

The 35 Day Life of John Paul
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Abstract

The recent birth and survival of a 21-week, 6-day old child weighing only 10 ounces in Miami, Florida reaffirms that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death. During 1987 and 1988, Pat and Dave, lost a Grandfather, age 90 and a premature son aged five weeks. Their son, John Paul, was born 22 weeks after conception with a weight of 1 pound 4-1/2 ounces. His 5 week life showed the value of human life in the smallest of packages. Pat and Dave share their story to show that all life is sacred. They hope their experiences help and comfort those with similar experiences. More factual and real life details discussed in this paper can be found in video titled "Littlest Shoes" which shows John Paul during his 5 week battle for survival outside of Pat's Womb. Dave and Pat present this biography of the 35-day life of John Paul, a second trimester infant, outside the womb shows the sanctity of human life during its beginning and its end.

Little Amilla

As reported by Wingert (2007) in the March 5, 2007 issue of Newsweek magazine, little Amilla Taylor of Miami, Florida was born October 24, 2006 only 21-week 6 days after conception. She is reported to be the world's 4th smallest baby weighing 284 grams (just under 10 oz). She was only 9.5 inches long and for many she just again reaffirms the Gospel of Life. NBC6.net (2007) recently posted a video of Amilla. In addition to Amilla, there are numerous less reported infants that have survived at even younger birth ages. Willke (2007) cites instances of survival for infants as young as 21 weeks, 20 weeks and even 18 weeks after conception. This article reminded us of the short life of John Paul who was born 22 weeks after conception and touched many people during his short 35 day life during the summer of 1988. This reminds all that human life is sacred and that even a second trimester infant such as John Paul went through the life cycle of conception, birth, a short life, and death.

The Gospel of Life

Since that time John Paul II (1995) wrote the Encyclical Letter titled *Evangelium Vita* on March 25th 1995 reaffirming the respect that we must have for all human life. As noted in a speech by Alvaré (1999), "This Gospel -- so simple and brief when written on a page -- is great good news. It is the good news that human beings, created by God from love, are invited to a new and eternal life with God. It is the good news that God is a "living" God who calls us to "profound communion" with himself. A sharing in His very life. It is the good news that in every single person, we can glimpse the face of Christ, a "trace of his glory." (*EV* 34). That our mortal lives, being a "fundamental condition" for our eternal life, have immense worth. It is finally, the news that the path to authentic freedom and happiness lies in living as Jesus lived, loving as Jesus loved, *e.g.*

making a "sincere gift of self" to God, and to others. (*EV 2, 37-39, 51*).” With this message, let Pat and Dave Banaszak (1988) share their story of grandpa dying and then shortly thereafter the sorrow and joy given to them by John Paul during his brief 35 day life outside of Pat’s womb.

Grandpa

PAT: You had to know my grandpa to appreciate him. He grew up in the old school where you allowed people to go first, even if you were there first. He believed in standing up for his rights, but being polite about it. In later years his sense of independence was paying for meals, gas, and anything that he could. He didn't want to burden anyone and never complained if he hurt or felt bad. When he went into the hospital in February 1989 for diabetes, he was feisty. He would try to do everything and it was difficult to help him.

Grandpa celebrated his 90th birthday on May 8, 1987. He seemed to be progressing nicely in May when he had a stroke, which affected his right side. Grandpa always went to the bathroom during the night, but this time he could not get back to bed. Grandma heard tapping in her sleep; it was grandpa trying to get her attention. When she aroused, she got me up and we called the ambulance.

Grandpa slowed down. He needed a walker, a potty nearby and someone close at all times. We gave him a bell to call for help, but he rang and rang, so we took it away. I will never forget hearing his HEYS yelling resounding through the house. Grandpa got self centered and as he lost independence, he lost his will to live.

Grandpa struggled to do for himself. Getting out of his chair was strenuous. For two months, he fought back as he learned to dress himself, to feed himself, and to walk. The last time I took him outside to sit on the patio, he admired the yard and the roses he planted and cared for. As always, our dog Benji sat beside him. Grandpa talked about the old days and his life on the farm. It was such a peaceful day, and grandpa was at peace with himself and God.

At the beginning of August, grandpa suffered a second attack; this one more severe. He stayed in the hospital longer and came home by ambulance. The doctor told us "there was not much to make him comfortable." He could not get out of bed. We fed him, cleaned him and just loved him. He looked at me with his blue eyes and asked, "Why don't I die". He knew his independence was gone. All we could do was hold him, say God was not ready for him yet and we loved him.

Grandpa's last week alive tested us. It took 2 hours to feed him each meal. Giving him pills was a challenge. Grandpa would find them and spit them out so we had to mash them up and hide them. He had many bloody bowel movements and needed to be turned every two hours so he would not develop bed sores. Fortunately, nurses from hospice came every two days and helped.

We made some hard decisions. The doctor said grandpa probably should be transfused with blood as he was losing some. That meant a trip to the hospital, which he might not survive. It became obvious that he had a short time left. We said no to procedures that would make him

uncomfortable and would not guarantee that grandpa would live longer. Grandpa wanted to stay home so we got oxygen to help him breathe and tried to fill his last few days with contentment and happiness.

DAVID: Grandpa died on August 29, 1987. Grandma, Pat and I sat outside grandpa's room discussing his condition since returning from the hospital. We thought about caring for him as he lay in bed. I said "He may live for months or years more." Then I went to check grandpa. I said "Hello grandpa", but I heard a gust of air from his oxygen tube lying by his mouth. He's dead I thought; and he was. It was 5:10 P.M. as I held his hand for a few moments before returning to comfort grandma. Thus, this ended the joy of having grandpa Onderdonk living in the apartment below our house for almost four years. Grandpa would tell no more horse and buggy and other old time stories of when he married grandma almost 70 years ago. The evenings spent watching baseball games with grandpa were gone.

PAT: Many books say the funeral is an important part of grieving. You have to go through that in order to get your life in perspective, to acknowledge to yourself and the world that this person really died. When grandpa died, all the arrangements were made ahead of time. He died on a Saturday and we had until Tuesday to do nothing but think. Grandpa was cremated and we did not view his body. There was a memorial service at church. I felt cheated, as if he had gone away but was not really dead. At the service, there was no casket, no burial, just a few words and a dinner. The next day I went to the funeral home and picked up an 8 inch by 10 inch plastic box containing grandpa's remains. I opened the box and found grandpa, looking like grains of sand and small pebbles in a plastic bag.

In October David, grandma, my brother and I buried grandpa's remains in upstate New York, next to his parents. We met my sister, aunt and nieces there. We prayed as we dug a small hole and planted both grandpa and flowers. I felt he was really gone; then the sadness and tears came. The cemetery was beautiful, overlooking autumn colored, rolling hills of New York State. Grandpa was home and I felt peaceful.

