

POPE BENEDICT XVI ON RESPECT FOR LIFE

"[The Pope] must not proclaim his own ideas, but rather constantly bind himself and the Church to obedience to God's Word, in the face of every attempt to adapt it or water it down, and every form of opportunism. Pope John Paul II did this when, in front of all attempts, apparently benevolent to the human person, and in the face of erroneous interpretations of freedom, he unequivocally stressed the inviolability of the human being and of human life from the moment of conception until natural death. The freedom to kill is not true freedom, but a tyranny that reduces the human being to slavery." -- *from the homily of Pope Benedict XVI at the Mass of Possession of the Chair of the Bishop of Rome, Basilica of St John Lateran, Saturday, 7 May 2005.*

PRAYER INTENTIONS

You are encouraged to remember the following intentions as you pray the Liturgy of the Hours:

JULY INTENTION:

For the advance of pro-life policies at the United Nations and internationally

AUGUST INTENTION:

That God may give eternal rest to the women who have died from abortion.

Oración al Espíritu Santo, El Defensor

Espíritu Santo, Tú fuiste la promesa que nos hizo Nuestro Señor Jesucristo, como el que abogarías por nuestras causas, el que hablarías por nosotros en las alturas del cielo. "y Yo pediré al Padre y os dará otro Paráclito, para que esté con vosotros para siempre..." (Jn. 14:16).

San Pablo nos enseñó que Tú intercedes por nosotros con gemidos inefables (Rom. 8:26).

Te alabamos Señor por el regalo de la salvación, porque sabemos muy bien que nosotros no nos podemos salvar a nosotros mismos. Hemos pecado, y no podemos perdonarnos nosotros mismos. Necesitamos un Defensor.

Te rogamos, Espíritu Santo, que nos hagas cada vez más concientes de aquellos que nos necesitan como sus defensores. Concédenos poder escuchar el gemido de los más pequeños, de los hermanos y hermanas indefensos, los que todavía se encuentran en el vientre de sus Madres, quienes no pueden hablar ni defender ellos mismos, y que ni siquiera pueden orar.

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Priests for Life has produced an audio CD and a brochure which relate Fr. Frank Pavone's account of the final hours of Terri Schiavo's life, which he spent at her bedside. Not only does Fr. Frank tell us what the euthanasia lobby does *not* want us to know, but he also gives important reflections about what we do next, and some guidance on end-of-life decisions. Order this important product at below.

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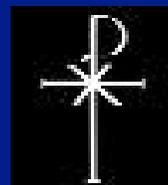
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PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Assisting God's people to respond to the evils of abortion and euthanasia

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Number 4

FR. MARK CLARKE, CMF JOINS PRIESTS FOR LIFE FOR FULL-TIME MINISTRY



Fr. Mark

As Priests for Life welcomes Fr. Mark Clarke CMF, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to him. Fr. Mark is a Claretian Missionary, and has been ordained a priest for just over two years. Throughout his formation, Fr. Mark was very involved with respect life issues through study as well as ministry, and has a burning desire to continue this ministry for life.

Fr. Mark's Masters Thesis focused on the U.S. bishops' treatment of the abortion issue from 1990 through 2000. He focused not only on abortion in the context of family, health care, justice and peace, and respect for life, but also in relation to euthanasia and capital punishment.

"I view respect life ministry as very comprehensive -- to recognize the inherent dignity of the human person and also the dignity of human sexuality," said Fr. Mark. "The focus of our work is not only on abortion, but also on contraception and how that relates to the whole human person."

His ministry work has led him to forming a student respect life club with students from Providence High School in San Antonio, Texas. The club's motto was "Respect Life, Respect Yourself," and the students were taught the positive and life-giving message of abstinence until marriage and the reality and consequences of the culture of death related to abortion. The students communicated this message to their peers through media, skits, art, and involvement with pro-life activities. Fr. Mark also facilitated a parish respect life program in Long Beach, California.

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Fr. Frank Pavone with pro-life Democrats: former Indiana congressman Tim Roemer (left), who recently sought the Chairmanship of the Democratic Party, and Michigan Congressman Bart Stupak (right), at the Democratic Party headquarters in Washington. Fr. Frank was invited by Democrats for Life to speak there at a press conference calling for legislation to reduce the numbers of abortions. It is our hope at Priests for Life that the Democratic Party will change its platform to call for the protection of the unborn.

MORAL GUIDANCE FOR END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS

-- Fr. Frank Pavone

Following are some key concepts to keep in mind as you provide guidance to others about end of life decisions.

Never to kill. The basic principle that we may not kill the innocent is always in force. There is such a thing as a worthless treatment, but there is no such thing as a worthless life. People always have to be given humane care, such as nourishment and comfort care.

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This newsletter is available by email, along with a bi-weekly column written by Fr. Frank. Subscribe free of charge at subscribe@priestsforlife.org

TERRI SCHIAVO AND THE ROLE OF THE PRIEST

-- Fr. Frank Pavone

As you may have seen in media reports, those who killed Terri were quite angry that I said so. The night before she died, I said to the media that her estranged husband Michael, his attorney Mr. Felos, and Judge Greer were murderers. I also pointed out that contrary to Felos' description, Terri's death was not at all peaceful and beautiful. It was, on the contrary, quite horrifying. In my 16 years as a priest, I never saw anything like it before.

