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# FR. FRANK REPORTS...

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## † In 2018 Priests for Life Celebrates †

*Fr. Frank Pavone's 30th Anniversary of Ordination and 25th Anniversary  
as National Director of Priests for Life*

### Newsbriefs

Priests for Life has announced the start of its own Publishing Division, for the purpose of publishing works written by our own pastoral team specifically on abortion. Fr. Frank and Alveda King are working on a new book together called, ***Abortion in Black and White***.

The National Day of Remembrance, co-founded by Fr. Frank, was held on Saturday September 8; Fr. Frank preached in Orlando at a Church where there are three aborted babies buried. Meanwhile, Fr. Stephen Imbarrato held a service in New Mexico, where he also obtained grave markers for babies buried there.

Priests for Life team members Bryan Kemper and Fr. Stephen helped to lead the Survivors' Pro-life Training Camp this summer in San Francisco, and were able to persuade the company who takes away the "medical waste" from the abortion clinics to stop doing business with Planned Parenthood!

### **Alveda King of Priests for Life meets with President Trump**

Evangelist Alveda King, full-time director of Civil Rights for the Unborn at Priests for Life, again attended a White House meeting with President Trump, who is very appreciative of the work she does. The topic of this particular meeting was the need for prison reform in the United States. As we know from our work in Rachel's Vineyard and Silent No More, many in prison suffer from a past abortion, and often the risk-taking behavior that gets them into prison is an after-effect of the abortion.

Many of the African-American clergy who attended the meeting were criticized for doing so, but Alveda was happy to have a chance to sit down with the president again and to discuss important matters.

As she wrote in a column that was posted by CNS News:

"At the meeting on August 1, the President focused on prison reform

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and urban initiatives. The session was very encouraging as we received updates on Executive Orders regarding prison reform, the job market and job readiness, aide to foreign nations, life and more. President Trump was very interactive with those around the table, and his team includes strong voices in the faith community."

Since Alveda was sitting right next to the president, her picture appeared in almost all the photos snapped by the media that day. In some of the photos, a book can be seen in front of the president. It's actually a copy of Alveda's cookbook - ***GG's Home for the Holidays Cookbook*** - that she presented to him before the meeting, asking the president to pass it on to First Lady Melania Trump.

## Father Frank Pavone celebrates 30 years as a Catholic priest

By Leslie Palma-Simoncek, Director of Communications, Priests for Life

In his 30 years as a Catholic priest, Father Frank Pavone has become well known for passionate preaching, a spirit of ecumenism, unflagging advocacy for the unborn and a tendency to become a thorn in the side of those who would prefer a softer message. All of these traits were nurtured during his 12 years in formation as a priest.

At the first Mass he celebrated the day after ordination, when it's customary for new priests to invite a more seasoned colleague to preach the homily, Father Frank chose to do it himself, spending 32 minutes preaching about the second coming of Christ and the urgency of proclaiming his Gospel. As part of the application of that Gospel, he railed against some religious sisters who had recently come out in favor of abortion.

"It was a sign of things to come," he said.

In 1975, Father Frank was a junior at a public high school in his home town of Port Chester, N.Y., when he attended a Saturday evening Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi in his parish, of the same name. Until that point, "Sunday Mass was the extent of my involvement," in his faith but something happened that evening as he watched an altar server bring the monstrance to a side table.

"It struck me what a privilege it was for the altar boy to be handling the monstrance," even before it held a consecrated host. And when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, he remembers feeling "a strong sense of the Lord's presence, as if he was calling me into the monstrance with Him."

The next day he spoke to the pastor about becoming an altar server and

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that led him to "rediscover the Eucharist." He began praying, reading the Bible and attending daily Mass. One of the elderly women who shared the pews with him every morning asked him if he was considering the priesthood.

"I said no, but then I thought to myself, maybe I should," he recalled. The idea grew on him. He had already begun applying to colleges but decided to apply to seminary instead. A college directory led him to one 90 minutes from home, in Newton, N.J. When he told his pastor, Father Peter Rinaldi about it, he learned that Father Rinaldi's religious order, the Salesians of Don Bosco, ran the seminary.

He entered in the fall of 1976 and graduated, as Brother Frank, in June 1981, giving the valedictory address at the commencement ceremony.

Three years passed between college seminary and theological seminary, and during that time Fr. Frank did other work. It was on a date with a young woman he met after seminary that he discovered that he was not called to be married.

"We were walking on the boardwalk at Playland (an amusement park), and I noticed a couple with a child in a stroller. I realized that this couple had to be fully invested in one another and that child. I didn't feel called to that. I felt instead a worldwide call to love and serve all people."