Transition Period

DAVID: We celebrated our 20th Anniversary in September with a Mexican lunch. I returned to work to hear a ringing phone. A lady said Pat had an accident on the way home from the restaurant. She was okay, so hopefully, our bad luck was over. The first week of February 1989, I come home and the kids were smirking. Pat had that 'you rat' smile on her face. Cheryl said, "Guess what Mom is? Naughty dad!!" Pat confirmed that two tests she did at the Right to Life office were positive. A nurse friend also confirmed the pregnancy. I was ecstatic, elated and happy. I wanted to be an over 40 father, and it was happening. I always wanted five children. Pat was not so elated. However, I was concerned the baby might not survive the nine months. We were lucky that our first four children, Craig, Cheryl, Brian and Dianne were healthy. I was fearful since this might be our final shot at parenthood. Pat started to get items for the baby. I thought a larger new car was needed.

On June 14, 1988, I get hit by a Grand Slam home run and miss the ball at a Reds game. Worse luck was to come. On June 16, 1988 I get home from work and grandma tells me that Pat is at the hospital; another car accident and the nurses have monitors listening to our baby. They finally got a heartbeat; but, Pat had a temporary cast on a broken ankle. We postponed our planned vacation to our wilderness cabin in northern Wisconsin. Little did we realize that this accident would be a blessing?

PAT: 1988 seemed destined to be a great year for us. The children were growing up and we finally could sit back and enjoy life a little. When I found out I was pregnant I was not happy. A baby at 42! I couldn't believe it! I was done with diaper bags and snotty noses and kids hanging on me. I didn't want to get up in the middle of the night and wash baby bottles and make special food. Here I was and because we do not believe in abortion I begrudgingly accepted it.

Support was beautiful. People congratulated me about the new addition. They told stories of women in their late forties who successfully mothered children who became the focus of their parents' lives. As spring wore on, Dave, I and the kids accepted the little one's coming and realized he or she would be here in a few months. I was determined to have one last great summer with the older kids; filled with picnics, swimming parties, and being free as the breeze! Little did I know my summer would stop before it really began!

On June 16, 1988, Cheryl was at my brother's house in Kentucky. The two boys, Dianne, I and Craig's girlfriend were on our way to the mall to get the oil changed, do some shopping, and go to a movie. A full day! We were excited and talking about what we would do first. Terror came in a moment--a swift move off the main highway --a touch of the tires on an oil slick--and disaster. What! NO BRAKES! HEY, I CAN'T STEER THIS! CRASH!

It happened fast and our lives were forever changed. Our car had the front end smashed in, the car in front looked like it had no rear end. People came out of the car and they looked hurt. I tried to move, but my ankle hurt too much. I looked around. Brian, in the passenger seat, looked shaken but OK. His head hit and cracked the windshield. His chin hit and split the dash. Luckily, he was OK and I thought how marvelous that he had such a hard head. I couldn't turn around, but asked Craig how everything was in the back. He looked very scared, but said he shielded his girlfriend and Dianne hit the back of my seat but she was OK. Dianne didn't say much and I wondered if she was in shock! Then the ambulance came and we were all whisked away to the hospital!

I remember lying in the hospital praying for the lives of my children and particularly my unborn one. The nurses couldn't find a heartbeat. They told me not to worry, but I was scared to death. The others I knew would live; I had a broken ankle, but I knew I would make it --but our baby; he couldn't die like this! But there was no heartbeat. Where was the heartbeat? Why was he so quiet? He just started kicking and every time I felt him the past few weeks I'd swell with pride. But now nothing and I was scared! Finally, they heard a faint beating and after tears of relief they let me go home saying all was well.

Those days at home after the accident were a nightmare. I was to stay in bed or still and that was impossible. Grandma lent me her bedroom so I would not have stairs to climb, but I could not get out of the couch much less out of bed. Grandma left 3 days later to visit my sister for the summer, Cheryl came home and I learned to cope. My friend, Pat, drove me to the hospital to get my cast put on. I brought a walker to get into the doctor's office. I couldn't use the walker so Pat got me a wheelchair, which was too small. WOW did I wish I could go home and die! I got the cast on and finally could use crutches. I felt silly, a fat pregnant woman, with foot in a cast on crutches!

On Tuesday, June 23, my obstetrician examined me and said all was well. On Thursday I felt crummy and stayed in bed all day. Friday brought more sickness, an overall tiredness and sore feeling, plus a lot of mucous with a tinge of blood. I thought it was from jumping around on the crutches so tried to stay still. Saturday was much the same, but when I started having back pains David said it was time to call the doctor. That call started a drama in our life that I will never forget. "Come to the hospital and be checked out," the on-call physician said. "We'll check you and let you go, but we just want to be sure that all is well." My neighbor told me she would watch the kids and said "It sounds like labor." David whisked me away to the hospital.

John Paul's Birthday

DAVID: It was 102 degrees that day. I returned home at 3:30 PM after stopping at the library, shopping mall and money machine. Pat and I discussed the hot weather for June. Pat mentioned she did not feel well. She had pains from back to front about every 15 minutes. It was too soon for the baby, but I told Pat we better call the doctor. The on-call man said come to the hospital. We left immediately without a suitcase or anything else. We drove to the hospital expecting false labor. The due date was October 15th; too soon we kept thinking. We arrived at the hospital at 5 PM.

PAT: When we got to hospital, it was like an episode from the Three Stooges. The signs pointed to the Maternity entrance, but there was construction, so David drove around. He wanted to follow a sign that said deliveries, but I told him that was for packages and supplies, not babies. David finally got me inside the emergency entrance. They put me in line at billing. As soon as David got in, they allowed me to go to maternity.

DAVID: They aides took Pat up to the delivery room. The nurse couldn't find the doctor. The fetal monitor did not detect a heartbeat. The on-call doctor did a vaginal exam and said Pat was fully dilated. Solemnly, the doctor told us the baby was sideways and to wait for the fetus to miscarry. We waited scared and unsure. Save the baby was our desire, but it was too soon. I checked Pat in as an out-patient. I returned to Pat, her doctor arrived in shorts and he examined her. He said it was time for a C-section, since the baby was lying sideways. It was too late to stop labor. Hurriedly and anxiously the doctor explained our options. We understood the baby might die if he came out sideways, with a C-section the doctor said the baby would live a day or two; he

was too young for help. It was 9:20 when the doctor, Pat and I agreed a C-section was the best choice.

