Word spread among the guards about Clozza's change. They began asking questions.

"Bert Clozza was making people deal with their own relationship with God," Ford said. "They'd say, 'What's going on with that man, because he has something that I need.' And it wasn't just one man, it was several."

On July 24, 1991, the guards came to prep Clozza. They shaved the oriental symbols from his head.

Ford passed the time at a local truck stop, grabbing a hot roast-beef sandwich.

He brought back a single red rose from a 7-Eleven. It became the sword of the peaceful warrior.

"The most amazing thing was to see Bert take that rose and caress it and to feel its petals and to rub it on his face and behold the beauty of God's creation," Ford said.

A fellow chaplain prepared communion and offered it to everyone, including the death squad.

"They looked like he'd said 'Boo!' " Ford said. "They jumped back and they were scared. Then, the captain of the death squad stepped forward and joined the circle."

One by one, each took communion and served the next. The chaplain asked if anyone had a last word for Clozza.

It was the captain who spoke first.

"There are none righteous. No, not one," he said.

"It shook the jail house as far as I was concerned," Ford said. "I felt like I'd come full circle in my own spiritual life."

As the warden read the death notice, Ford used the long-stemmed rose as a back scratch, then as a fan, to break the somber moment.

Clozza smiled.

He was ready to begin The Walk.

As the black leather straps were tightened around Clozza's legs, chest and arms, Ford stood in front of him, looking into his eyes with a final message. As they placed the metal helmet on Clozza's head with the briny sponge and hooked up the electrodes, Ford affirmed him.

"You were asking who would join you?" Ford said. "The truth is that all of us will follow you soon. No one here will be left behind."

Afterward, Ford drove home with his close friend, death-penalty opponent Deans.

Ford's thoughts returned to that moment he gazed into the eyes of Albert Clozza, trying to make sense of what he saw there.

"Russ was crying," Deans said. "He was just sobbing and I was holding him and rocking him. He was really lost."

Deans told Ford he had been on the banks of the river Styx with Charon the boatman, making sure that Bert had a pence in his shoe to pay his toll across the river.

"But I told him he hadn't stayed on the shore, that he had crossed over the river with him."

Ford knew he had tread into a sacred place. He determined to never again gaze into the eyes of a man as he is being executed.

**By 1993, the executions** were taking their toll on Ford. Where there had been one a year in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, there were four in 1992 and five in 1993.

The streetwise Derrick Peterson. Roger Coleman, proclaiming innocence until the end. Edward Fitzgerald, the death row spiritual guru. Willie Leroy Jones, the man who kissed the chair. Timothy Bunch, seeker of truth.

Charles Stamper, the cripple. Syvasky Poyner, the man with no emotions. Andrew Chabrol, the naval hero with a demon. David Pruett, the man who married in the death house.

Some deaths were not easy.

Fitzgerald had crude phone sex with a death row groupie until the guards led him away.

Chabrol, who taped a picture of his victim in the family section of his Bible, showed no remorse.

"His punishment should have been to be kept alive until he dealt with what he had done," Ford said.

Pruett, distracted by his death-house wedding that took place only days before his death, refocused too late on his spiritual journey. He stuffed himself with shrimp, pizza and ice cream, then died a fearful death.

They are the men Russ Ford broods about, the ones who were lost.

After Chabrol went defiantly to the chair on June 17, 1993, Ford was exhausted. He was routinely working 70 hour weeks, going from one execution to counseling the next man who was to die.

Just four days before Chabrol's execution, another man on death row, Wayne DeLong, had hanged himself with a bedsheet, a syringe dangling from his arm. Ford took the loss hard.

He asked Chaplain Services for a sabbatical and was told not to worry, that he would have plenty of time to rest.

The organization was short on funding, they said. They were eliminating his position, filling it with part-time volunteers.

Ford does not agree with the move. Though he has relied heavily on volunteers for support and believes they are a vital part of the ministry, they cannot fill the role of full-time counselor.

"It took us years to become comfortable in the death house," Ford said.

"Volunteers usually bring in their own agenda about what the death row journey should be. Most are not capable of just going there and providing meaningful, in-depth ministry."

Ford struggled with what to do. He continued to feel a strong call from God.