He applied to St. Joseph's Seminary, which ordains priests, primarily, for the Archdiocese of New York. In the summer of 1984, when he entered, Cardinal John J. O'Connor had just been named to the archdiocese following the death of Cardinal Terence Cooke. Cardinal O'Connor was among an extraordinary group of people Father Frank now describes as "a stellar lineup of formators" -- Father Benedict Groeschel, Father Andrew Apostoli, and Monsignors William B. Smith, James O'Connor and Michael Wren.

Ordained a deacon in May 1988, he was assigned to St. Ursula's Church in Mount Vernon, N.Y., to serve a sort of ecclesiastical internship. The young deacon's duties included baptizing babies, visiting the sick, and helping with adult catechesis and marriage preparation. He found that he particularly loved preaching, but soon after delivering a sermon on the Church's teachings against birth control, he learned that



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"some people were getting upset at my preaching."

The pastor received a letter about the young deacon, but it only served to amp up his message:

"I started preaching even more strongly."

Before ordination, it was customary for each seminarian to meet with the seminary rector, then Monsignor Edwin O'Brien, to learn if they had been accepted for the priesthood. But the pastor in Mount Vernon had shown the letter of complaint to the rector, so that became the topic of Father Frank's meeting.

"The monsignor told me the preaching was upsetting some people," he said. "While expressing my willingness to learn from constructive criticism, I also made it clear to the pastor and to the rector that my understanding was that I was being ordained to *preach the Catholic Faith*, and that this was exactly what I intended to do. If the cardinal wanted to ordain me, at least he knew what he was getting."

Cardinal O'Connor was one of the most outspoken advocates for the unborn and the young deacon had heard the cardinal preach many times about pro-life, and had the chance to converse with him at monthly meetings at the cardinal's residence with the other seminarians and on the cardinal's visits to the seminary. On those visits, the cardinal said he was receiving favorable reports about Father Frank.

So while his ordination was assured, there was a foreshadowing of what Father Frank described demurely as some of his "controversial homilies," fueled by the pro-life passion that was born less than a year after that experience with the monstrance in 1975. He attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C., with his mother and grandmother in January 1976.

"That sparked my interest in the pro-life movement," he said. "The call to the priesthood and the call to the pro-life movement were intertwined right from the start."

After that meeting with Monsignor O'Brien, Father Frank went into the seminary chapel, knelt before the tabernacle and said to the Lord, "Now I know you want me to be a priest. Your Church has confirmed, externally, what I have felt internally." Since then, he said, "I've never had a moment's doubt about my priestly vocation in all these 30 years."

At his ordination at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan on Nov. 12, 1988, Father Frank recalled being "filled with peace and joy." His parents, Joseph and Marion Pavone, were chosen to bring the gifts to the altar. Father Benedict Groeschel, a Franciscan just beginning his

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own order, the Community of the Friars of the Renewal, was the priest Father Frank chose to place his priestly vestments on him for the first time during the ceremony.

When Cardinal O'Connor drew the seven newly ordained priests around him on the altar to give the final blessing, he reminded the young men "to be kind to the people. He repeated it three times." That stuck with Father Frank for all these years.

The next day was his first Mass in his home parish in Port Chester, where the 32-minute sermon was heard not only by his family, friends and the parishioners, but also by a number of Protestant clergy whose churches Father Frank began visiting during his seminary years. He would join them for worship after attending Sunday Mass.

"I wanted to see how other Christians were worshipping," he said. It's often said that Father Frank preaches like a Baptist minister and it could be that those skills got a boost one Good Friday evening during seminary when a Baptist pastor offered to let him preach from her pulpit. Naturally, he took her up on the offer. That was the start of a lifetime of interdenominational bridge building as well.

Father Frank had only been to Staten Island, New York City's smallest borough, once before in his life but his mom had a premonition that he would be sent to serve a parish there. She was right. He was assigned to St. Charles, a parish that was located just a few blocks away from where Priests for Life would later have its headquarters for 17 years. "I was happy," he said. "I was ready to go. As Staten Island came into view from the Goethals Bridge on my first drive there as a priest, I raised my hand in blessing, praying for all the families and individuals I'd be privileged to serve in this community."

Being a priest taught Father Frank many insights that he has passed along to younger priests. One such lesson is that the biggest temptation is to *take the sacred for granted*. "We're given the power to perform miracles," Father Frank said. "We can never let that become mundane."

Just less than five years after ordination, and again with the blessing of Cardinal O'Connor, Father Frank took over a fledgling organization known as Priests for Life. His ministry now took on the shape he had foreseen when, during his seminary years, he had on the wall of his room a map of the world with a quote from John Wesley, "All the world is my parish."

