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## More coverage: Terri Schiavo

### Memorial praises Terri

**It was a goodbye and a celebration of her life.**

By TAMARA LUSH, Times Staff Writer  
Published April 1, 2005



[Times photo: Kathleen Flynn]

Bob Schindler thanks everyone at a memorial service for his late daughter, Terri Schiavo, on Thursday at Praise Cathedral Renewal Center.

PINELLAS PARK - Father Terry Gensemer stood at the pulpit of Praise Cathedral Renewal Center Thursday night and described Terri Schiavo in life: a beautiful woman, a loving sister, a devoted daughter.

In death, he said, she is a Christian martyr, a seed of inspiration.

"For 15 years, the seed lay in a bed, alone," he said. "Now, the seed has been planted, in several gardens around the world. There's not a nation in this world where someone has not heard of Terri Schiavo."

With those words, 400 people rose and applauded during the 90-minute

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interdenominational service.

The service was a celebration of Schiavo's life, and a thank-you for those who stood vigil outside her hospice for the past two weeks.

"I was compelled to come here," said Terri's father, Bob Schindler. "Terri thanks you."

Someone in the audience yelled: "We love you, Bob."

Schindler didn't stay long. After embracing several people, including memorial organizer and antiabortion activist Randall Terry, he went home to rest.

He made no mention of the contentiousness that marked Schiavo's final days, nor did he mention Michael Schiavo, her husband. Others did.

Father Gensemer called Terri Schiavo's death "a murder."

"Terri was murdered by the system, by legalism, and by the system's culture of death," he said. Monsignor Ted Malanowski criticized Michael Schiavo for not allowing the Schindlers to see Terri in her final moments. Malanowski and Rabbi Rayow Steven of Zera Emunah, a Madeira Beach temple, were also upset that Michael Schiavo intends to cremate Terri and bury her in Pennsylvania.

"Release her to her family," said Steven. "Give her the burial she so rightly deserves."

Added Malanowski: "They may have her body, but we have her soul."

[Last modified April 1, 2005, 08:37:03]

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