

VOICES VOICES VOICES



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Spring 1991

The Right to Life vs. 'RIGHT TO DIE'

Court to Hear New Missouri Case: Euthanasia Conflict Intensifies

NANCY CRUZAN died in December after her parents succeeded in their three-year effort to have her feeding-tube legally removed. Almost immediately following Nancy's death, the father of another young

woman patient in the same Missouri hospital as Nancy, also severely brain damaged in a car accident, stepped up his efforts to move his daughter to a hospital in Minnesota where she can meet a similar fate.

Both young women had been described by physicians as "vegetative." Christine Busalacchi, however, has improved dramatically during the past several months, and rehabilitation experts believe her condition will continue to improve — *if* she is allowed to live. The State of Missouri, who has paid for most of the care of both patients, is fighting for her life. The families of both women have argued that only the family should decide the health care of patients unable to make decisions for themselves.

By contrast, in the same Minnesota hospital where Mr. Busalacchi hoped to move Christine, lies Helga Wanglie, a comatose stroke victim whose family has been paying for her care and want the care continued. Minnesota officials want to withdraw Mrs. Wanglie's food and water. Unlike the Cruzan and Busalacchi cases, however, the "family's right to determine the fate of a disabled person" is not the argument of those who want to terminate nutrition and hydration for Mrs. Wanglie. Instead they cite "allocation of resources" as the reason for discontinuing her care, and argue that Mrs. Wanglie's condition does not warrant further treatment — even if her family wants it (as they

"Life and Death" Forum

"When Pope John Paul II told anesthesiologists that 'life, health, and all temporal activity are subordinated to a spiritual end,' he meant something beyond the immediate moment," said St. Louis University's moral theologian Joseph Murphy, S.J. Father Murphy was addressing a forum, "*A Matter of Life and Death: The Christian Response to the Plight of the Permanently Disabled*" in St. Louis March 20.

The spiritual good of life is "God's will for me right now," Father Murphy told the audience, and this good does not depend on so-called "quality-of-life"

The forum, sponsored by WFF, examined problems of suffering and the responsibility of family members and caregivers in the treatment and care of people who are severely disabled, chronically or terminally ill, and impaired elderly in the light of Catholic teaching about the innate dignity of all human life.

Other panelists were Ceil Callahan, lobbyist for Missouri Right to Life, and Nancy Valko, of Missouri Nurses for Life.

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inside voices...

...Let us run with patience the race that is set before us ... Looking unto Jesus...who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame... Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, when you are wearied and faint in your minds.

—Hebrews 12:1,3

We know that being willing to suffer for the faith is something Christians are supposed to be prepared for. We also know that the cross we may be called to endure is not limited to physical pain. A particularly intense form of suffering comes about when the persecutors are not 'infidels' but other Catholics — when we suffer not at the hands of an alien enemy, but 'from our own.'

Persecution of this kind seeks to destroy the spirit, to wound what is most truly and originally human in each person. Nazi torturers tormented their victims, frequently fellow Germans, in this demented way, crushing hearts and crippling minds, not just bodies. Those who survived could not eradicate this damage. Even if invisible, the defilement remains just as deeply inked into the consciousness as if it had been created with hot needles. The stains are indelible, and even when they no longer burn as intensely as when they were inflicted, the injury persists.

It seems to me we have lost, over the many centuries, the sense of the true shame of the Cross.

We have done very well at proclaiming the glory of the Cross (which is real and true), but perhaps in so doing we have lost the first half of the metaphor: the absolute degradation, the humiliation, the debasement and dehumanization of the Man Who Suffered for us, Who is Priest for us, Who is Victim of Victims, self-offered for us.

Where is the humiliation of a cross like those gloriously wrought processional crosses of the Renaissance? Can you imagine anyone wearing a bejeweled gallows or a little golden gas cannister around the neck? A processional noose? Can we imagine suspended over the altars of our churches images of an electric chair containing the slumped body of Christ, still strapped down, the electrodes forming his 'royal crown'? We set the Passion of Christ to music, for heaven's sake!

