



NLA BRIEF

National Lawyers Association ♦ Vol. 7, No. 1 ♦ April-June 2010

President's Message

"A Call to Action" for All Members

The Bible's book of Ecclesiastes reminds us of these ancient truths: "To everything there is a season; a time for every purpose under heaven; a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to reap.... A time to build up and a time to weep; a time to mourn and a time to laugh...."

Ruminating about the passing of NLA's founder, Mario Mandina, in January--and the future of the NLA--brings those biblical words of wisdom to mind. As many of you know, Mario was the heart, soul and face of NLA for the last 17 years or so. Many of the NLA's activities and ventures slowed down during the last year as Mario and his wife Kathleen (also NLA's administrator) wrestled with his sudden and debilitating illness.

Although our mourning over the loss of our friend Mario still lingers, it is time to get up off the mat, to begin planting and planning for NLA's future, and to build up NLA so that its legacy continues--not in spite of Mario's death, but rather because of his life and dedication to NLA and its founding principles.

I remember first meeting Mario and six other lawyers over 17 years ago in St. Louis. We came together to discuss what we could do in response to the American Bar Association's decision to depart from its position of neutrality on abortion, and to adopt an official organizational position favoring and championing abortion rights. That

meeting resulted in the founding of NLA.

NLA is an organization to which I have been proud to belong and to serve. Over the years I have met many highly skilled lawyers, from around the country, at various NLA conferences. They have always made me feel at home, and as if I were amongst friends. I have referred cases to NLA lawyers and received referrals in return. We have always started and ended our board meetings with a prayer.

Now, in these dire and uncertain economic times when many of our leaders seem to want us to march this great Republic away from its founding principles, the NLA is needed more than ever. What other bar association acknowledges and promotes the transcendent truths set forth in the Declaration of Independence? The NLA Foundation has done great work in producing and distributing educational videos/DVDs and lesson plans, and ensuring copies of both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution have been seen by thousands of students in middle school through high school.

Thomas Jefferson once said: "A little revolution now and then is a good thing." I agree. And that's why I'm asking that if you're already a member of NLA, please become more active in its activities, and invite other like-minded lawyers

to join. If you're not already a member, consider joining NLA and making a difference in our society. We have an urgent need for members to serve on the Board, maintain the Web site (e.g., the discussion forum and job boards for like-minded

"It is time to get off the mat, to begin planning and planting for NLA's future..."

professionals), revitalize NLA sections and committees, work with and expand NLA law school student chapters, write for NLA's newsletter, plan upcoming conferences, and help fund NLA and its Foundation.

Life is short. We are all busy. However, I ask you to think about your professional legacy. Will it be a good won-loss record in trial? A career of solid work and happy clients?

I hope it will include those things for you. But is that enough? Will your legacy last the test of time? I don't know if mine will--but I do know my involvement in NLA is my proudest professional achievement. Why? As NLA members I really believe we are running the good race, fighting the good fight, and carrying the pro-life baton to that next generation of lawyers.

--John Farnan, NLA president

Attend ADF's Litigation Training Program

All NLA members are invited to apply for an invitation to attend The Alliance Defense Fund's litigation training program to be held July 5-9, 2010, at a four-star property in Chicago, Illinois. This will be a very special event with much energy, enthusiasm and rich fellowship.

During the training program attorneys will receive four and a half days of professional training in litigating religious speech and religious freedom claims. Enrollment includes 11-16 hours of CLE credit in most states, airfare, lodging, and most meals for attorneys willing to commit to reporting 450 hours of pro bono work in ADF-specific areas of interest.

Apply online at <https://nla.alliancedefensefund.org> by April 30, 2010. For more information, logon <http://tinyurl.com/yhgw4kd> or call 1-800-835-5233.

ARE YOUR NLA DUES CURRENT?

If not, join today at one of the full membership levels (\$200 and above) and receive our new membership perk: a one year's subscription to *Human Life Review*, the country's premier pro-life journal.

The Manhattan Declaration Answers “The Call of Christian Conscience”

Last November, when the “The Manhattan Declaration” was quietly published online, it planted the seeds of a movement uniting thousands of people willing to speak out together on three major issues concerning biblical morality and Christian conscience.

Now, six months later, about 432,000 individuals people have virtually signed the document found at www.manhattandeclaration.org. In addition to numerous U.S. evangelical leaders, among the signatories are nine Catholic archbishops, the president of the Catholic League, the primate of the Anglican Church of Nigeria, and the primate of the Orthodox Church in America.

