

A lawyer for Winkler (with Matthew, Brianna, Mary Alice and Patricia) says they have learned about "things that led to the day in question."

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—WINKLER LAWYER LESLIE BALLIN

much in the good graces of her late husband's congregation. Each week in the church bulletin, prayers are requested for the Winkler family. Each Sunday members of the Church of Christ visit her at the McNairy County Jail, where she seems to be adjusting to life behind bars. (Her father, Clark Freeman, also visits Winkler on weekends.) Church member Pam Killingsworth recalls one recent episode when a woman visiting began to cry at the sight of Winkler. "Mary told her, 'It's going to be okay,'" says Killingsworth, who makes the trip every week. "She seems more concerned for everybody else."

All the same, her own legal plight doesn't look to be improving in the near future. It is expected that she will be indicted for the killing next month, with a trial to follow in the fall. Farese Sr. has declined to say what might have prompted Winkler to shoot her husband, but he has vowed to mount a stiff challenge to the prosecution. "We want every stone turned over. We want every defense available to us to be looked at," he told the weekly *Independent Appeal* last month. "All we want is a fair trial for Mary Carol Winkler." ●

TOP: TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION/SP. KYLE CARTER/REUTERS

SHE MISSES THE KIDS

Awaiting indictment for killing her husband, Mary Winkler faces the prospects of not seeing her daughters

Seven weeks after killing her preacher husband, Matthew Winkler, in Selmer, Tenn., Mary Winkler still has not seen her three young daughters or even had a phone conversation with them. "She is getting more anxious as the days go by, wanting to talk to them," says one of her lawyers, Leslie Ballin. The kids—Patricia, 8, Mary Alice, 6, and Brianna, 1—have been sent to live with their paternal grandparents in Huntington, Tenn. So far, though, the grandparents have not agreed to a request that the children be allowed to visit their mother. "The grandparents addressed that with the girls' counselor," says Winkler family spokesman Eddie Thompson, "and the counselor

doesn't feel like it is a good idea yet."

Given the fact that Winkler, 32, has been charged with killing the girls' father, says another of her attorneys, Steve Farese Sr., Winkler understands why it might be best if the girls be kept away for the time being. "She told me if a psychologist says it would be bad for the children, she'd forgo seeing them," says Farese. "She is behind the Winklers 100 percent. Whatever they feel is in the best interest of the children, she accepts that." The two older girls are back in school, where classmates have mentioned the case to them. Says Thompson: "I think they are aware that their mother is in jail."

Meanwhile, Winkler remains very

Winkler (in court in March) is "doing better," says one of her lawyers.