Our idea of His cross of anguish is mostly limited to the acute phase of His physical suffering — the scourged flesh, the bloody sweat, the physical agony of his final few hours. It is fitting that we glorify the Cross as a sign of Christ's resurrection and triumph, of course. And as a symbol of the physical agony Jesus endured on our behalf.

But His suffering was not limited to its physical

aspect. We must not lose sight of the depth of His sense of abandonment, utter debasement. He endured, also for us, ugliness and degradation, the profound humiliation of His betrayal and persecution and the shame of the circumstances of His death.

We may be too estranged by time and by our understanding of the ultimate meaning of the Cross to comprehend His own experience of it, and as it was understood by His contemporaries. It was 'His own,' after all, not the alien Roman authorities, who jeered and spat and ridiculed Him and demanded His death.

Although all Christians are called to "run with patience the race that is set before us," a few men in our time may be especially called to this singular *imitatio Christi*. It should not be surprising if such a one might pray, "Let this cup pass from me," as Jesus did. But those who do not refuse this bitter cup become *like Him* — Victim, as He was, conforming their wills to God's, as He did — for the sake of others.

Those men, priests and bishops, whom God has called willingly to endure our contemporary version of 'shame and spitting,' who must withstand taunts and ridicule and isolation, who suffer the acute interior agony of humiliation, are thereby bound close to Him on the Cross of His Priesthood. In a special way He confers on these men His Mission, His Holy Orders to act 'in His person,' to feed and to teach, to bind and to loose in His very Name.

Those whose wills, whose faith cannot bear such burdens are 'sent back to their tents' like all but a few of Gideon's army. Those precious few who remain, who drink as God wills, never laying down the weapons He has given them to use in His defense and for the protection of His "little ones," are the ones He has chosen to deliver us from the modern Midianites.

We, for whom they sacrifice so much, must sustain them with our prayers.

Vol. VI, No. 2 — Spring 1991

VOICES is published by Women for Faith & Family, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132, ph. (314) 863-8385 and distributed to signers of the Affirmation for Catholic Women to provide information on events and issues of concern to Catholics.

Women for Faith & Family, established in 1984, helps provide Catholic women with a means of expressing unity with the teachings of the Catholic Church and deepening their understanding of Catholic teachings.

Women for Faith & Family is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Missouri. Tax-exempt donations, inquiries and changes of address may be mailed to Women for Faith & Family, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132. Editorial mail should be addressed to VOICES c/o WFF, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132.

A Special Appeal...

*God shall supply all your needs
according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
—Philippians 4:19*

LAST spring, readers of VOICES responded generously to WFF's request for a special yearly donation. We thought you'd like to see how we spent your money, so following is a short summary of the past year's efforts on your behalf:

On June 1, 1990, WFF sent a statement to bishops and a press release to selected media responding to the second draft version of the 'women's pastoral.'

On September 1, we published a COMMENTARY ON THE DRAFT PASTORAL — a 35-page booklet on the history of the pastoral, statistics, observations, critiques and recommendations based on what we've heard from you. This COMMENTARY was sent to every bishop in the United States, and to the Vatican. Within the week WFF was mentioned in a front page *New York Times* article about the unexpected postponement of the pastoral. *The International Herald-Tribune* reprinted the *Times* article the following day. The COMMENTARY is now in its second printing. [See Order Form, page 7.]

WFF's sixth annual conference was held in October, again sharing conference space, outstanding speakers and Masses with the *Consortium Perfectae Caritatis*. Plans are well underway for the 1991 conference October 11-13. Although not everyone can come to our conferences, tapes of the talks are a major resource for individuals and study groups. [See Order Form.]

During the 1990 conference a meeting with those interested in forming WFF affiliate groups was held. Two affiliate groups have formed (Cleveland and Toledo), and others are in the beginning stages. Helen Hitchcock addressed groups in Cleveland, Steubenville and Omaha in October and November. Helen also addressed two parish groups in St. Louis; and Laurie Gill and Sherry Tyree had a WFF table at the St. Louis pro-life convention.

WFF was represented at several major meetings during the fall, including the November '90 meeting of the National Council of Catholic Bishops, the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Convention, and the NCCB-USCC 'Women's Symposium' (Helen Hitchcock was a delegate from the Archdiocese of St. Louis.)