In sum, the manifesto strongly supports the sanctity of human life; the sanctity of marriage (recognized as the conjugal union of husband and wife); and the rights of conscience and religious freedom. “These issues are interrelated; if one is compromised or suppressed, all three are in jeopardy,” states the study guide in the Web site’s Resources section. “That is, if Christians remain silent when one of these issues is assaulted – by abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or any other means – it won’t be long before all these issues come under assault as well.”

The project’s goal is not just to get lots of names. Rather, it’s to “alert secular leaders and other influencers of our culture that Christians of many different traditions are already united...in defense of foundational principles of justice and the common good,” states support-

ing material on The Manhattan Declaration’s Web site. “These are people who could expose the lie which so many in our culture have embraced about self being the center of life; and then winsomely present, in the words of St. Paul, ‘a more excellent way.’”

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council President, says that “at the heart of the Manhattan Declaration is a very significant message from Christian leaders that they will not wait to respond to efforts that would limit or curtail religious liberty in America.”

The Declaration’s drafting committee is comprised of Robert George, McCormick Pro-

cessor of Jurisprudence, Princeton University; Timothy George, Professor at Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School; and Chuck Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship and host of the “Breakpoint” radio show. The document was originally developed for the Centurion Program offered through the Colson Center for Christian Worldview (www.ColsonCenter.org).

Organizers say they are deeply concerned about legislative and judicial actions that “deny value to the innocent, weak and aged; dis-

mantle historic protections and definitions for families, children and marriage; and impose legal strictures contrary to the constitutional freedoms long provided for people and institutions of faith in America. The Declaration [of Independence] reminds the nation as well as the church that the Christian conscience is bound to Christ. We cannot love him or our nation well if we refuse to address challenges to morality and liberty that we believe will unravel the social fabric that protects all her citizens.”

In addition to its huge online grassroots support, the project is garnering other high-profile discussion as well. For example, the American

Manhattan Declaration.org

Family Association’s *AFA Journal* (circulation: 180,000) printed a summary of the declaration in its February issue. And on March 11th, the Kentucky House of Representatives passed a resolution to “recognize and honor the efforts of those who have inspired thousands of Kentuckians with the Manhattan Declaration.”

To sign The Manhattan Declaration online, or to print a hard copy for you and others to sign, visit www.manhattandeclaration.org. E-mail questions to: TheMovement@pfm.org

is no rational reason for this to happen.”

On March 21, Congress passed a bill transferring jurisdiction of the case from Florida state court to a U.S. District Court for a federal judge to review. Although President Bush signed the bill into law the next day, federal courts refused to overturn the state courts’ decision. The appellate court agreed with a lower court decision that Terri’s feeding tube could be removed as she had “no hope of recovery.”

After almost two weeks without the tube, Terri died on March 31, 2005.

Terri’s family wrote a book in 2006 detailing the whole story of the battle that

(continued on page 4)

Remembering Terry Schiavo, Five Years Later

This past March marked the fifth anniversary of the passing of Terri Schindler Schiavo, the focus of a national “right to die” culture war still being fought today. The 41-year-old woman died 12 days after a court ordered a slow, horrific death via starvation and dehydration.

In 1990, 26-year-old Terri suffered a mysterious cardio-respiratory arrest (for which no cause has ever been determined) which resulted in severe brain injury. Although she was able to breathe on her own and maintain vital functions after being placed on a ventilator, Terri stayed in a severely compromised neurological state. A PEG tube provided food and hydration.

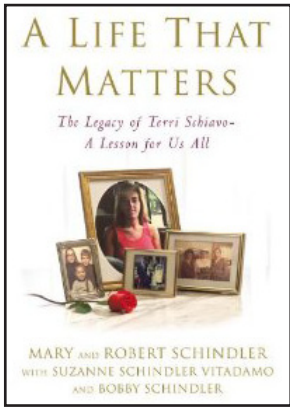
Her husband Michael became her guardian. In 1995 he began living with a woman (and had children with her) but declined to dissolve his marriage to Ms. Schiavo. In 1997, he retained a right-to-die attorney who filed a Petition to Withdraw Life Support the following year.

After a very lengthy court battle spanning years, Judge George W. Greer ruled the feeding tube had to be removed on March 18, 2005.

“There are vital signs, and she is being starved to death,” the Rev. Jesse Jackson said during this ordeal. “She is being dehydrated to death and that is inhumane. It is immoral and it is unnecessary. There

NLA Bookshelf

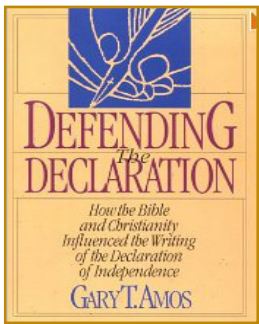
***A Life That Matters: The Legacy of Terri Schiavo - A Lesson for Us All* by Mary and Bobby Schindler | \$23.95 | Grand Central Publishing**



"In this work, Terri Schiavo's parents and siblings present their chronology and views concerning her illness, their fight for her life, and her death. Firmly convinced that Terri was not in a persistent vegetative state, the family seeks to educate others who may have severely handicapped loved ones.

