

FATHER TED

REMEMBERED



Have you ever imagined your own death as you thought of what you might see when you closed your eyes to this world and entered the journey to the Eternal? What do you think you would see and what would it feel like? Who would greet you along the way and escort you to the magnificent Light that is God's Home?

We Christians need to have an eye for the eternal, the infinite and the beyond even though we can scarcely imagine them, for while they may seem so very much beyond our scope they are nonetheless real and Jesus has told us so.

Father Ted Colleton was a champion for life and was best known as a priest who devoted much of his later years in exposing the murder that is abortion. He wrote articles and books on the subject in the defense of human life and gained some media attention when he once chained closed the gates at the illegal abortion clinic of Henry Morgentaler in Toronto, an act for which he was arrested.

I imagine the passage from death to God for Spiritan priest Father Ted Colleton, who died last Friday at the age of 97, as being filled with light and joy and babies!!! The souls of those who cry out against their murder in this age, though no one hears them save through the voices of people like Fr. Ted and others, become the escort of Fr. Ted to the judgement seat of heaven where he will be told by Christ, "I was being murdered and you spoke out strongly on my behalf!"

Fr. Ted was born in Ireland and became a priest with the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1940. He was sent to work in Africa in 1941 and spent over 30 years there in missionary work. Following the times he spent in the mission fields, he came to Canada. As the idea of abortion became more and more open and, though at the time abortion was illegal in Canada, there were still illegal abortion clinics such as the one owned and operated by Henry Morgentaler on Harbord Street in Toronto. Fr. Ted could not understand how people could possibly think it was okay to take the life of an innocent child and he began to speak out about it. He attended peaceful prayer vigils at the Harbord Street abortuary and reflected much on what Blessed John Paul II would later call our "culture of death" referring to abortion as the "shame of our age".

In Canada he had faced a country brought to its knees by abortion and the contraceptive mentality. He had been a tireless supporter of family values and human life by writing, teaching, preaching, fasting, vigils and even time spent in prison for his stance on behalf of the unborn.

In an interview in 2008, Fr. Ted was asked the following questions (among many) by a reporter.

Reporter: What do you see as having been the biggest problem in the 30-plus years you spent battling abortion here in Canada?

Fr. Ted: *"It's difficult to say ... I think perhaps the Church*

was at some kind of loss to impress on people what a terrible thing the murder of thousands and thousands of babies is and I think it's a pity that it couldn't have done more. I think, perhaps, we didn't realize ourselves - we Catholics, who perhaps should have realized more than anybody else, because it is the teaching of the Church on the matter - but I'm not sure that we did as much as we really could have and we began to take abortion for granted. We knew that there were abortuaries around the country where babies were being murdered - and murdered is the word - and I think we began to get too used to that and to consider the people who stood outside the abortuaries and who took a stand against abortion as being peculiar people who should have minded their own business. So, I think while some people did a great deal, there were thousands and thousands who really didn't do what they should have done to stop this terrible crime in our country."

Some years ago, shortly after Fr. Ted had been arrested for putting a padlock on the gate leading to the Morgentaler Abortuary and his arrest and subsequent 6 weeks spent in jail, Fr. Ted appeared on a television interview.

The host asked Fr. Ted about the incident where he was charged for "mischief" and Fr. Ted responded, "I haven't been charged for mischief since my own mother who has been dead for over fifty years now."

The interviewer asked him, "Father, breaking the law, and in fact no matter how much of a misdemeanor it was, you were breaking the law, and you're charging Henry Morgentaler, Dr. Morgentaler, with breaking the law; you're doing the same thing; you're fighting fire with fire."

"Oh" said Fr. Ted, "fire with fire? Putting a padlock on a gate: I can't say it's the same thing as murdering babies."

"But it's the law", said the interviewer, "no matter the severity of it, it is still breaking the law; you were breaking the law, of course abortion is far more serious, but you're a man of God, a man of peace, and you're breaking the law."

Fr. Ted responded by saying,

"Am I allowed to ask you a question?"

"Sure", the interviewer said.

"If you were passing a swimming pool and there was a notice over it with a sign saying 'No Trespassing' and you saw somebody with a baby by the feet drowning it, would you say, 'Oh gee, I'd like to go in and save that baby, but I can't because it's trespassing?'"

The interviewer answered, "Point well taken."

That was Fr. Ted Colleton. I had the opportunity myself on several occasions to speak with him and see him in action with young people as he spoke to them about the sanctity of human life and how abortion was in every way evil. He would always win you them over with card tricks and puzzles and his wonderful sense of Irish humour and then would speak to them seriously and from the heart about the scourge that abortion was and is upon the earth.

