



# ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG IN FLORIDA

- [Bishop](#)
- [Administration](#)
- [About the Diocese](#)
- [Parishes and Missions](#)
- [Schools and Centers](#)
- [Protection of Children](#)
- [Mass Schedules](#)
- [Sacraments and Worship](#)
- [Vocations](#)
- [Clergy and Religious Life](#)
- [Pastoral Center Services](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Spiritual Growth](#)
- [Christian Formation](#)
- [Marriage & Family Life](#)
- [Life Issues](#)
- [Youth Programs](#)
- [Young Adults](#)
- [Older Adults](#)
- [Opportunities for Giving](#)
- [News, Events and Bulletins](#)
- [Catholic Charities](#)
- [Apostolates and Programs](#)
- [Web Directory](#)

## Statement of Bishop Robert N. Lynch

The bishops of Florida have once again addressed the issue of the withdrawal of the artificial feeding tube from Terri Schiavo. As in the past, I join them in addressing this complex and tragic situation. As the local bishop and pastor for all the family parties involved, I would like to add the following. At the end of the day (the judicial, legislative days) the decision to remove Terri's artificial feeding tube will be that of her husband, Michael. It is he who will give the order, not the courts or certainly the governor or legislature or the medical personnel surrounding and caring for Terri. In other words, as I have said from the beginning of this sad situation, the decision will be made within a family. A significant part of that family feels they are outside of the decision-making process and they are in great pain and suffering mightily.

I urge and pray that before the finality, one last effort be made for mediation. Normally, at the end of life, families of the person in extremis agree that it is time to allow the Lord to call a loved one to Himself, feeling that they have done all they possibly might to provide alternatives to death, every possible treatment protocol which might be helpful has been attempted. There is a peace. This will not happen in this instance because of the seeming intractability of both sides. I beg and pray that both sides might step back a little and allow some mediation in these final hours. The legacy of Terri's situation should not be that of those who love her the most, loathing the actions of one another, but of a heroic moment of concern for the feelings of each other, guided by moral and ethical considerations, with a single focus of achieving the best result for Terri. I ask the Catholics of the Diocese of St. Petersburg in the waning days of Lent to pray hard to the "Author of All Life" for Terri and for her family.