"By documenting the mistakes they feel they made as they sought medical and legal assistance, they hope others will know better how to advocate for those in similar circumstances." — *Library Journal*

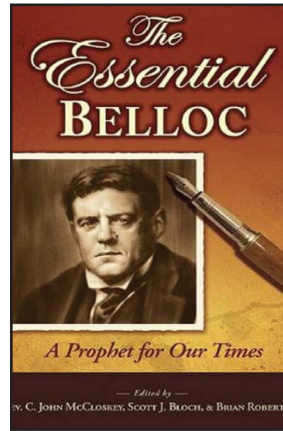
***Defending the Declaration: How the Bible and Christianity Influenced the Writing of the Declaration of Independence* by Gary T. Amos | \$15.95 | Providence Foundation**



"In this scholarly yet easily readable book, Gary Amos exposes the error of the Supreme Court's establishment of secularism as our national religion. Professor Amos demonstrates that America's founding, as exemplified in the Declaration of Independence, was neither secular nor deist, but was rooted in the Christian tradition of the common law. This book is an important and courageous

challenge to prevailing misconceptions." --*Charles Rice, The School of Law, Notre Dame University*

***The Essential Belloc: A Prophet for Our Times* by Hilaire Belloc | Edited by Scott Bloch, Esq., Rev. C. John McCloskey & Brian Robertson | \$17.95 | Saint Benedict Press**



Scott Bloch, a powerhouse special prosecutor under the Bush Administration, carried out his duties despite political opposition. This new book about Hilaire Belloc may put Bloch's own career into historical context as one who tackled the powers-that-be. Belloc is, according to Bloch, a "prophet for our times" because he was a staunch defender of a market free from the manipulation of a handful of large concerns, and protested the easy corruption of political parties.

Amazon.com says: "He was a poet, a polemicist, and a prose stylist without peer, but Hilaire Belloc (1870-1954) was first and above all a mighty champion of the Catholic faith.... *The Essential Belloc* draws upon the prolific writer's works (he authored more than 140 books plus countless articles, pamphlets and letters) to provide a comprehensive overview of his ideas, style and personality....

"Belloc himself once remarked that genius is the ability to think in a very large number of categories. In *The Essential Belloc* you will marvel at how well he fits that very definition, and be edified by the breadth of his brilliance and its continuing relevance for the modern world."

Member Spotlight: Denis Brennan

Denis Brennan of Newtown Square, Penn., has been a lawyer "forever" (since 1962). Throughout his illustrious career spanning over four decades, he always did civil litigation across a wide spectrum of law, especially environmental law.

Back in 1993 Denis was one of the hundreds, perhaps thousands of lawyers who quit the American Bar Association (ABA) when it adopted an official pro-choice stand. "I had been in good stead with the ABA as I paid my dues and attended its conferences. Frankly, I was shocked when it took that position," he recalls. When Mario Mandina came up with idea of forming a new bar association based on respect for life, Denis says, "I was very happy to join the effort."

It wasn't too much later that NLA was

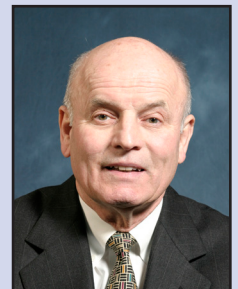
formed during a strategy meeting held in St. Louis attended by a handful of former ABA members. "We decided we'd create NLA as an organization that would aid and assist lawyers in a manner consistent with a pro-life philosophy," he says.

This founding NLA member has been on the board throughout the association's existence. He answered the call to become NLA's president a few years back, and then answered the call again last year (his term ended March 2010). He is excited about the board's decision made last December to re-energize the organization through new marketing and activity initiatives beginning this year.

"Almost all NLA members are uniformly admirable, bright and upright people," he notes, "and they're willing to help each other

with business opportunities and referrals. But NLA needs lots more members and money. Once we get the word out that we espouse strong traditional values and a conservative interpretation of the Constitution, I think we can develop the market for an organization like ours."