PAT: In the labor room, the nurses connected all kinds of machines and could not find a heart beat. Now I was scared! The nurses examined me and sent for the on-call doctor, who examined me and solemnly told me that I was in deep labor and the baby was lying sideways. I would have to stay in bed and wait for a miscarriage. "NO!" I remember screaming, "NO!" I can't let my baby die!! God would not do that to me. Oh God, this is the punishment for not wanting him in the first place! This is what I get for causing that accident! All kinds of jumbled thoughts ran through my head and yet the most pervading thought was NO NO this my baby cannot die; he can live. So as David and I cried and talked, we begged the doctors to please try to save our baby's life. They brought in more equipment and found the baby was moving and alive. I was only 22 weeks pregnant, but other babies had survived so why not mine?

My obstetrician arrived and examined me. He confirmed that there was no stopping labor. Our baby was coming. He discussed a C-section, but he said it might be a waste because the baby probably would not survive the night. Without the surgery, there was a good chance of the baby bending in half to come out and crushing itself. What choice did we have? We wanted to give our baby the best chance of survival, so all agreed and I signed the papers for a C-section.

DAVID: Pat and I prayed for a miracle that the baby live. We knew there was a chance of survival, because of all the babies we had seen in the Right to Life slides. I called our parish priest, he said baptism was appropriate and to get the chaplain at the hospital. A Franciscan lay minister came to comfort us. I readmitted Pat as an in-patient. Pat went to the operating room. Myself, the Franciscan and an ambulance driver waited in the hall outside the operating rooms, where three of my children were born. The Franciscan asked about baby names and I told him, "If the baby is a boy his name would be John Paul after the Polish, Pro-Life pope. We had not picked out girl's names."

PAT: At about 10:00 I was wheeled into the operating room. I was so scared, the most I have ever been. Even with all my knowledge about unborn children, I could not imagine what they would encounter when they got inside. I prayed and prayed. Soon, David stood at my head as the operation began.

PAT: Boy was I scared! I had not expected labor after 22 weeks of pregnancy. I felt sick to my stomach and tried to vomit a few times. I was scared and the anesthesiologist tried to calm me. I felt cutting and pushing, but pain was in my heart for I feared my baby would not live. I saw David watching the doctors. All at once, they said the baby was out, alive and small. My first glimpse of my baby was when the doctor handed him to the nurse. All I could see was the top of his red, hairy and tiny head. They said it was a boy. That moment was the only time I would see our baby for 5 days. My son was alive and was being worked on by doctors from another hospital, who had broken all rules to come over and keep him alive. I felt relief and happiness. I saw the nurses working on him, but I couldn't see him. Then they put me under.



**Figure 1 John Paul by Dad's Hand
Second Trimester. 570 Grams
Less than 24 weeks after
conception. June 26, 1988**

DAVID: The nurse called me in for the delivery. The anesthesiologist calmed Pat and two doctors worked on the C-section. The doctor delivered my son on Saturday, June 25, 1988 at 10:20 PM. I saw his feet first. The doctor said "The child is a boy" in a solemn, work like manner. The doctor handed the baby across Pat to the assistant, who gave the boy to new nurses and a doctor who hovered over an open incubator. The baby squeaked, the only cry I ever heard. He weighed in at 1 pound 4-1/2 ounces. He was alive! I prayed as I watch them pumping air into him with a bellows type airbag. Fear of deformity filled

my thoughts. The doctor and nurses worked on him continuously as Pat's doctor sewed her up. The Franciscan comes in, looked at me and quietly asked, "John Paul???" I nodded approval and he baptized my small, fragile newborn son John Paul in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as he poured a small bottle of water on his forehead. I feared the water would hurt his fragile forehead, but his baptism gave me a sense of relief. One nurse asked "viable or non-viable?" as she was filling out some forms. After a silent moment; another nurse said "viable." I guess that made John human!

Pat's doctor said the baby was transferred to another hospital. John's doctor had a drug called natural surfactant which had been successful with very pre-mature babies. Even though John Paul was slightly below age required for this drug, John Paul's doctor brought the drug in his pocket. For this we will be forever most thankful. John's chances were slim, perhaps 5%, with the possibility of many complications. The nurses said I could call John's new hospital and I talked to the nurse who said John Paul survived the trip. It was after midnight, so I went home to sleep, take the kids to Mass and return to the hospital.

The 35 Day Life of John Paul

DAVID: I saw John twice that first full day, once by myself and once with Craig, Cheryl, Brian and Dianne. On my first visit, the nurse explained the machinery. That afternoon I returned with the kids, and the nurse had us put on gowns and scrub. John was back by the window. He was so small, but looked perfectly normal. The nurse explained the temperature, heartbeat and breathing monitors. She warned of bleeding in the brain and skin breakdown. She showed me where to find his weight chart. It started at 570 grams. The five week lifetime of John Paul Banaszak had begun.

A lady left the nursery in tears. Later, I found out that breaking the rules on non parent visitors was for a child close to death, but I was full of hope for John Paul. The nurse explained the ventilator tube, oxidation sensor and thermal sensor. His skin was shiny red those first few days. I asked the nurse if John looked normal. She said all his features looked normal for a baby his age. His eyes

were fused shut, but he looked normal in every other way. He looked perfectly formed. That first week of John's life, Pat stayed in the other hospital. I worked, visited Pat, then John Paul and went home to the kids. I hoped that John live until Pat got out of the hospital.

DAVID: When I got home early morning of June 26, I checked my old St. Pius X Missal edited by Van De Patte (1956) and discovered that June 26 was the feast of Saints John and Paul, Martyrs. St. Paul the Apostle's feast was on my birthday June 30 and the feast of St. John of St. Facundo, Confessor was June 12, Pat's birthday. Our new son, John Paul's birthday fell between these feast days! I recalled that John Paul I was a pope for only 33 days. To me this meant that John Paul, like his name sake John Paul II, was a very special person. I believed that John Paul was a special Pro-Life message sent to us by God. Were these signs from our **Faith** or just unusual **coincidences**?

PAT: The next days dragged by, yet went quickly. I never had a roommate. The nurses were super and I had great visitors. I wanted to see John. I was exhausted constantly. It was hard to manage with my leg in a cast. I was a novelty on the ward. The nurses seemed amazed that a 42 year old woman, who just had a C-section, could walk on crutches. Wow--a walking miracle! I felt loved and not too lonely.

The next few days in the hospital I made many calls to John's hospital to ask about my baby. I looked out of my room's window to view John's hospital across the river. I got lots of attention from nurses, who rarely get someone there with a broken ankle. They helped me with crutches, gave me sponge bathes and helped me nurse and store milk for Baby John.

On Thursday, June 30, I gave David a birthday present; I came out of the hospital! I had an appointment with my bone doctor at John's hospital, the same day. David sprung me from one hospital and I went to the other hospital. I went to my appointment and when I went to X-Ray, I made a detour to see John. The neonatal nurses put up with my wheelchair and my clumsiness. It had been 5 days and I had to see John. I knew that John Paul was a special baby. When I first saw John I fell in love.

