

SAINTS ALIVE! APRIL 28: ST. GIANNA BERETTA MOLLA



Since January 1973, 55 million unborn children have died through abortion. If your calling from the Holy Spirit is to work to end abortions, you likely feel as if the task is daunting.

Fortunately we believe in the communion of saints, the spiritual solidarity which binds together the faithful on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the saints in heaven. You are not alone; you have Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, the patron saint for unborn children.

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla was an Italian pediatrician, wife and mother. In 1961, during her second month of pregnancy, Gianna developed a fibroma on her uterus. After examination, the doctors gave her three choices: an abortion, a complete hysterectomy, or removal of only the fibroma, which if she continued with the pregnancy, could result in her death.

The Catholic Church forbids all direct abortion even when the woman's life is in danger, but Catholic teaching would have allowed her to undergo a hysterectomy, which would have resulted in her unborn child's death as an unintended consequence.

Rather than save her life at the expense of the life of her unborn daughter, Gianna opted for the removal of the fibroma. She successfully gave birth but because of complications from the fibroma, she died a week later.

St. Gianna is the first canonized woman physician and professional who was also a “working mom.”

If you are publicly exposed as a defender of life then you are likely buffeted by the severe winds of public disapproval. Whether the winds are bitter Nor'easters or dehydrating Santa Anas depends on where the Holy Spirit has called you to protect life.

From one side we have the cultural mantra winds of individual liberties and women's rights drowning out the cries of the rights of the unborn human being. From another side we have the storms of disapproval blowing against those who adopt the Catholic approach to defending life: all life, from conception to natural death and every life in between.

A Catholic Culture of Life Movement embraces the threats to human life that Pope John Paul II listed in *Evangelium Vitae* in 1995: abortion, physician-assisted suicide, war, death penalty, poverty, hunger, and malnutrition.

Inside the well-built structure of a Catholic Culture of Life, in community we can better withstand the secular minimization of life inconvenient to our lifestyles, our pocketbooks, or to our political values. In community and with the community of saints.

St. Gianna, pray for us



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