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Shortly before 123 million voters picked a president, 38 Louisiana monks moved the judiciary toward a decision that could change American governance more than most presidents do. The monks' cypress caskets could catalyze a rebirth of judicial respect for Americans' unenumerated rights, a.k.a. privileges or immunities.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina damaged the trees that the monks of Saint Joseph Abbey near Covington, La., harvested to support their religious life. So they decided to market the sort of simple caskets in which the abbey has long buried its dead. Monasteries in other states sell caskets, but these Louisiana Benedictines were embarking on a career in crime

In 1914, Louisiana created the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors. Its supposed purpose is to combat "infectious or communicable diseases," but it has become yet another example of "regulatory capture," controlled by the funeral industry it ostensibly regulates. Nine of its 10 current members are funeral directors.

Read the full report at [The Washington Post](#)

Thanks to Death Midwifery in Canada for alerting us to this article.