The neonatal nurses warned me to be prepared for tubes and equipment all over my son. But as David wheeled me over to our son, I saw lots of children with tubes, but I just saw babies. John was my baby, so fragile, tiny and helpless; yet so loving like a gift from God. How I wanted to hold him, comfort him and just love him. Sometimes we were not allowed to hold his hand, because it would throw him into fits and make his heart rate do crazy things.

DAVID: Pat got out of the hospital on my birthday. The doctor said "go home first and rest a day", but we knew the next stop was to see John Paul. For the next three weeks, we made daily treks to see and admire John in his artificial womb. John opened his eyes, he had broviac surgery, his heart valve closed in response to medication, his skin was doing well, he survived one bout with infection and the ultrasounds showed there were no brain bleeds. Each day we became closer to John. We prayed to have John home for Christmas. I saw John Paul every day of his life, but I never again heard an audible cry, except for that first little squeal. Pat got rides to the hospital each

day and I picked her up after work. The other children prepared supper and waited for us to get home. We were falling in love with this little boy who weighed the same as a 20 oz box of cereal. One day we put a ring around his wrist, just as we saw in Dr Willke's slides mentioned by Willke (1997). We came to a deep appreciation of the work of the doctors and nurses in the intensive care nursery and began to bond with them and many of the nurses were bonding to John Paul.

PAT: Lying there, John looked like heaven. Thus started my four week love affair with my son, an affair that I would agonize over yet never be sorry I went through. From June 30 to July 30 I saw John almost every day. It did not seem like a burden, but something we needed to do. The kids were not allowed to see him often. They saw him, when he was first born, then Cheryl saw him a few times. Once they moved John to the viewing window and all came to see him. I got in a routine at home. I would get up, straighten the house, and prepare the kids for the day. A friend drove me to the hospital, where I would visit with John until Dave came in from work. We tried to get home around 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM for the other kids. I felt bad leaving them, but knew John needed me. Cheryl took over as mother. How grateful I will ever be to her for maturing so quickly and helping out.

Now, each day we had was a miracle. We brought in our video camera. He was a miracle, alive and a real baby like everything we taught in Right to Life. Babies are real at 22 weeks; John did have all his components. He looked all red and wrinkled and his eyes were fused. His fingernails and toenails were starting to grow and his ears were pinned back. With the surfactant, his lungs



Figure 2 John Paul -Four Days after Birth

were ready to work. By July 4, his eyes opened. He makes no noise, with the tubing in his mouth, but he sure could screw up his face just like any other crying baby.

David told me about the crying woman he saw the first night he saw John. Maybe she lost her baby. We knew that could happen to us, but we tried to not think about it. We tried to have happy and optimistic thoughts. I kept asking the doctors the odds John had, but they never give us good ones. I knew not many babies die so I had hope.

On Friday, July 22 at 11 PM, we got a call from the hospital. John had not voided all shift, he had yellow mucous, indicating another infection and he was in serious condition. I did not bother David, but went to bed and prayed. The next day we went to the hospital at 8 AM. From then until the next Saturday, I left the hospital 2 times. When we got there John was very still. He had been given a drug to paralyze him so he would not fight the respirator. He could move nothing, not even his eyes. We looked at him and felt helpless. He looked so innocent and so tiny. All we could do was waiting until the doctor came and told us the news. John had pneumonia, which they could

control. He was not voiding, that they could not control. They gave him drugs to induce voiding. We waited and hoped.

Saturday afternoon, one nurse said holistic medicine encourages making everything yellow to make one want to go. So we covered John's warmer with yellow gowns. We put yellow everywhere. Our daughter, Dianne lent her yellow butterfly. We waited. As the day wore on, I told David I could not leave John Paul. He agreed and I called for a room in the dorm and Dave went home. I stayed the night, talking to John and the nurses, encouraging him to go, pleading with God, praying and hoping.

On Sunday, July 24, I stayed the night again, played John's tapes for him, talked to him, read to him. He got great comfort, as I read THE LITTLEST ANGEL over and over. I started writing my thoughts down. I was scared, what if he didn't go, then what. When Grandpa died last year, we expected it and though it hurt, we knew it was coming. Babies are not supposed to DIE. We knew odds were not great when he was born; but here he was over a month old, he was supposed to be past the dying stage. WHY GOD? WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

COME ON JOHN, please go. In the next days he did go a little, but not enough. He bloated up with fluids. His head got big, his neck doubled chinned, his chest and stomach rose with fluid. The fluids went to his arms and legs and made him look like a balloon. The doctors tried every medicine they could use, but nothing worked. As we prayed, we realized, the answer to our prayer might be that John die. God might need him. I pleaded, but knew God's will be done. I prayed for acceptance.

DAVID: On Saturday, July 23, John reached his 4th week in our world. On Thursday, he looked fine and the nurses placed him near the front window for all to see. The new doctor on duty told us of John's impending failure. I thought John looked puffy the night before. I hoped he was finally gaining weight. The doctor said John stopped urinating. That part had always worked so well. The doctor said they gave him medicine to help get his kidneys working. Our vigil over John Paul began and thoughts of Grandpa filled my mind. I didn't want John to die. I hoped he would recover, but I knew deep down that John would die. Pat and I went to noon Mass at Holy Angels church to pray for John. John must have a proper funeral, a voice keep telling me. I recalled the pictures of aborted babies in the trash can. I saw many faces like John's over and over again. John must "die with dignity." By God's will, the world accepted our small pre-mature baby as a human person and my son. I felt sorrow for people who had miscarriages and did not get acknowledgement that the life they loss was real. I understood the sorrow of couples and women who miscarriage and have little pity from society for their dead babies. Some felt John was just a second trimester fetus, but he gripped my little finger for help before he said good bye to me in the world, just like Grandpa used to grasp my hand on his death bed.

PAT: On Monday, John celebrated his 1 month birthday. Dianne made John a banner and we hung it with his teddy, his animals and his butterfly. John looked around and moved his arm very slowly as the fluid was building up. We talked of dialysis with the doctors, but were told it did not work

in such tiny infants. On the next couple of nights, David brought the kids down to stay with me individually and they were able to see John. On Thursday, Dave brought all the kids down and we got to hold our baby for the very first time. He felt tiny and light yet so precious in our arms. He seemed contented to be held. From the time we picked him up until he died, we never let him down again, except to change his dressings. My brother and sister-in-law came from Kentucky and the four of us took turns holding, comforting, singing to and rocking John. We played music, which he loved, over and over, read him the LITTLEST ANGEL, and looked at him. He didn't seem to be in pain, except when we put him down to change the blankets that wrapped him and became soaked as we held him. Every so often he looked up with his dark blue eyes to check if we were still there. When we became exhausted, the nurses who loved him so, held him.

