

# STEVEN MCDONALD, R.I.P.

Bill Donohue comments on the death of Steven McDonald:

New York City Police Officer Steven McDonald passed away yesterday.

Two years ago, in my book, *The Catholic Advantage: Why Health, Happiness and Heaven Await the Faithful*, I wrote about his heroics. "One of the most courageous persons I have ever met is Steven McDonald; he is a Catholic activist and a member of the Catholic League." His legacy is rich with inspiration.

After questioning some teenagers in Central Park in July 1986, he was shot, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down. His wife, Patti Ann, was three months pregnant at the time, and when she gave birth to their son, Conor, Steven took it as a sign that he "should live, and live differently." So he prayed, asking God for guidance. "That prayer was answered with a desire to forgive the young man who shot me."

Why did Officer McDonald feel the need to forgive the man who left him disabled, confined to a wheelchair, using a tracheal tube to breathe? "I wanted to free myself of all the negative, destructive emotions that his act of violence had unleashed in me: anger, bitterness, hatred, and other feelings. I needed to free myself of those emotions so that I could love my wife and our child and those around us."

Steven was also a robust defender of the faith. In 2010, he spoke at a Catholic League rally across from the Empire State Building, protesting the decision by the owner of the iconic structure not to honor Mother Teresa; a request I made to have the tower shine blue and white on her centenary was refused (though Mao Zedong, the mass murderer, was honored). Steven also spoke at events with me fighting anti-Semitism.

Steven McDonald was special: He was a paragon of forgiveness,

teaching all of us—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—of the need to forgive those who have trespassed against us. May he rest in peace.