In December, we produced an expanded version of our CELEBRATING ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS sourcebook for families, which many of you have ordered. Also in December, as part of our outreach to the community, we held for the second year an Immaculate Conception Mass and Family Festival in St. Louis. At that time the 1990 Faith & Family Award was conferred on Edouard, Cardinal Gagnon, retired Pro-Prefect of the Pontifical Council on

...Continued next page

Women For Faith & Family and Consortium Perfectae Caritatis Present...

"The Church's Missionary Mandate"

October 11-13, 1991— St. Louis - Clarion Hotel

Make plans now to attend!

Information? WFF Office (314) 863-8385, (314) 727-5772

the Family.

On February 2, to help neutralize publicity given to dissenters from Church teachings, WFF sent regional lists of names of women who had signed the *Affirmation for Catholic Women* to all U.S. bishops who head dioceses. Some of the many encouraging letters we received from bishops were published in the Fall/Winter 1991 of VOICES. Like the COMMENTARY, this issue of VOICES was sent to every bishop in the United States.

Many of you saw Helen Hitchcock on *Mother Angelica—Live* in mid-February. (This generated a lot of mail—and many new *Affirmation* signers!) Sherry Tyree, the same week, represented WFF in Washington, D.C. at a meeting of *Women Affirming Life*.

Early this year, WFF responded, with other national, state and local groups, to another emergency “right to die” case in Missouri. Because we are in St. Louis, we were able to assist as a conduit of vital information. (See related stories in this issue.) WFF’s local Lenten program, “*A Matter of Life and Death: The Christian Response to the Plight of the Permanently Disabled*,” drew an outstanding panel of experts. A tape of this excellent presentation, and of anti-euthanasia activist Rita Marker’s address to the 1989 WFF Conference, are available from the Daughters of Saint Paul. [See Order Form.]

And of course we have continued quarterly publication of VOICES, now in its sixth year. Our mailing list has now expanded to 5,000 copies each edition.

Other new publications include four leaflets: *Changing the Way We Talk About Abortion*, *Changing the Way We Talk About Euthanasia*, *How Can I Plan a WFF Event For My Community*, *I’ve Signed the Affirmation—What More Can I Do?* The *Novena for the Unborn* continues to be used by pro-life groups, both small and large. These materials respond to some of the most frequently asked questions and needs of those who write to us. (The leaflets are available on request from the WFF office.)

The WFF staff has continued to handle a voluminous amount of correspondence, answering hundreds of letters (and nearly as many phone calls!) from those of you in need of information and assistance on a wide variety of matters.

SPRING has arrived, and this “no-frills” operation needs your help once again. (No-frills indeed! The staff operates out of our homes and two home “offices” — an extra bedroom is the WFF mailroom and a not-so-extra basement contains extensive files, the WFF phone, a copier and the computer which generates VOICES, printed materials and many, many letters. Weekly planning sessions are held at a dining-room table.)

We are entirely dependent on your help to plump up the WFF bank account in order to fulfill our commitment to you and to the Church.

Specifically, we need—

- to pay for printing and mailing of forthcoming issues of VOICES (and meet the *postage rate increases!*)
- to continue to improve our *communication* with and for you (telephone bills, postage and stationery supplies, copying, printing, &c.— *and funds to purchase a FAX machine.*)
- to buy additional *computer equipment* for increased record-keeping and publishing needs.
- to pay for some desperately needed *office help*.
- to continue work on *new projects*, i.e., the Catholic Culture Project’s Family Sourcebook series.
- to meet *conference* expenses.
- to meet *travel* expenses when we represent you at important meetings.

We are deeply grateful to so many of you for your all the encouragement and support you have given us in the past. Frankly, sometimes we are almost overwhelmed by the need to respond to so many urgent matters. *We need your prayers!* We know some really cannot afford to send us money. (Small donations are always welcome, however! A dollar still buys 3.1 postage stamps!

But some of you can help support us financially as well as spiritually. Some of you have said you’d give to WFF on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Will you now consider responding to WFF’s annual spring appeal? (Donations are tax-deductible.)