*If you would like to send Fr. Frank a congratulatory message for his anniversary, you may go to [PriestsForLife.org/Anniversary](http://PriestsForLife.org/Anniversary) to do so!*

## "End Abortion" Podcast

Priests for Life is adding to its media outreach the "End Abortion Podcast." This regular podcast will provide listeners with compelling arguments against legal abortion, testimonies of those who have had abortions, interviews, pro-life speeches, music, and more.

The podcast is hosted by Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life, but will also include the members of the Priests for Life pastoral team, including Executive Director and Silent No More Awareness Campaign Co-founder Janet Morana; Associate Director Father Denis Wilde, O.S.A; Father Stephen Imbarrato, priest associate; Alveda King, director of Civil Rights for the Unborn; Dr. Theresa and Kevin Burke, co-founders of Rachel's Vineyard; Youth Outreach Director Bryan Kemper, and Marie Smith, founder of the Parliamentary Network for Critical Issues and the wife of pro-life congressional leader Rep. Chris Smith. Interviews with National pro-life leaders and other guests also will be included.

Listeners can tune in to End Abortion on the following platforms (with many more to come): iTunes; IHeart Radio, Google Podcast; Sound Cloud; Sticher; and TuneIn. The website for the podcast is EndAbortionPodcast.US.

"The podcast is the latest complement to our online television channel, EndAbortion.TV, and our recently announced publishing division, Priests for Life Publishing," Father Pavone said. Among many other broadcast opportunities in secular and Christian outlets, Priests for Life also hosts "Defending Life" on EWTN Television and "The Gospel of Life" on Radio Maria.

*Priests for Life offers a word of special thanks to friends at BreadBoxMedia.com for their assistance in launching the new podcast.*

## New Seasons of EWTN Programming by Priests for Life Begin

Priests for Life has announced that all new episodes of **Defending Life** and **The Catholic View for Women** have begun broadcasting in September on EWTN.



Fr. Denis Wilde, OSA participated in Maryland's "Face the Truth" Tour this summer. Here he is pictured with Jack Ames of *Defend Life*

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**Defending Life** returns for its 33rd season of vital programs on ending abortion, with the first two shows focused on the importance of electing pro-life lawmakers. Episodes air at 3:30 a.m. ET on Mondays, and 10:30 p.m. ET on Thursdays.

**Defending Life** is the world's farthest reaching and longest running program on abortion, and started when Mother Angelica asked Fr. Frank Pavone in 1994 to tape a series for EWTN about abortion.

Priests for Life Executive Director and Silent No More Awareness Campaign Co-founder Janet Morana will return as host, with Associate Director Father Denis Wilde, OSA, and Priest Associate Father Stephen Imbarrato alternating co-hosting duties.

Topics to be covered, in addition to political responsibility, will include the 50th anniversary of Blessed Pope Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae*; Priests for Life work at the United Nations and its international outreach; the Silent No More Awareness Campaign and its Healing the Shockwaves of Abortion initiative; late-term abortion, and the impact of abortion on fathers.

"This new season is kicking off at a very important moment for our nation," said Father Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life. "The midterm elections in November will determine whether Congress will move forward in protecting the unborn, or become bogged down with anti-Trump debates. Our first two episodes are must-see TV for all voters."

**The Catholic View for Women** will return for its 10th season with co-hosts Janet Morana; Catholic author and radio host Teresa Tomeo, and EWTN's Elena Rodriguez. Episodes air every Sunday at 11:30pm. Topics to be covered in the 13-episode season include becoming a 24/7 Catholic; ensuring that Catholic women's voices are heard in the upcoming elections; a Catholic perspective on the #MeToo movement, and responding to our violent culture.

"We work hard to make sure our episodes are hard-hitting, full of practical information and relevant to today's Catholic woman," Mrs. Morana said. "We hope our loyal viewers will return and that people new to the show will give us a try."

To learn more, visit [www.TheCatholicViewForWomen.com](http://www.TheCatholicViewForWomen.com) and [www.DefendingLife.TV](http://www.DefendingLife.TV)

[www.ProLifeDonation.org](http://www.ProLifeDonation.org)

**Priests for Life** is not funded by Church entities, but by ordinary people like you! Please help us save lives by donating at our secure site, [www.ProLifeDonation.org](http://www.ProLifeDonation.org), or sending a check made out to "**Priests for Life**" to:







**Priests for Life, PO Box 236695, Cocoa, FL 32923.**

You can also sign up to be a monthly donor, which helps us plan future events more effectively! See the options on our website, or call **321-500-1000** for assistance!

And you can remember us in your will and other forms of planned giving. Find out more about joining our Priests for Life Legacy Family at [www.PriestsForLifeLegacy.com](http://www.PriestsForLifeLegacy.com) or call **(321) 500-1000**. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

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