**"I've been wrestling** with whether to run away or confront it," Ford said.

"Whether to be like Jonah, confined to the belly of the whale, or to be in God's will. It would be a whole lot easier to walk away. But that doesn't change the burden that I feel, or the need."

Ford launched his own ministry, Gateway Parish, in late July. He needs about \$60,000 a year to buy supplies and pay himself and a support staff.

The new ministry will include not only the condemned, but also their families

and the families of their victims. Seventy percent of Gateway's resources are pledged to victims of violence.

"I've become evangelical about the nurturing of the soul," Ford said. "If we don't nurture the soul, we are in agony. People in our country are hungering and thirsting for that and it's important for the church to respond to it."

An inmate's walk to death is full of truth for everyone, Ford said, because it matches the structure of every man's search as he faces death. The only difference is that the darkness confronting death row inmates is deeper, he said.

Ford has lined up support from attorneys, psychologists, health professionals and other ministers.

Death row attorney Barry Weinstein has agreed to support the newly formed ministry. So has the Rev. Joseph Vought, pastor of Lutheran Church of

Our Savior in Richmond, a death row volunteer.

Both watched as Timothy Spencer, the most recent man executed in Virginia's electric chair, died alone, without a Russ Ford at his side.

The volunteer chaplains who tried to help Spencer had visited only a few times in the final days. "You can't take a novice with a flock and say get down here at 6 p.m on execution night and start pastoring," Weinstein said.

"Tim, in essence died without coming to terms with his own death," Weinstein, Spencer's attorney, said. "I was shocked. I'm not a religious person. I just believe that anyone who's confronting death needs to be able to deal with it, and that's where the church is supposed to come in, isn't it?"

Vought agrees.

"This man has gifts and experience nobody else has," he said of Ford. "No one else understands their journey and their struggle."

**Ford knows funding his ministry** will be difficult.

Conservatives who may share his religious concerns favor capital punishment and are unlikely to see the need for his ministry. Liberals who oppose capital punishment are unlikely to share his evangelical fervor.

Ford hopes organized churches will

help because they understand best the teachings of his own spiritual guide.

"Jesus was the first death row chaplain," Ford said. "He was hanging on the cross with convicted thieves on either side, and he led one to paradise. The other one died and went to hell.

"That's where Jesus would be today. He'd be on death row and he'd have us be there. We're commanded to work with the outcast and condemned.

"It's hard to believe that God loves them. It's tempting to turn your back. Unredeemed killers. Why pump money into that? Because Jesus said to the thief who was dying at the hand of the state, 'Today you will be with me in paradise.'"

## THE EXECUTED MEN AND THEIR CRIMES

On June 25, 1985, Ford witnessed his first execution, of Morris Odell Mason, pictured on Page J1.



**M**ichael Marnell Smith, 40, executed July 31, 1986. Smith raped and strangled Audrey Jean Weiler then drowned her in the James River on May 23, 1977. Smith stabbed her repeatedly near the beach where she was reading poetry. It had been sunning and was her 36th birthday.



**R**ichard Lee Whitley, 41, executed July 6, 1987. Whitley used a Boy Scout knife to slash the throat of his next-door neighbor, 63-year-old Phebe Parsons in Fairfax County on July 25, 1980. After Parsons died, Whitley sexually assaulted her with an umbrella.



**E**arl Clanton Jr., 33, executed April 14, 1988. Clanton robbed and strangled Wilhelmina Smith, a Petersburg librarian, on Nov. 16, 1980.



knife 42 times, then placed in her bathtub and doused with bleach.

**A**lton Wayne, 34, executed Aug. 30, 1989, for the murder of 61-year-old Laverne B. Marshall of Lunenburg County on Oct. 14, 1977. Marshall was raped, beaten, bitten and stabbed with a butcher



served him tea, then stole diamond rings from her fingers.

**R**ichard T. Boggs, 28, executed July 19, 1990, for the murder of an 87-year-old Cradock woman, Treeby M. Shaw, on Jan. 25, 1984. Boggs bludgeoned her to death with a metal bar after she



**W**ilbert Lee Evans, 40, executed Oct. 17, 1990, for the shooting death of Alexandria deputy sheriff William G. Truesdale on Jan. 27, 1981. As Evans tried to escape from the courthouse, he

grabbed Truesdale's gun and fired into his chest.



