



# Diocese of Colorado Springs

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Statement of Bishop Michael J. Sheridan Concerning Terri Schiavo's Right to Life**

The decision to save or to take the life of Terri Schiavo represents a critical moment in our nations' history, not only because an innocent woman's life is at stake, but also because a decision for death will set a precedent for legalized euthanasia in our country. The legalization of abortion by the United States Supreme Court in 1973 was only the first step down a dark and slippery slope. Today we are witnessing the logical consequences of that dreadful decision against life, namely, the disregard for the lives of those who are vulnerable at other stages of life. Just as in the case of legalized abortion, in which a child is legally entitled to life only if his or her mother *wants* that child, so now persons who have come to birth are entitled to life only if they are judged by others to have a sufficient "quality of life."

In this case Terri Schiavo represents all persons who are vulnerable, especially the mentally and physically handicapped. Medical science has clearly verified that Mrs. Schiavo is not dying. She does, however, rely on others to sustain her life by providing her with those things that every human being needs to survive: food and water. We have been told by Mrs. Schiavo's husband and others that it would be an act of love to kill Terri by starving her to death. It is not an act of love or compassion or anything like that. It is murder pure and simple. Should Terri Schiavo be legally starved to death, another dark chapter in the annals of the culture of death will have been written.

It is my hope and prayer that all those who are advocating the death of Terri Schiavo will be converted in mind and heart and come to realize the gravity of their actions. As with abortion, this is not a religious issue. It is an issue of a human right – the right to life.

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