A Letter to John on JULY 26 Tuesday

PAT: Hi John,

You look better now. Your eyes are open and moving all over. It feels good to see you look. I think you see the butterfly Dianne gave you. WOW!! She doesn't share easily. Your skin is breaking down a little, especially your hands and stomach. Your pressures are good. You are



Figure 3 John Paul Looks at Us

down to 71% on the oxygen. Your heart rate is good. Your temp is great. Your IV's are holding up. You look so sweet. You have the kid's nose, all small and turned up. You have Craig and Cheryl's eyes, blue and clear. You have my hands, slender and long. You have Daddy's fat feet. You are so beautiful with your brown hair. We hope never to forget the beauty that you have given us. You have shown us patience, when you were born and for me that week after. I couldn't see you for what seemed a lifetime. Finally, 5 days after you were born, daddy wheeled me in to see you. You were so adorable! All the tubes and sensors couldn't

stop your beauty. And as I look at you, your beauty is still there and will be always.

Have you touched lives? Why John, you have touched so many lives you will never know. Many people we don't even know were deeply affected by your birth and struggle. They have said prayers, brought us meals, and cared about us. You are a teacher, John. You taught me patience more than I want to know, and how much one can love and you have shown how precious life is and how fragile. Ever since birth, people accepted you are a true baby, with all the physical aspects plus all the personality of a true saint. All the nurses love you; Louisa, Beth, Mary Ann, Mary, and Ann. You know I watched Ann last night. She's in pain because you are so sick. She loves you so much, it's written all over her face. She loves to care for you, talk to you and play with you. Yet tonight she would barely speak to me. She only occasionally came to look at you. I think she is afraid, afraid of being involved and yet she is. When 11 came, I said goodbye to her, patted her and

told her thank you for all the goodness she shows you. Relief came to her face and she smiled. On the 27th she came up to us at 10 PM and said she and Mary Ann had been talking to you the whole PM shift and she was just so relaxed and it was beautiful.

Craig and Brian Visit You

PAT: You know it's strange how you affect people. Craig and Brian are no different. They came and shyly looked at you. Because you look different now than when you were well, I think they were scared. It didn't take long for them to see the real you, past the distortions and bloated ness. They saw your soul. They reached out, slowly at first. Then Craig found you had a grip and he started to relate to you. Hey, he though, you can play ball with him. Hey, you can play soccer and roughhouse with him. He talked to you and enjoyed you. He relaxed and I was so glad he got to see you and enjoy you when you were still responsive. Brian was scared at first, then started touching you and relaxed. He talked to you and joked with you just like a brother. He looked past your deformities and enjoyed you as a brother with a little teasing and conning. I hope the girls do as well.

DAVID: Since that day, this visit by Craig and Brian reaffirmed for me the Respect for all human Life that we must all have as described in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and published by the United States Catholic Conference (1994).

JULY 27 Wednesday

PAT: We called David's Father and more people tonight. We touched one person, who always seemed so cold before. With your crisis, we learned she had a child like you, a baby with a big crisis. She told us she felt helpless and sad when her child died. Same as we feel now.

Cheryl and Dianne Visit

PAT: We held John for the first time tonight. We had many good experiences today. Cheryl and Dianne visited you and are staying with me tonight. Dianne looked at you, but would not touch or come close to you. She loves you and says you are going to heaven. She's only eight and doesn't really understand. There's a real you that some people cannot see. Cheryl was also a little frightened at first, but her maternal instincts took over and the love for you shown through her eyes. None of us know why you have to go through this pain, but you do and we pray it will end for you soon. I don't want you to die, but I don't want you to suffer either.

DAVID: Again John's LIFE affected many people. Many others have been in our situation. Sullivan (2007) discusses the sorrow of a young mother over her son's short life of an hour and 42 minutes. Sullivan (2007) concludes that "Noah Scott lived for just moments on this earth, but he touched many others. And he was loved – by his parents surely, but most of all by a Heavenly Father who makes no mistakes. Disguised as a medical tragedy, Noah Scott became a true

blessing.” McHugh (2001) gives us some insight into the sorrow of mothers who mourn miscarried babies with the article titled “Mother Cares Father Cares: Who else cares for the mis-carried baby?”

Other Visits

PAT: Our neighbor came tonight to see you. She was in awe at how terribly small you are, yet perfectly formed. John, you are a symbol to the pro-life movement; so tiny and young, yet perfectly formed and definitely a human. Abortion could have legally killed you during your second trimester birth; yet, you were born a baby, not a fetus or a thing.

Father John also came to see you. He prayed that God do his will and that we might accept whatever that will would be. He was inspirational and touched everyone. I glanced at Ann while we were praying. She was visibly touched and yet seemed afraid to break into our moment. All I could think was that it was because of you, a seamless nobody in this big world. You evoked all this emotion and got down to what life is all about, loving and caring of individuals and the simpleness of life. Your life affected all of us.

Thoughts as I Sit Beside John Paul

PAT: As I sit by you, John, knowing that we are again praying for a miracle, I remember the night you were born. We again asked for a miracle. I went to the hospital, just for a check up. I had you inside me for about 22 weeks. The doctors told me you were ready to be born, that I was fully dilated and you were coming as a miscarriage. I said NO, that couldn't be and cried the same tears I'm crying now. We knew you could live, we begged for a chance for you. My obstetrician told us he would do a C-Section, which might extend your life for a day. Well, John, we went for it. It is now a month and we are again told you will not make it. As I gaze at you I am really happy we've had you so long, a month longer than we thought. If you get better we could have you lots longer. We will still hope and pray. John, we went to church yesterday at Holy Angels. You are a little angel of God. It was appropriate to go a parish filled with families and kids and hope for the future.

Daddy and I wonder why has God done this to us? We can't answer. We know you are here for a reason to teach us maybe about love. For you are love complete and without sin. The nurses and staff have fallen in love with you, maybe that's the reason, so that we never take anything for granted not life, not children, not anything. All life is so precious; we should not take life for granted.

My head is so filled as I look at you. I imagine my parents sitting with me 39 years ago. My mom wrote, I had polio and they did not know whether I would live or die. Miracles of miracles, I came through OK. So I know it can be done and I'm hoping. I keep thinking back to the story your grandma wrote about me and how scared she was and now I can relate to that fear. I'm praying for you like grandma prayed for me, asking God to spare your life and praying for strength to accept

what He decides. That is the difficult part, to accept what He decides. All at once I'm not in control, like the car accident. I feel guilty about the accident, but I could do nothing. This situation is hard but I have to trust in God. I have to surrender completely to his will and accept what He decides. John, this ward has been your life. In this ward you affected lives. Your nurses and a lot I don't know will never be the same after knowing you.

