

# Ruling over baby's life support is criticised

BY ED WEST

A PRO-LIFE group has condemned a High Court judge's order to switch off the life-support machine for a baby boy against his parents' wishes.

Ms Justice Russell made the ruling about the one-year-old after being advised that he had suffered "profound and irreversible brain damage" after being born prematurely. Doctors had said he would need "life-sustaining intensive care", including mechanical ventilation, for the rest of his life.

His mother had told the judge: "At the end of the day he is still alive. The ventilator is helping and supporting that life.

"Where there is life, I don't think you should get the right to determine whether that should be taken away."

She added: "He is still alive. Miracles do happen."

The boy's father told the court that he "knows what is going on". "I spend a lot of time with him, talking to him. I know when he is listening... we know he is reacting to certain things," he said.

Peter Williams, executive officer of Right to Life, said the ruling was "profoundly saddening and appalling". The decision, he said, "should be the prerogative of the parents alone. Neither doctors nor the state have the right to make that decision for them."

3<sup>rd</sup> October  
Catholic Herald  
2014