Yet I think that it is sad that one like Fr. Ted should be uniquely remembered for his strong stance on human life when it should be the role of every person, every Christian, and certainly every Catholic to believe in and protect the sanctity of human life that comes from God and is no one's to take except God. Lapel roses for Life, as meaningful as they might be intended will do little to stop the killing of

innocent human life in an age that has grown both blind and deaf to the reality, the horror and the murder of human beings. Jesus, the Resurrection and the life has never been, could not be and will never be anti-life and for abortion. All those who believe in Him must live as He lived and taught and mandated His followers to be. Life, is not negotiable or subject to ones own opinion.

I don't know what it will take for every Christian and every Catholic to believe in what God has given through the gift of life itself and for people to realize just what abortion is to innocent lives, women and men. From a culture of death and mediocrity, God save us! God bless you, Fr. Ted!

(Fr. Charles)

IN THE PARISH THIS WEEK:

- Today is MOTHER'S DAY
- This Sunday at the 2:00 p.m. Mass is First Communion for St. Bridget and public school candidates.
- Roses for Life – Mother's Day. The Knights of Columbus will distribute stick on Roses for Life before and after Masses on May 7th and 8th, in support of Rose of Durham and young Mothers who they support. Your donation will be appreciated.
- Next Sunday the Social Committee will hold a Parish Breakfast after the 9 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Masses.

MASS INTENTIONS

Tuesday, May 10 – 8:30 a.m. -

Wednesday, May 11 – 9:00 a.m. – St. Bridget School Mass
7:00 p.m. –

Thursday, May 12 – 8:30 a.m. -

Friday, May 13 – 8:30 a.m. -

Saturday, May 14–5:00 p.m. - Efren Bautista+
Lilia Ortega+

Sunday, May 15 - 9:00 a.m. – Harold Livingston+
- 11:00 a.m. – Luigi Giardullo+

The Book of Jonah: A Bible Study

St. Leo's Parish will be hosting a bible Study May 28th to July 2nd. Classes will be Saturday at 9 a.m. and the cost is \$30. For more information, please contact patrick.sullivan@utoronto.ca

March For Life Bus Trip – May 12, 2011

Dan Pigeau is a teacher at Msgr. Paul Dwyer and is organizing a bus trip to Ottawa for March For Life. Please see the parish bulletin board for detailed information.

SHARELIFE...

WORKING WONDERS FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS...

12 years ago, Michael walked into the Good Shepherd Centre, a ShareLife recipient – homeless, penniless, friendless. He was only 25 but had already wrecked a promising life with hard drinking and drug use. Availing of the Centre's Drug and Alcohol Recovery Enrichment program, Michael finally managed to turn his life around and start afresh – those who knew him then and now are just astounded at the change. ShareLife funded agencies assisted over 20,000 people with special needs last year, affirming their value to our society.

3rd ShareLife Collection – June 5, 2011

Please give generously. You can work WONDERS!

The Social Committee are having a Pancake Breakfast on Sunday May 15th after the 9 & 11 am Masses.



Mother/Daughter Fashion Show

On May 13 at 7:00 p.m. in St. Leo's parish hall.

Day of Reflection for Women

Saturday, May 28 in St. Leo's parish hall.

Tickets are available after all the masses or by calling (905) 620-0724 or (905) 620-1413. Please see posters on the bulletin board for details.

ALL ARE WELCOME: The Office of Formation for Discipleship of the Archdiocese of Toronto will offer the series *Basic Teachings of the Church* from May 5th to June 9th. The sessions will be presented at St. John the Evangelist Parish, 903 Gifford Street, Whitby from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. This series is designed to help Catholics better understand the important aspects of our faith such as the Trinity, the Church, Sacraments and Liturgy, Social Teaching of the Church and Prayer. It will help us to understand our faith more fully and live it more eagerly. Each session can stand alone, so people are welcome for one session or for all, as their time allows.

Free Online Math Tutoring!

Grade 7 to 10 students in our Durham Catholic schools can receive free, online Math tutoring from Ontario-certified teachers! Tutoring is available Sunday to Thursday from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. at www.homeworkhelp.ilc.org Registered students were provided with Usernames and Passwords by their teachers. Parents may also go to the site register as Guests and then observe tutoring sessions or use the many resources. For more info. email the board's eLearning Contact, Michele Faux, at HomeworkHelp@dcdsb.ca