

PROGRESS MADE ON ICE DETAINEE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue is asking everyone to push one more time for the release of a Thai man who is still in the custody of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):

Earlier this month, I asked everyone to appeal to the White House requesting that Pornchai Moontri be released from ICE. For those of you who are unfamiliar with his case, read the story below.

We need you to make one more appeal to President Trump before Christmas. Why? Because we have learned that just days after many of you answered our call and appealed to the White House, the Thailand embassy was contacted by ICE saying there is movement in his case. He is in his fourth month of ICE custody.

Click [here](#) to access the form for the White House appeal. Suggested remarks: "President Trump: Please expedite the repatriation of Pornchai Moontri (ICE detention A-039064244). He has paid his debt to society and simply wants to return home to his native Thailand."

Here is why Pornchai deserves to be released.

Pornchai was born in Thailand in 1973 and was abandoned by his mother when he was two-years-old. She intended to sell him, but a young relative came to his rescue and brought him into his home. When he was 11-years-old his mother reemerged with a new husband; they took him to Bangor, Maine, against his will. His stepfather, Richard Bailey, immediately started raping him, and did so for three years. At age 14, Pornchai escaped (it was his second escape) and became homeless. When he was 18, he got into a fight with a much bigger man while he was intoxicated and took the man's life during the struggle (he was so drunk he does not recall stabbing him).

While awaiting trial, Pornchai's mother came to visit him in jail, warning him that if he disclosed to the authorities what his stepfather did to him, she would suffer the consequences. Fearing for his mother's life, he prudently decided not to speak, even to the point of not defending himself in court. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to 45 years in prison. Maine has no parole.

In 2000, his mother attempted to leave her husband; they were living in Guam. That is where she was beaten to death. The only suspect was her husband, but there was no evidence to convict him. Subsequently, many things changed.

In 2005, Pornchai was sent to a New Hampshire State Prison. That is where he met Fr. MacRae. Five years later, Pornchai became a Catholic; he soon became a fan of the Catholic League.

In 2018, after new evidence emerged—advocates for Pornchai pursued Bailey—and justice was finally done. Bailey was convicted on forty felony counts of child sexual abuse against Pornchai.

On September 11, 2020, Pornchai, after serving his full sentence, was released at age 47 to the custody of ICE for deportation to his native Thailand. He is still in custody, with no end in sight.

Pornchai has served his time and has suffered enough. He should now be set free.