John's Doctor's and Nurses

PAT: During John's life we were constantly told not to expect miracles. He had a staff of doctors. Some were optimistic and others spelled the voice of doom. The first doctor I met was a somber man who gave us no hope. However; he was the man who risked his job to bring the life-saving drug, surfactant at John's birth so John might have a chance to live. When I first saw him, he said John had like a 5% chance of survival. I thought that we would meet that challenge; we would be the ones to beat the odds. All through out the five weeks, your first doctor never was optimistic and yet he was always honest with us. He gave us no false hopes, which is sometimes good in such a serious situation.

The second doctor I met gave us hope. He was filled with optimism, love of babies and always on the up side. When John's first doctor told us the broviac surgery (a tube is placed into the throat and stomach to go directly to the heart so that medicines and food can given without using external veins) was dangerous and John might not live past it; this doctor told us not to worry that most kids come out of the surgery fine. He joked with us, even in the most anxiousness week of death. He made us feel good.

John's third doctor gave us comfort. I believe God gave us these doctors in order that they were needed. At first, when we needed reality, in the mid time when we needed hope and humor. Now we knew John was probably going to die, this doctor would answer questions, give us a word of comfort, or stand and look at John with us. He cut red tape so all the relatives could come in to see John and just did what he could to aid us in our grief. I remember many nights sitting there with John just looking at him and crying softly and the doctor would come and put his arm around me. He was a tower of strength for us.

The nurses knew John better than us and they loved him as much. Mary his primary nurse, always knew what to do to comfort him. Ann was his respirator therapist and he was her sweetheart. He hated when she suctioned him out when it was necessary, but he didn't care. He would squabble and squirm and his oxygen level, which was supposed to stay above 87-92%, would drop. The nurses had to crank the dial up for more oxygen until John settled down. When the nurses left John, he would contentedly stay at a steady level. John had many nurses and I will never forget the lovely care he received. They watched over him and the other babies. It seemed like the baby across from John was always sick. She developed hydrocephalus and they had to tell her mom they were going to put a shunt in her to relieve pressure on the brain. The mother was sad and scared. They transferred the baby to another hospital and I prayed that she lived.

DAVID: The kindness and care provided by most of the medical professionals fit well into the thoughts of Gotcher (2000) who states “But, and this is important, direct action must be done consistently with a promotion of the culture of life and civilization of love. In other words, it must be done with an eye toward the dignity of everyone involved: the child, the mother, the medical personnel, and politicians.” We were fortunate to have doctors, nurses and other professions who were promoting the culture of life.

John Paul Dies

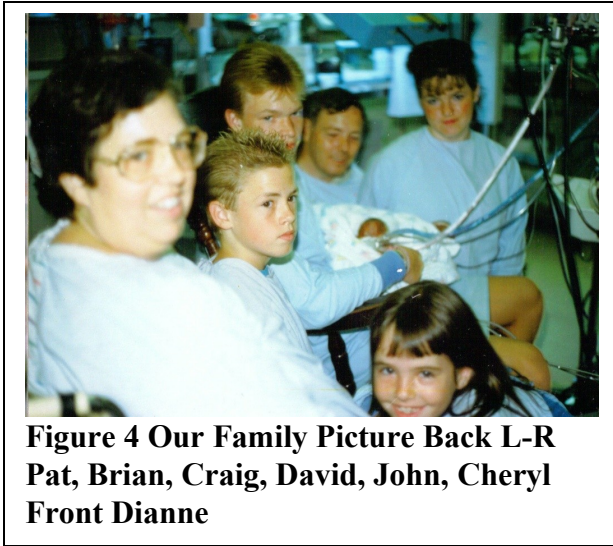


Figure 4 Our Family Picture Back L-R Pat, Brian, Craig, David, John, Cheryl Front Dianne

DAVID: On Thursday, they let each family member hold John and we had our only family picture with him. On Friday morning, I took Craig to take his driving exam. Then I joined John Paul and Pat at the hospital. Pat, myself, Pat's brother Mike and his wife, Joyce took turns holding John as he near death and the swelled effects of his kidney failure took over. He was like a feather to hold, but he kept peeking to make sure someone was holding him. He rested peacefully when held, and squirmed and cried when set in his bed to change his dressing. I held John a couple of hours; it was hard to get Pat and Mike to sleep. We hoped each minute that John would live

another day. Pat took John Paul in the early morning hours, I told Michael and Joyce to go home and get some rest and I went to sleep in Pat's room at the hospital.

PAT: When John died we were stunned. To know death is coming and to accept are two different things. I was sitting in the rocker, holding my son and staring at his heart rate monitor. It was around 80 when I took him and it went up and down for a while. I stared as it started to go down and not come back as fast. I got my book and started to read passages about death and dying and what to expect. Once in a while John looked at me with his blue eyes with total trust and contentment. I sat, cried, read and rocked. The nurses knew not what to say, so they left us alone. When the monitor displayed 55, the nurse asked if we should wake up David to come. I said wait until it got to 45-50, thinking there would be more time. John's monitor read 45, I told the nurse to call David. Within 5 minutes, it went down. John looked at me one last time at about 45-47 then just shut his eyes and seemed to go to sleep. The monitor went steadily down from 40 to about 32, then he seemed to have a heart attack and it went to zero and stayed. I just sat and cried there was nothing I could do. The nurse unhooked him from the respirator and checked and there was no heart beat. My baby died in my arms.

DAVID: At 6:04 AM the phone rang, it was the nurse saying I should come over to see John. I walked back figuring that John would still be alive. I got my gown on and saw the heartbeat

monitor display 0. Pat said he was gone, his heart stopped at 6:10. My thoughts rushed to the funeral. I felt out of place with our dead baby among the live babies. The nurse disconnected the respirator and we saw John's full face for the first time since birth. We kept what mementos we could.

PAT: The books said that when a baby dies, it's a good idea to take your picture with him. The nurse did that for us. I kept thinking I have so many pictures of him alive; I don't want one of him dead. I sat there and held John and let the world go on around me. About an hour after he died, we took John to the funeral home. We asked to carry him ourselves, an unusual, but legal practice. I remembered grandpa being carried out in a body bag and I could not see John being put in a bag. We wrapped John in his blanket and they wheeled me out to the car. I held him all the way to the funeral home.

DAVID: John's favorite nurse comes on duty as we were getting ready to leave. We arranged it so we could drive John to the funeral home. The nurse brought John and Pat down to the car for me; just like taking your baby home from the hospital. Pat held John as I drove; this was John's first and only ride with us. We were proud of him. We made arrangements at the funeral home. On the drive home I cried profusely. I went through a red light due to my nervousness. My parents were due the next day and we had to pick up grandma at the airport that afternoon.

