

## AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS

BEFORE ME this day personally appeared BISHOP ROBERT N. LYNCH of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, who, upon being duly cautioned and sworn, deposes and states:

1. My name is Robert N. Lynch, and I am the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.
2. I received my bachelor of arts degree from the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio in May, 1963 and my master of divinity degree from Pope John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Massachusetts in May, 1978. The same month, I was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Miami.
3. I served as the General Secretary of the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). My most recent assignment before coming to St. Petersburg was in Fort Lauderdale as the pastor of St. Mark Catholic Church. Previous assignments include associate pastor of St. James in North Miami and rector and president of St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami.
4. On January 26, 1996, I was ordained a bishop and installed as the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.
5. I was appointed the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Palm Beach, while remaining the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, on June 2, 1998. I remained administrator until January 14, 1999.
6. The Diocese of St. Petersburg is comprised of five counties and serves 398,700 Catholics in 73 parishes with nearly 200 priests.
7. As the Bishop for the Diocese of St. Petersburg, I am the spiritual leader of over 398,700 Catholics in central Florida.
8. It is a part of my responsibility to explain the moral teachings of the Church on end-of-life issues so that those who are faced with such decisions can act on morally sound principles.

9. Church teaching is clear that there should be a presumption in favor of providing medically assisted nutrition and hydration to all patients as long as it is of sufficient benefit to outweigh the burdens involved to the patient.

10. It is the teaching of the Catholic Church that nourishment or hydration may be withheld or withdrawn where that treatment itself is causing harm to the patient or is useless because the patient's death is imminent. There are times when one may refuse treatment that will result in a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life. Properly, this may be seen as an expression of our hope in the life to come.


11. If Terri Schiavo's feeding tube were to be removed because the nutrition she receives is of no use to her, or because she is near death, or because it is unreasonably burdensome for her, her family, or caregivers, it could be seen as permissible. But if her feeding tube were to be removed to intentionally cause her death, or because her life is perceived to be useless, or because it is believed that the quality of her life is such that she would be better off, this would be wrong.

12. Without question, the removal of Terri Schiavo's feeding tube will result in her death. If additional medical treatment can be shown to be helpful to her condition, I urge that all parties involved take the safer course and allow it to be used.

13. Just as I am concerned for Terri Schiavo, I am also concerned for others who are weak and vulnerable. There is an inherent danger in assuming that food and water can simply be withheld without clearly knowing a patient's wishes. There is reason to be circumspect and ever careful in these cases.

14. I reject outright the euthanasia movement and its utilitarian standard that some lives are not worth living. Every life is precious and unrepeatable.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

  
Bishop Robert N. Lynch

Sworn to and subscribed before me by Robert N. Lynch, who is personally known to me, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2003.

  
Notary Public

