

## **BISHOP MCHUGH: CHAMPION OF LIFE**

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Bishop McHugh's life is a model for the University Faculty for Life. By his words and deeds, he demonstrated the value he placed on education and on the sanctity of human life from conception until natural death.

He was a scholar, and he pursued graduate studies in sociology at Fordham University and at the Catholic University of America. He earned a doctorate in divinity, and a doctorate in Sacred Theology from the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome where he focused on moral theology. He was internationally recognized as an expert in family life issues and medical ethics. His courageous countercultural stands had to be taken seriously, even by those who opposed his views.

A model of courage for all who are engaged in the immense task of building a culture of life, our Bishop refused to be intimidated by those who, for example, hoped to keep representatives of the Church from speaking out on political matters. He wisely distinguished between engaging in partisan political activity, which he would not allow, and educating the public which he saw as both a right and a responsibility. Thus, in a letter dated only a few months before he died, he encouraged his pastors to educate parishioners "about the truly critical issues at stake in the coming election, [to] encourage them to vote and [to] inspire them to persuade others to consider the moral dimension of the critical issues."<sup>1</sup> It was one of the countless times he courageously refused to be silenced by those who like Tereus would cut out the tongue of their accusers. As educators, we in the University Faculty for Life are also familiar with the sometimes subtle and sometimes overt pressures to still our voices when we attempt to assure a hearing for pro-life views in the academic community. We would do well to draw upon Bishop McHugh's legacy of wisdom and courage.

### **Notes**

1. Letter to his Pastors, September 21, 2000, LIFESITE SPECIAL REPORT, October 6, 2000.