

God occasionally offers us teachable moments through otherwise routine (and sometimes tragic) natural events that are closely linked in space or time. One such moment was in the late summer of 1997 when, in the course of one week, the celebrated Princess Diana died abruptly in a tragic car accident and, six days later on the other side of the world, the humble Mother Teresa passed away quietly after a lengthy illness. Among other teaching points was the radical difference in the reactions of the world press to the two deaths. While brief and perfunctory respect was offered to the 87-year-old Mother Teresa (after all, she made only a small dent in India's overwhelming problem of poverty), Diana's death drove the international media into a months-long frenzy about the details of her accident, the allegedly sordid activities of the royal family, and Diana's legacy to the British people.

The Prince and the Pauper

We saw another such moment last week, also with British connections. On Monday, April 23, the 35-year-old Prince William (elder son of Princess Diana) and his wife welcomed their third child into the world, giving him the (predictably patrician) name Louis Arthur Charles. The infant boy, who is the sixth great-grandchild of Queen Elizabeth II, is now fifth in line to the British throne. Simultaneously, a months-long drama came to a climax in the British city of Liverpool, where a 23-month old toddler named [Alfie Evans](#) was at the center of a legal battle for his very life. On Saturday, April 28, Alfie died, nearly a week after his life support was withdrawn by order of a British court. According to testimony from inside sources, it is quite possible that Alfie's death was the direct result of [four different drugs](#) which were administered by the hospital a few hours before his sudden decline and passing.

Little Alfie Evans joins [Charlie Gard](#), who died under similar conditions in 2017 at the age of eleven months, as casualties of British law and medical ethics (or lack thereof), in which the rights of the state now trump those of the parents. Alfie had suffered from a degenerative neurological condition and had been in a Liverpool hospital since December, 2016. When Alfie's parents had the audacity to disagree with the hospital's decision to "pull the plug" on their son, a four-month legal battle ensued. In February, a British court ruled in favor of the hospital administrators, agreeing that there was "no hope" for the youngster and permitting the hospital to withdraw life support. Legal appeals by the Evans family were met with denials at three levels, including the European Court of Human Rights, which called their petition "inadmissible."

Two Irritants

Complicating the situation for British authorities, otherwise in lockstep about the decision to end Alfie's life, were two irritants. First, Pope Francis made a [public plea](#) for Alfie's life after a personal meeting on April 18 in the Vatican with Alfie's father, Tom Evans. Secondly, as

noted by even the liberal Jesuit [America](#) magazine, “the Italian government granted citizenship to Alfie, and Vatican-owned Bambino Gesù hospital in Rome has offered to care for the child. Doctors in the U.K. have not been able to make a definitive diagnosis of the 23-month-old child’s degenerative neurological condition, but they have said keeping him on life-support would be ‘futile.’ Three specialists from Bambino Gesù had flown to Liverpool and examined Alfie. According to the president of Bambino Gesù, ‘a positive outcome would be difficult, but the baby’s suffering can be alleviated.’”

At this point, however, British authorities were not willing to have the Italians come out as heroes by rescuing little Alfie and providing superior care. Thus, two days after the Italian offer, a British Court of Appeal upheld a ruling preventing Alfie from travelling abroad after life support was withdrawn. Thus, the toddler’s fate was sealed – no life support, no travel, and no appeal. Such is the realm of medical “ethics” in the New World Order. After Alfie’s death early Saturday morning, Tom Evans, a Catholic, wrote a magnificent [tribute](#) to his beautiful son on Facebook: “My gladiator lay down his shield and gained his wings... absolutely heartbroken.”

Immoral Judge

A brief look at the British judge at the center of the Alfie Evans case is sufficient to see the forces of death hard at work. As noted by the [Church Militant](#) website, High Court Justice Anthony Hayden is a pro-gay activist and a member of the Bar Lesbian and Gay Group (BLAGG), a network of gay lawyers in the United Kingdom. “He has repeatedly ruled against Evans’ parents, represented by the pro-life, pro-marriage Christian Legal Centre, which has condemned homosexuality as one of the ‘most significant challenges to God’s pattern for family in today’s society.’” Hayden is also the co-author of a book promoting gay adoption, described as a guide for those “who provide advice and support to same sex families.” In his February 20 ruling that permitted the halting of life support, Hayden [noted](#) (apparently with no trace of irony) that young Alfie required “peace, quiet and privacy.”

As with 1997, the press coverage of these two juxtaposed stories is entirely predictable. The British tabloids will continue full of stories on little Louis Arthur Charles in the coming months and years. The British public and royalists around the world will be regaled with details about his favorite foods, his first steps, his first words, etc. Meanwhile, Alfie Evans will be conveniently forgotten except by “Alfie’s Army,” the local activists who supported his cause, and – of course – in the mind of God.

Providential Date of Passing

One last point must be mentioned that may well be part of our teachable moment. Alfie

Evans died on the anniversary of St. Gianna Molla's death. On April 28, 1962, the 39-year-old Italian mother died of expected complications from the birth of her daughter one week earlier. Gianna had refused both an abortion and a hysterectomy for the sake of her Catholic faith and the welfare of her child. Was Alfie's death on this anniversary perhaps God's way of reminding us of the preciousness of all vulnerable life in His eyes? Or, in the words of Christ, "Having eyes, see you not? and having ears, hear you not?" (Mark 8:18).