PAT: What have we learned from your life? We learned that simple things in life are important. I never thought about walking until I broke my ankle. When I had to go from the dorm to your ward, I really knew what being able to walk meant. Such a simple task, yet we take it for granted. Patience-what a way to teach this. I learned that the best things in life you have to be patient for, like getting in to see you; waiting for the doctor's making rounds to get back in; and waiting for you to die. As we rocked you in the last few days, I thought often of how long it would take. I did not want you in pain, but you didn't seem to be in our arms, so then I wanted you to live forever. Peace. You showed all of us an inner peace that I never thought I had. It was beautiful that a baby could teach his parents. So John, as I say goodbye to you, I know it is not forever. I know I will see you again in heaven and you will be happy. We love you forever in our hearts.

John Paul's Funeral

PAT: When we knew John would die, we made arrangements. As the knowledge sank in that John was going to Heaven, I was sad and did not see how I could be happy again. I'm glad we planned the funeral. Here was the chance to add our special, personal touches. The hospital social worker helped with the arrangements. We had to decide on a funeral home, a funeral or private service, and a burial site. Mostly, I wanted our church's services for John. After his baptism, only one clergyman visited John in the hospital. Luckily, one of our friends prevailed on her priest uncle. His prayers and words comforted me and then I knew John was going into God's hands. His presence and words stirred many of the hospital staff as well; as many stopped to listen as he comforted us and John. I will be eternally grateful to him. The same with grandpa, the whole time he was sick, only one clergyman from another church saw him. When you are terminally ill, that is

when the clergy is so important, not to the sick person, as much as to the family. Families need to be reassured that there is a God in heaven and that His will be done, even if it hurts. Without clergy, none of this is said and even though our faith is strong, we ask God WHY? We need answers.

We decided on burial, because cremation reminded us of aborted babies, burn them and pretend they were never alive. We decided to bury John with my mom at a cemetery near us. We chose a funeral home. The funeral director said come over when John dies and we would make arrangements. He did tell us, even before John died, that we should have a closed casket. Seeing John in an open casket would disturb many people, including us.



Figure 5 John Paul in his Casket

DAVID: On Monday afternoon we visited John at the funeral home. He looks so special in his tiny coffin. We held John and this helped. The director kept recommending a close casket. We spent the weekend figuring the Mass, the music and the little special flyer we wanted for John. Many friends provide meals, help and cards.

PAT: As I recall our efforts with grandpa and John Paul, we did what we had to do and we do not feel guilty about what we could have done. The worst feelings I think you can have in any

death situation is the wonderment as to what you could have done to change things. I feel in both instances we did all we could and we can live with that knowledge. We could never think about pulling the plug.

One of my saddest feelings is that we have so few memories of John. With grandpa we had a whole life. Grandpa loved to talk about them; his life on the farm, his courting grandma, his retirement in Florida. With John we had an hour of video tape, 2 full picture books and a lot of wishes. We are grateful for those since many don't even have that.

At the home we made arrangements. Dave's relatives were coming in that day, so we decided to have the funeral Monday so they could go back Tuesday. We wanted to have a viewing time and the funeral on Monday night so all our working friends could come. The funeral director persisted about a closed casket, so we said OK and left.

Monday night, when we saw John, he looked beautiful and very tiny; we told the director we

wanted an open casket. We wanted our friends to see John Paul and to love him as we did--and he was so beautiful. Many people who came were amazed at his size, at his perfection of body. He had touched them. It was a beautiful viewing. Our children did special parts of the



Figure 6 Marker on John Paul's Grave

funeral; his sister Cheryl and brother Craig, his god parents, carried the casket. God gave us the songs to sing and gave the whole funeral the dignity that John deserved. We sang Like a Shepherd, We Walk by Faith, Here I am Lord, and You are Near. Cheryl read from Jeremiah and John.

DAVID: I filled with pride at John's funeral. Many people, including two of John's nurses, expressed sympathy. Little John touched a lot of people. John's viewing was before the Mass. I wanted the open casket so people could see that a baby this young was indeed a human. It touched me, when a Knights of Columbus brother said "I hate to admit it but the little fellow looks like you." We sang, we prayed and we thanked God for giving us John Paul for the short time. The next day, after a prayer at the cemetery, John was buried beside Pat's mother. Grandma said her baby and Pat's baby were side by side. Jer 1: 4-8 is inscribed on John's burial marker. In New American Bible (NAB) this is Jer 1:5-8 which states "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord GOD!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the LORD answered me, Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."

John Paul's Personhood

DAVID: John Paul lived 35 days. Many people, including the 1973 Supreme Court, would not consider him a person. Franz (2003) reports on uncertainty for young unborn human life in the 30 years since Roe V. Wade. John was a person inside and outside the womb. Some in this country believe John was a person only because his place of residence changed from the womb to a neonatal nursery. Some would say he was not even a person as he lay in the nursery. John Paul weighed in at 1 pound 5 ounces (a second trimester fetus). He accomplished many human feats.

John taught me the sadness of the men and women who lost a little child, especially through miscarriage. He showed me the dedication, noble efforts and respect for life that many doctors and nurses in the hospital do have. John Paul, considered by many to be a non-person, taught me lessons a well trained teacher could not. John left the following worldly trail. I learned that John's renal failure had the same physical effect as kidney failure in an older person. John Paul had Life Insurance and we received a settlement because he lived 15 days outside the womb. John Paul had a birth and death certificate. John was a dependent on our income tax return, a person in the IRS's eyes. John Paul was an American citizen as stated in the 14th Amendment because he was born in this country. John Paul had lots of bills which worried his parents and which our health insurance helped pay because they considered John to be a person. John's blood type was A+, just like moms. John had mail delivered to him at the hospital. John Paul had an obituary in the paper. John had a funeral and a marker on his grave. At the funeral John Paul resembled me. This made me proud. John Paul caused love and stress. John Paul gripped my little finger in his last days. John Paul stirred most every human emotion possible during his short stay. John made people laugh and he made them cry. Even hospital nurses and doctors bonded to John. People at work showed concerned and asked about John's progress each day I worked. Believe me these are the

characteristics of a person. We're just lucky that we had John for five weeks, and we thank God for his gift to us.

Braken (1998), Crosby (1993), Kaczor (2004) and Peach (2003) discuss the personhood of embryos. Crosby (1999) explains "Why Persons Have Dignity." Pruss (2002) reminds us that we were all once a fetus. Surely John was a person and John did have dignity. His life in the neonatal nursery was just a change in residence for him. John did have conscientiousness and responded to our voices.