After I said these things, Mr. Felos and others in sympathy with him began attacking me in the press and before the cameras. Some news outlets began making a story out of their attacks and said I was "fanning the flames" of enmity and hatred.

Actually, there's a simple reason why they are so angry with me. They had hoped that they could present Terri's death as a merciful and gentle act. My words took the veil of euphemism away, calling this a killing, and giving eyewitness testimony to the fact that it was anything but gentle. Mr. Felos is a euthanasia advocate, and like all such advocates, he needs to manipulate the language, to sell death in an attractive package. Here he and his friends had a great opportunity to do so. But a priest, seeing their work close-up and then telling the world about it, just didn't fit into their plans.

One of the attacks they made was that a "spiritual person" like a priest should be speaking words of compassion and understanding, instead of venom. I had, in fact, reached out publicly with compassion to Michael Schiavo. But compassion demands truth. A priest is also a prophet, and if he cannot cry out against evil, then he cannot bring about reconciliation. If there is going to be any healing between these families or in this nation, it must start with repentance on the part of those who murdered Terri and now try to cover it up with flowery language.

Give us your views through our ONLINE POLL!

On our home page, www.priestsforlife.org, we conduct an ongoing online poll. Each month, a different question is posted, and you are invited to answer that one question with a "Yes" or "No" response. It is very simple to do, and it enables us to get a sense of what our web visitors think on a variety of topics related to the pro-life movement. Please be sure to give us your opinion, and invite the other members of your pro-life group to do the same!

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friends and Pastors!

FR, MARK CLARKE... *Continued from page 1*

Of coming to work with Priests for Life, Fr. Mark "is excited and very blessed to have this opportunity... to be with a very established and visible organization." He is looking forward to learning as much as he can about the pro-life movement as well as being able to preach and teach the message of the Gospel of Life. Fr. Mark has desired to work with Priests for Life because he recognizes his call to full-time respect life ministry.

To his fellow priests, Fr. Mark would like to offer the encouragement in preaching the message of life. "Do not be afraid to communicate the truth and beauty of this teaching," said Fr. Mark. "If in doubt, pray for the wisdom... of the Holy Spirit."

Fr. Mark's complete biography is posted on our web site at www.priestsforlife.org. He will be based in Amarillo, Texas, and is available for speaking engagements (contact travels@priestsforlife.org).

END OF LIFE DECISIONS... *Continued from page 1*

You've got to be there. Questions about whether or not specific medical treatments are or are not morally obligatory can usually be answered only when one has the input of doctors who can give the medical details about the patient's condition, and about the anticipated benefits and burdens of the proposed treatment. To say "I don't want to be on a respirator" means one thing if it would only prolong imminent death for months on end, and quite another if it would only be needed for 48 hours after an accident, and one could be restored to normal health. *Resist the temptation to give an answer on the spot as to what medical treatments should or should not be withheld.*

"I wouldn't want to live like that." There are many people about whom we can all say this -- and not just those who are ill. I wouldn't want to live like the homeless, for example. But that does not give us permission to kill, or even ignore, the homeless, nor does it give them permission to kill themselves.

A straw is "artificial." We all rely on "artificial" things to sustain life and health every day. Many artificial machines and processes went into getting the cans of vegetables into your kitchen. *The relevant moral distinction about what treatments are required is not found in "artificial" vs. "natural,"* but rather in whether the treatment will provide benefit without unreasonable burden.

The danger is not that we will be over-treated, but rather that we will be under-treated. We already have the right to refuse medical treatment. What we run the risk of losing is the right to receive the most basic humane care -- like food and water -- in the event we have a disability. Our culture also promotes the idea that as long as we say we want to die, we have the right to do so. But we have a basic obligation to preserve our own life. A person who leaves clear instructions that they don't want to be fed is breaking the moral law by requesting suicide.

You can't predict the future. The reason you cannot indicate today what medical treatments you do or don't want tomorrow is that you don't know what medical condition you will have tomorrow, nor what treatments will be available to give you the help you need. Living wills try to predict the future, and people can argue over the interpretation of a piece of paper just as much as they argue about what they claim someone said in private.

Will to Live, NOT Living Will. The better solution is to appoint a health care proxy, who is authorized to speak for you if you are in a condition in which you cannot speak for yourself. This should be a person who knows your beliefs and values, and with whom you discuss these matters in detail. In case you cannot speak for yourself, your proxy can ask all the necessary questions of your doctors and clergy, and make an assessment when all the details of your condition and medical needs are actually known. That's much safer than predicting the future. Appointing a health care proxy in a way that safeguards your right to life is easy. In fact, the National Right to Life Committee has designed a "Will to Live," which can be found at www.nrlc.org and which I recommend highly.

Send a message of comfort to Terri Schiavo's family

Priests for Life maintains regular contact with Terri's parents, Bob and Mary Schindler, and her siblings, Bobby and Suzanne. They are strong Christians with a beautiful, gentle spirit. If you wish to relay a personal message to them, you can send it to terri@priestsforlife.org and we will pass it along to them myself. Meanwhile, let us continue to commend Terri to the Lord, mindful of the equal value of every life, no matter how prominent or obscure, healthy or sick.

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