

ON THE LITANY OF ST. THOMAS MORE, MARTYR AND
PATRON SAINT OF STATESMEN, POLITICIANS AND LAWYERS

Throughout the year, on October 31, 2000, Pope John Paul II proclaimed St. Thomas More to be the patron of statesmen and politicians. St. Thomas More has also been known as the patron of lawyers.

The Pope eloquently explains why the life, principles and holiness of this saint and martyr who died in 1535 have a particular relevance in the New Millennium: "There are many reasons for proclaiming Thomas More Patron of statesmen and people in public life. Among these is the need felt by the world of politics and public administration for credible role models able to indicate the path of truth at a time in history when difficult challenges and crucial responsibilities are increasing. Today in fact strongly innovative economic forces are reshaping social structures; on the other hand, scientific achievements in the area of biotechnology underline the need to defend human life at all its different stages, while the promises of a new society — successfully presented to a bewildered public opinion — urgently demand clear political decisions in favor of the family, young people, the elderly and the marginalized. In this context, it is

helpful to turn to the example of St. Thomas More, who distinguished himself by his constant fidelity to legitimate authority and institutions precisely in his intention to serve not power but the supreme ideal of justice. His life teaches us that government is above all an exercise of virtue."

I share this *Litany of St. Thomas More, Martyr and Patron Saint of Statesmen, Politicians and Lawyers* in a true spirit of compassion for all politicians who sincerely strive to serve the nation and the world with good will. I ask you to pray especially for politicians who take public anti-life positions. It is my belief that if we pray for them in a spirit of gospel and eucharistic charity, we may begin to see some substantial changes in their public positions.

I ask that Catholics in the Diocese of Wilmington consider praying this short litany every day during Respect Life Month October 2004. May the "Man for All Seasons" inspire us to be faithful to the Gospel in season and out of season.

+ Michael A. Saltarelli

Most Rev. Michael A. Saltarelli
Bishop of Wilmington
September 30, 2004

LITANY OF ST. THOMAS MORE, MARTYR AND
PATRON SAINT OF STATESMEN, POLITICIANS AND LAWYERS

V. Lord, have mercy
R. Lord have mercy
V. Christ, have mercy
R. Christ have mercy
V. Lord, have mercy
R. Lord have mercy
V. Christ hear us
R. Christ, graciously hear us

V. St. Thomas More, Saint and Martyr, R. Pray for us (*Repeat after each invocation*)
St. Thomas More, Patron of Statesmen, Politicians and Lawyers
St. Thomas More, Patron of Justices, Judges and Magistrates
St. Thomas More, Model of Integrity and Virtue in Public and Private Life
St. Thomas More, Servant of the Word of God and the Body and Blood of Christ
St. Thomas More, Model of Holiness in the Sacrament of Marriage
St. Thomas More, Teacher of his Children in the Catholic Faith
St. Thomas More, Defender of the Weak and the Poor
St. Thomas More, Promoter of Human Life and Dignity

V. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world
R. Spare us O Lord
V. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world
R. Graciously hear us O Lord
V. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world
R. Have mercy on us

Let us pray:

O Glorious St. Thomas More, Patron of Statesmen, Politicians, Judges and Lawyers, your life of prayer and penance and your zeal for justice, integrity and firm principle in public and family life led you to the path of martyrdom and sainthood. Intercede for our Statesmen, Politicians, Judges and Lawyers, that they may be courageous and effective in their defense and promotion of the sanctity of human life — the foundation of all other human rights. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.