

Priests for Life is a recognized Catholic association and a 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to end abortion and euthanasia. With a full-time staff of over 60 people, it is a family of ministries, encompassing Deacons for Life, Seminarians for Life, Rachel's Vineyard, the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, Gospel of Life Ministries, and more.

Ecclesiastical Authority

*His Eminence Cardinal Timothy Dolan
Archbishop of New York*

Our Pastoral Team (Partial list)

*Fr. Frank A. Pavone
National Director and Chairman*

*Fr. Denis G. Wilde, OSA
Associate Director*

*Fr. Walter Quinn, OSA
Priest Associate*

*Msgr. Michael T. Mannion
Pastoral Consultant*

*Fr. Scott Daniels, OP
Pastoral Consultant*

*Janet A. Morana
Executive Director
Co-Founder, Silent No More Awareness
Campaign*

*Dr. Alveda King
Director, African-American Outreach*

*Dr. Theresa and Kevin Burke
Founders, Rachel's Vineyard Ministries*

*Mr. Bryan Kemper
Director, Youth Outreach*

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*His Eminence Renato Cardinal Martino
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Justice and Peace*

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Bishop of Colorado Springs*

*Most Reverend Roger Foy
Bishop of Covington*

*Most Reverend Clarence Silva
Bishop of Honolulu*

(See additional bishops online)

Medical Consultants

*Anthony Levatino, M.D.
William R. Lile, Jr., M.D.
Daniel Lee Holland, M.D.
Byron Calhoun, M.D.
Matthew P. Harrison, M.D.*

Media Consultants

*Drew Mariani
Teresa Tomeo*

General Correspondence:

*P.O. Box 141172
Staten Island, NY 10314
Phone: (718) 980-4400
Fax: (718) 980-6515
mail@priestsforlife.org
www.PriestsForLife.org
www.RachelsVineyard.org
www.SilentNoMoreAwareness.org*

Orders Department

*(888) 735-3448, ext. 237
www.priestsforlife.org/store*

Media Department

*For interviews: 347-286-7277
media@priestsforlife.org*

Financial Support

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Assisting God's People to Proclaim, Celebrate, and Serve the Gospel of Life.

March 12, 2015

His Eminence Beniamino Cardinal Stella
Prefect, Sacred Congregation for the Clergy
Vatican City State

Your Eminence,

Given that there are several distinct concerns that the leadership of Priests for Life would like to raise in reference to your letter of 6 February 2015 (Prot. NO. 20150367), we are sending them to you in separate letters, of which this is the second.

We would like to inquire about who else received this letter, and whether it was sent with instructions of confidentiality. This concern arises from the fact that more than once, we have been surprised when matters which we thought were confidential between us, the Congregation, and members of the United States hierarchy have, to our surprise and dismay, come to the attention of our colleagues in the pro-life movement, bishops and priests across the United States, and the Catholic and secular media.

This happened most recently with the letter that Cardinal Dolan wrote, "cutting ties" with our ministry. We are still trying to discern what aspect of the good of the Church and her mission is served by the release of that letter, and despite wide consultation, have come up with nothing. We also wonder how a past President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops would not be aware of the fact that posting something on the "private website" of the US Bishops is no guarantee that it will remain private.

Therefore, we are concerned about the current letter that you have sent to us. Should this become public, those who do not have the benefit of knowing the context of the interaction we have had with the Congregation, and who do not have an understanding of the canonical or technical issues involved, will grossly misinterpret it. Moreover, those who are not well-disposed toward our ministry -- including some in the hierarchy -- will have yet another tool to use against us.

Let me give a specific example, namely, the wording in your letter which states that Priests for Life "should not present itself as a recognized Catholic

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"The Spirit God has given us is no cowardly spirit." (2 Tim. 1:7)

association." We understand what that means, will certainly abide by it, and we appreciate the explicit way in which Your Eminence has affirmed the value of our apostolate and the fact that nothing prevents us from continuing that life-saving work while we seek recognition in the proper way.

But the words, "should not present itself as a recognized Catholic association," taken out of context (which they certainly will be should the confidentiality of this letter not be respected) can be construed to mean any or all of the following:

- Priests for Life is no longer Catholic
- Priests for Life is being punished for wrongdoing
- Priests for Life has been rejected by the Church and should not be supported
- Catholics in good standing cannot associate with Priests for Life.

Your Eminence, given the history of how our ministry has been treated by some in this country, this concern of ours is well-founded. We do not expect the Congregation to prevent every misinterpretation that people can give to the very valid things that you say to us. We are, however, asking that any parties to whom this letter has been transmitted be reminded of the necessity of confidentiality, so that, as the Congregation has consistently expressed as its intention throughout this process, the good name of our ministry may be preserved.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Frank Pavone". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Frank Pavone
National Director