In the face with a pistol in her trailer on Oct. 3, 1978.

**B**uddy Earl Justus, 38, executed Dec. 13, 1990, for the rape and murder of Ida Mae Moses, a 21-year-old Montgomery County nurse who was 8 1/2 months pregnant. Justus shot Moses three times



**A**lbert J. Clozza, 30, executed July 24, 1991. Clozza raped and beat 13-year-old Patricia Beth Bolton to death on Jan. 13, 1983 in Virginia Beach at the trailer park where he worked.



**D**errick L. Peterson, 30, executed Aug. 22, 1991. Peterson stormed a Pantry Pride supermarket in Hampton on Feb. 7, 1982. He shot the manager, Howard Kauffman, 45, and took \$6,000.



**R**oger Keith Coleman, 33, executed May 20, 1992. Coleman was convicted of raping and slitting the throat of his 18-year-old sister-in-law, Wanda Faye McCoy on March 10, 1981 in

Grundy, a South-west Virginia coal town. Coleman insisted he was innocent until he died.



**E**dward B. Fitzgerald Sr., 34, executed July 24, 1992, for the 1980 rape, torture and fatal stabbing of 22-year-old Patricia D. Cabbage in Chesterfield County. He stabbed her 184 times with a machete, hacking

a tic-tac-toe game into her back.



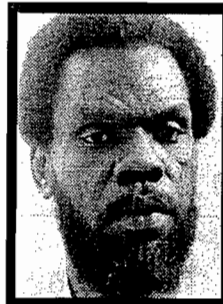
**W**illie Leroy Jones, 34, executed Sept. 15, 1992, for shooting an elderly couple in Charles City County on May 13, 1983. Retired shopkeeper Graham Adkins, 77, and his wife Myra, 79, were tied up, shot and

burned when their house was set afire.



**T**imothy D. Bunch, 33, executed Dec. 10, 1992. The Marine Corps sergeant robbed and shot his lover, Su Cha Thomas, 40, on Jan. 31, 1982. He tried to disguise the murder as sui-

cide by hanging Thomas from a doorknob in her Prince William County home.



**C**harles Stamper, 40, executed Jan. 19, 1993. Stamper broke into a Henrico County Shoney's on March 25, 1978. He stole \$4,000 and shot three of his co-workers — Agnes Hicks, Franklin D. Cooley and Steven

Lee Staples — point-blank as they were opening the restaurant.



**S**ylvasky L. Poyner, 36, executed March 18, 1993 for the 1984 murders of five Peninsula women during an 11-day spree in Hampton, Newport News and Williamsburg. Poyner chose

women who were easily frightened, robbed and shot them with a .38-caliber revolver.

Joyce Baldwin, 45, a Hampton hair salon manager and mother of five, was killed Jan. 23. Louise S. Paulett, 72, and Chestine Brooks, 43, manager and housekeeper of a Williamsburg motel, were killed Jan. 30. Vicki P. Ripple, 17, a nursing student, was killed Jan. 31. Carolyn J. Hedrick, 44, a candy distributor and mother of three, was abducted from a Newport News supermarket parking lot and robbed, raped and murdered on Feb. 2, 1984.



**A**ndrew Chabrol, 36, executed June 17, 1993. On July 9, 1991, Chabrol abducted 27-year-old Melissa Harrington from her Virginia Beach townhouse, took her to his Chesapeake home, tied her to the bed and

raped her. He covered her face with duct tape then strangled her.



**D**avid Mark Pruett, 44, executed Dec. 16, 1993 for the murder of two Virginia Beach women, killed a decade apart. On May 23, 1975, Pruett stabbed 22-year-old Debra McInnis to death at the Vir-

ginia Beach Kentucky Fried Chicken where she worked. On Feb. 12, 1985, he raped and killed 36-year-old Wilma Harvey, the wife of his best friend, as she was ironing choir stoles in her Virginia Beach home.



**J**ohnny Watkins Jr., 33, executed March 3, 1994 for the November 1983 slayings of two convenience store clerks, Betty Jean Barker and Carl Douglas Buchanan, in Danville. Watkins killed the two in

robberies in Pittsylvania County on Nov. 14 and Nov. 22.