



Tom Evans asked the Pope to intervene in the battle over his son's life support

# Save my son, father of Alfie Evans asks Pope

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The father of Alfie Evans kissed the Pope's hand yesterday and begged him to help "save our son".

Tom Evans, 21, and Kate James, 20, want to take their 23-month-old son from Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool to Rome for treatment and have begun an application to the Supreme Court for permission.

The couple have already lost cases in the High Court, Court of Appeal, Supreme Court and European Court of Human Rights after Mr Justice Hayden ruled that doctors could stop providing life-support treatment for Alfie, who is in a semi-vegetative state. The boy has a degenerative neurological condition that doctors have not definitively diagnosed. Doctors believe Alfie's best interests are served by ending treatment.

It was revealed yesterday that the couple had flown to Rome to ask the Pope to intervene. Mr Evans wrote on Facebook: "Last night I jumped on a plane and came to Vatican Rome to

meet the Pope." He posted photographs of himself kissing Francis's hand, and said: "Your Holiness save our son." In the meeting he asked the Pope for asylum for his son.

During his general audience afterwards, the Pope led the crowd in silent prayer for Alfie. At the beginning of April, Francis tweeted his support for the boy: "It is my sincere hope that everything necessary may be done in order to continue compassionately accompanying little Alfie Evans, and that the deep suffering of his parents may be heard. I am praying for Alfie, for his family and for all who are involved."

This week he said: "It's our duty to do everything to care for life."

Mr Justice Hayden said that flying Alfie to a foreign hospital would be wrong and pointless. Alder Hey Children's Hospital has said that treating Alfie is "inhumane" and "futile".

Alfie's parents want to take him to the Bambino Gesù hospital in Rome, where it is understood that staff would be willing to perform a tracheotomy. If that fails, they plan to take him to Munich.

1 times April 19 & 20 18