Brenan adds that members should be "very proud" of the Declaration of Independence Project. This NLA Foundation effort produced three levels of age-appropriate DVDs



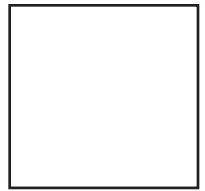
Denis Brennan

(continued on page 4)



NLA

National Lawyers Association
44 Cook Street
Suite 100
Denver, Colorado 80206



Remembering Terry Schiavo *(continued from pg. 2)*

captivated millions (see review in this issue). They also established The Terri Schindler Schiavo Foundation to educate and assist families by enabling them to better protect the rights and lives of their cognitively disabled loved ones. Broadly speaking, it supports efforts to promote a “culture of life... embracing the true meaning of compassion by opposing the practice of euthanasia.” Through its sister group, the Terri Schindler Schiavo Foundation Center for Health Care Ethics, Terri’s family speak about her case at national and international venues.

Many anniversary events have been scheduled this spring to remember Ms. Schiavo, and to explore the ethical avenues of handling end-of-life issues. For example, the Foundation recently posted stories about events that happened on each of the 13 days Terri went without food or water. “We offer this not only in respect for Terri’s memory,” states the Foundation, “but as a reminder that in this moment countless people are suffering slow, agonizing deaths in hospice, nursing homes, and hospitals in America and around the world.” Ave Maria

University hosted a National Mass for “Terri’s Day” March 31 attended by the faithful, including representatives from Priests for Life and Human Life International. And on April 11, the Foundation will hold the first annual “Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Concert” in Indianapolis featuring country music stars Randy Travis and Collin Raye.

For more information about Terri’s Foundation and its various resources and activities, logon www.terrisfight.org or call 727-490-7603.

Denis Brennan *(continued from pg. 3)*

about the Declaration of Independence for students in grade school and high school (see www.nla.org for details).

Now retired from commercial practice, Denis still exercises his lawyer muscles by doing pro bono work for various pro-life causes.

“Adoption is a very fine option, but it’s made difficult for many people to adopt as adoption statutes vary state by state,” he explains. “So to help decrease abortions we need to make adoption easier on the state level, ease restrictions on foreign adoptions, and give the millions of dollars which now go to Planned Parenthood to programs for expectant mothers. Many of my clients are on the front line; they’re working to persuade these poor, desperate girls to bring their pregnancies to term or to keep their babies....I do wonder if a lot of those women really know what they are doing when they opt for an abortion.”



NLA BRIEF

The *NLA Brief*, the official newsletter of the National Lawyers Association, is published four times a year. Publisher/NLA CEO: Rebecca Messall. Editor: Lisa A. Bastian, CBC. Headquarters address: National Lawyers Association, 44 Cook Street, Suite 100, Denver, CO 80206. Phone: (303) 398-7030; (800) 471-2994. Fax: (303) 398-7001. Web site: www.nla.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Mark Allen III, *Long Beach, CA*; Denis V. Brennan,* *Philadelphia, PA*; Richard E. Browning, *Mobile, AL*; Willam P. Daniel, *Flint, MI*; John G. Farnan,* *Cleveland, OH*; William Maywhort,* *Denver, CO*; Rebecca Messall,* *Denver, CO*; William D. Olson, *Grinnell, IA*; Ronald D. Ray, *Crestwood, KY*; Mark C. Rohlena, *Denver, CO*; Tracey L.F. Triggillo, *Springfield, IL*; Philip S. Walker, *Hartford, CT*. * = NLA past president.

ADVISORY COUNCIL: Prof. Frank Covey, Jr., *Loyola Univ. of Chicago*; Dean Robert D’Agostino, *John Marshall Law School*; Prof. Joseph Dellapenna, *Villanova Univ.*; Assoc. Dean Robert Destro, *Catholic Univ. of America*; Prof. Joseph L. Falvey Jr., *Ann Arbor, MI*; Prof. Scott Fitzgibbon, *Boston College Law School*; Prof. David Forte, *Cleveland State Univ.*; Edward Gaffney, *Valparaiso Univ.*; Prof. Lino A. Graglia, *Univ. of Texas Law School*; William F. Harvey, *Prof. Emeritus of Law, Indiana Univ.*; Prof. Raymond Marcin, *Catholic Univ. of America*; Prof. Charles Rice, *Notre Dame Univ.*; Prof. Richard T. Stith, *Valparaiso Univ.*; William Valente, *Prof. Emeritus of Law, Villanova Univ.*; Prof. Lynn Wardle, *Brigham Young Univ.*; John C. Buckley III, *Colorado Springs, CO*; Eugene S. Bulso, Jr., Esq., *Nashville, TN*; James S. Cole, Esq., *St. Louis, MO*; David C. Drury, Esq., *St. Louis, MO*; Mary Ann Johaneck, Esq., *Cleveland, OH*; Darwin Johnson, Esq., *Kansas City, MO*; Denish Mackura, Esq., *Cleveland, OH*; Thomas E. Maxwell, *Birmingham, AL*; William R. Mikos, Esq., *St. Paul, MN*; Thomas Spencer, Jr., Esq., *Miami, FL*.