Thank you, and God bless you!

Letters...

From Susan Taormina, New Jersey

I am a new convert to Catholicism. ... As a convert, I don't feel very comfortable talking about my orthodox views with priests or laymen, and my contacts are inevitably few... [with] women my age (38) they are especially rare.

I am happy to have the opportunity to add my name... Coming from the emptiness of the 'philosophy' espoused by so many of my peers, I am especially saddened to see that the very elements which attracted me irresistibly to the Church are being discarded by so many within the Church...

From Mother M. Therese, P.C.C.

Abbess, Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Mercy, Belleville, Ill.

We are united with you in asking the blessing and guidance of the Holy Spirit on all your conference activities, and that He may continue to make fruitful all your wonderful efforts on behalf of the Church.

All of your intentions and those of all who labor so diligently for Women for Faith and Family are gratefully included in our prayers and sacrifices, by day and by midnight. ... We are [hoping to finish] our upstairs quarters (left undone due to lack of funds) with the earnest prayer, praise and penance on behalf of His own.

From Margaret Radoush, M.M., St. Paul, Minnesota.

I am sending Bishop Myers a message of encouragement, also to you. It is as follows: St. Teresa of Avila's Bookmark:

"Let nothing disturb thee, let nothing frighten thee. All things are passing. God never changes. Patient endurance attains all things. Whom God possesses, in nothing is wanting; God alone suffices."

It is well known that St. Teresa of Avila was seriously calumniated in her lifetime through much misunderstanding. Her own cousin, who was a Carmelite nun, turned her away from a visit, just a month before St. Teresa died. Have courage. You are a chosen group to do God's work. Every new day is like a fresh morning dew, to work for Him though His holy Mother Mary.

From Dallas, Texas

I believe strongly in your work and thank you for your most recent response to the bishops' pastoral on women.

I am a convert, with three children, ages 5, 3, and 1, and while from all outward appearances our parish school is "pretty good," I am alarmed at times by the lack of orthodox belief in other Catholic mothers I know, wondering if the lack of commitment to and understanding of orthodox Church teaching among parents of the parochial school children could mean defective religious education there by virtue of default, ignorance or both.

From Nancy Haizlip, Georgia

WFF Is the answer to prayer. I'll be glad to help spread your wonderful message in the mountains of Georgia and North Carolina. As a DRE of Elementary Ed. in our small parish it's a constant struggle. We are constantly being bombarded with Humanism, New Age, Matthew Fox, etc. ... With God's Grace and lots of prayer the Church will survive even this. We must all stand
you
for all you are doing for the Church and for all women.

To be Continued Next Issue...

A Note to Our Readers—

In the last issue of VOICES we printed excerpts from some of the letters we received from bishops in response to their receiving lists of names of women in their dioceses who have signed the Affirmation for Catholic Women.

We know that you were as encouraged as we were to read these letters, because many of you have written to tell us so.

(You will be happy, too, to know that several bishops also sent donations, for which we are very grateful.)

We had planned to print more letters in this issue of VOICES (we received so many!) but we simply ran out of space. Many of your letters were accompanied by gifts and offers of prayer for WFF's work.

We think you will enjoy reading a few letters, anyway, and we hope to print more next time..

Thank you for all your prayers and gifts. We know that many of you have made sacrifices in order that we can continue our work.

PRINTED MATERIALS ORDER FORM

#		Total
	Commentary on Draft Pastoral "One in Christ Jesus" (@ \$5.00 postpaid)	
	Family Sourcebook on Advent and Christmas (@ \$5.00 postpaid)	
	"I've Signed the <i>Affirmation</i> , What more can I do?"*	
	Novena for the Unborn*	
	Changing the Way We Talk About Euthanasia*	
	Changing the Way We Talk About Abortion*	
	How to plan a WFF event for my community*	

* 10 copies, \$1.50. Single copy free with self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Please send me the above materials. I am enclosing check or money order payable to
Women for Faith & Family - PO Box 8326 - St. Louis MO 63132