PAT: John Paul struggled and fought for life. He fought infection, skin break-down and tried to breathe on his own. Even though he lost the fight for his own life, he enhanced so many other peoples. One little boy, who never should have lived, showed the world the preciousness of life and the need to protect life. He showed how much society loses, if we disregard life and throw it away in our quest for pro-choice and our own rights. As we sat and looked at him, we wondered how one little boy, deemed not viable by certain people, including 7 Justices of the Supreme Court, can mean so much to so many. We wonder how many others, who were just as viable, are killed every year by abortion. How many Johns are there, that we never give a chance to affect the world or to touch a heart or to give love so generously? We weep not for John, but for moms and dads who will never know and feel the life from their beautiful unborn babies.

John's whole life gave love to people, to sharing his cute personality; from his hand grip to let you know he was a boy, to his eyes, clean and blue, that pierced our heart and soul. Never able to speak out loud, John spoke to us in many other ways. His hands waved and feet wiggled when excited. His faced screwed up, got red and grimaced when mad. He loved to be stroked, held and talked to. He showed utter contentment to his tapes of Bach and Vivaldi. He affected nurses and friends and he was total LOVE.

John Paul Banaszak lived short time on this earth. Born on June 25, 1988, he was a joy to his parents, his nurses and to all those whose lives he touched. John was born at 24 weeks gestation and was so tiny but stirred a powerful amount of love while on this earth. His mission, on this earth, was to show the preciousness of life from the tiny, to the handicapped, to the dying. His gift to us all was unconditional love.

Concluding Thoughts

PAT: John moves his eyes yet his vision is to heaven and not here. He is a child of God. God called him home and he is going. Why did God do this to us? Why can he tempt us with love, then snatch it away? Why does He allow us to become attached, and then pry away from our hearts the one we love? We must believe he was here for a reason.

DAVID: One thing that helped me is that I may be the only person to see John Paul at least once every day of his born life. It bonded me closer to John, and helped me to accept his death. Even if

it was for ten minutes a day, I know it helped me to feel pride in my son. Even when the kidney failure progressed, I did not realize John looked so sick.

PAT: When John was alive, almost everyone knew of someone who had a baby as small as John. When he died, even more people came up and said they had a stillborn, miscarriage or little one that died. Listen and comfort them.

DAVID: Grandpa and John Paul were both helpless, but Pat and I did all we could. We tried and had few regrets that we didn't do all we could. We were stunned by the similarities between John's and grandpa's last days.

PAT: Hearing is the last function to go before dying. Continue to talk all the time before death. In Grandpa's case, we talked, played his ball games on radio, sat in his room and talked to him or to others around him. We knew he was listening. John Paul did not like noise. His monitor's alarms would sound when there was noise around him, so the nurses put him in an isolette. Even when we would stand on either side of the isolette and talk over it, he would cringe up to let us know he did not like it. He did like his music. His favorite was Vivaldi, Bach and soothing mood music. Harps and flutes, he loved.

Bereavement Thoughts

PAT: Here are six points to remember from services for those who died in the hospital during July and August 1988. We found these points to be helpful.

1) Don't suppress emotion. Acknowledge them and let people know your experiences. Let people comfort you in good times and bad. 2) Don't refuse to talk. Put your chaotic feelings into words. 3) Don't indulge in self condemnation. No human being is infallible. We only can do what we have the physical and emotional power to do. We can only make decisions on what we know at the time, not what we find out after. 4) Don't stay inactive. No idleness. Engage in new activities. Redo your environment. Help someone else who may seem to need help more than you. 5) Don't undervalue the healing power of time. In time broken bones mend and so does the ache of bereavement dull. Don't feel bad if you cry at times and don't feel ashamed. If you see someone like that reach out and touch them. They will know you understand without a word. 6) Don't deny the need for help.

PAT: Stress the importance of memories, even if for a short time. Take pictures, as we did with John. Be there every day possible, if only for ten minutes. Talk to and touch your infant and show your love. Talk anything. Learn and find out all you can about procedures used. You will not have to think back and wonder if you could have done more. Plan your own funerals don't let anyone intimidate you. Do it the way you feel comfortable or the way you feel the person would feel best about. Seek comfort of others and let them hug you or be there with you or do things for you. Don't shut yourself off just because you don't feel that others can't feel the pain you are going through. Bring in your children, even if they do not want to be. They will regret it later if you

don't. Call the clergy. If they can't come, ask a friend to help find someone. I will be ever grateful for the Franciscan lay person that baptized John and the priest that gave John last rites. I wish our priest had seen John. We need to educate priests and ministers that dying is part of life, and they have to learn to deal with it too.

Evangelium Vita

DAVID: Returning to the Gospel of Life we see the following two paragraphs to be very applicable to the 35 day life of little John Paul.

“44. Human life finds itself most vulnerable when it enters the world and when it leaves the realm of time to embark upon eternity. The word of God frequently repeats the call to show care and respect, above all where life is undermined by sickness and old age. Although there are no direct and explicit calls to protect human life at its very beginning, specifically life not yet born, and life nearing its end, this can easily be explained by the fact that the mere possibility of harming, attacking, or actually denying life in these circumstances is completely foreign to the religious and cultural way of thinking of the People of God.” (John Paul II, March 25, 1995)

“85. In celebrating the Gospel of life we also need to appreciate and make good use of the wealth of gestures and symbols present in the traditions and customs of different cultures and peoples. There are special times and ways in which the peoples of different nations and cultures express joy for a newborn life, respect for and protection of individual human lives, care for the suffering or needy, closeness to the elderly and the dying, participation in the sorrow of those who mourn, and hope and desire for immortality.” (John Paul II, March 25, 1995)

From the Sorrow will come a Joy

DAVID: Many times during the life of John Paul and since, Pat and I tried to believe that from the sorrow will come a joy. There are three instances in the New American Bible by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (1970) which uses sorrow and joy in the same passages. They are EST 9:22, JER 31:13 and 2 COR 2:3. In preparing this paper we found the Second Vatican Council (1965) published a document titled *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope) which we found again shows the usefulness of all human life. Gotcher (2000) prepared an excellent discussion of *Gaudium et Spes*. Finally, the short biography of John Paul is produced as a video by Gungor (1990). We see this second trimester infant struggle for life, impact adults and die into eternal life. John Paul provided sorrow, but his joy is in heaven.

The 35 Day Life of John Paul

We give thanks to God for John Paul
Who filled our hearts with joy
More than any manmade toy

John visited us for 35 days
And touched our hearts in many ways
We think John visited us as a special message
That all Human Life is very precious
He grasped my little finger,
in the final moments that he lingered.
Just like grandpa's helpless hand grasped my.
John cried silently and quieted with a pacifier.
He looked at me with his deep blue eyes.

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