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AUDIOTAPE ORDER FORM

tapes

- 190 BEVILACQUA, The Most Rev. Anthony J - Keynote Address, "Faith, Family and the Future"
- 290 HITCHCOCK, Helen Hull - "Family: The Cradle of Faith"
- 390 GRIER, Dolores Bernadette - "The Joy of Being a Catholic Woman Today"
- 490 SMITH, Janet - "Feminism, Motherhood and the Catholic Church"
- 590 DEMARCO, Donald - "Feminist Ideology and Virism" (two tapes)
- 690 WILEY, Juli Loesch - "On the Fatherhood of God"
- 790 RUTLER, The Rev. George W.—Banquet address, "The Strength of Women"
- 1090 WFF PANEL- "How to Build the Domestic Church"
- 990 KELLY, The Very Rev. Msgr. George A., "In Defense of Fatherhood, Motherhood and 'Children-hood'"
- 1190 HOMILIES FROM MASSES Abp. Bevilacqua, Bp. Ziemann, Bp. O'Brien

 MARKER, Rita — "Women as Care Givers - Women as Care Receivers" (from 1989 WFF Conference)
 "A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH: THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE PERMANENTLY DISABLED."
 Panel: Fr. Joseph Murphy, Ceil Callahan, Nancy Valko.

 Total number of tapes @ \$3.50 (incl. \$2.00 postage & mailing for first 5 tapes and .25 for each additional tape. Orders shipped UPS)

\$ Amount enclosed

Note: Save 15% on order of entire set of Conference tapes. Set of 11 - \$35.00 (+ 4.00 post & handling)

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Women for Faith & Family offers...

A Prayer for Fathers

Most gracious Heavenly Father,

We thank Thee for our earthly fathers, those to whom Thou hast entrusted the responsibility to provide loving protection of their families and guidance of their children. We thank Thee, also, for our priests and bishops, whose spiritual fatherhood is so vital to the faith of Thy people.

May our earthly fathers imitate the manly courage of Abraham, Jesse and Joseph, and all the holy fathers of the past in providing wise counsel to the children Thou hast given to their care. And may our spiritual fathers be guided by the examples of Sts. Peter and Paul, all the Apostles and their saintly successors. Give them valiant faith in the face of confusion and conflict, hope in time of trouble and sorrow, and steadfast love for Thee, for their families, and for all Thy people throughout the world.

Assist all fathers of families, all spiritual fathers, and all Christian men, that through Thy Grace they may steadily grow in holiness and in knowledge and understanding of Thy Truth. May they generously impart this knowledge to those who rely on them.

As Thou, our Heavenly Father, didst so love the world, sending Thine only Son to be our Savior and Redeemer, we ask Thee to help all men to imitate His fatherly gentleness and mercy toward those who are weak; His humility, perfect obedience to Thy Will, and fearless witness to Thy Truth. May their lives be examples to all of heroic faithfulness to Thee.

We ask Thy blessing on all those to whom Thou hast entrusted fatherhood. May Thy Holy Spirit constantly inspire them with justice and mercy, wisdom and strength, fidelity and self-giving love. May they receive Thy Grace abundantly in this earthly life, and may they look forward to eternal joy in Thy presence in the life to come.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Thy Son and Our Lord, *Amen.*

Anti-Euthanasia Task Force

Rita Marker, co-director of the *International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force*, is among those at the forefront of mobilizing for the defense of life against "right to die" forces. The Task Force provides information on the subject of euthanasia to the public, appears on television and in other forms of public debate, and assists in co-ordinating resistance to the growing pro-euthanasia movement. Mrs. Marker addressed the 1989 WFF Conference on "*Women as Caregivers: Women as Care Receivers.*" Tapes of her

address are still available. [See Order Form.]

Address: IAETF, Human Life Center, University of Steubenville, Steubenville, Ohio 43952 (Ph. 614-282-3810)

Life & Death - Continued from page 1

The panelists addressed the issues involved in "right-to-die" and what the Christian faith requires of the family of a permanently disabled person. Father Murphy focused his remarks on the essential *good* of human life. Nancy Valko spoke on the rights and responsibilities of family or medical personnel in caring for the severely impaired. Ceil Callahan gave an update on legislation. The forum was audio-taped. [See Order Form.]