

117th Pope of Alexandria and the patriarch of all Africa of the Coptic Orthodox Church. He passed on March 17.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III presided more than 40 years over a worldwide expansion of the Coptic Orthodox Church. During his papacy, he appointed the first-ever bishops to preside over North American dioceses. When His Holiness became Pope in 1971, there were only four churches in North America. Today, there are over 100.

He championed a deep commitment to ecumenism interfaith dialogue, not just with Catholic groups—meeting the Roman Catholic Pope of Rome for the first time in over 1,500 years in the year of 1973—but he joined with Protestant churches as well as Islamic leaders and Muslim clerics. He was a man for the world.

I had the honor of meeting the Pope at our local Coptic Christian church when it was being constructed. He was a man of immense faith, unforgettable. I never will forget his steady, strong, peaceful countenance when I asked him what it would take to achieve unity among the faith confessions, and he said: It would take love.

His contributions to world understanding and bridging horizons yet unmet will flower in decades ahead and progress will move forward in his memory.

[From the New York Times, Mar. 17, 2012]

COPTIC POPE DIES IN EGYPT AMID CHURCH'S STRUGGLES

(By Kareem Fahim)

CAIRO.—Pope Shenouda III, who led the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt for four decades, expanding the church's presence around the world as he struggled, often unsuccessfully, to protect his Christian minority at home, died on Saturday after a long illness, state media reported.

Pope Shenouda, who was 88, had suffered from cancer and kidney problems for years.

His death comes at a time of rising fears for Egypt's to million Coptic Christians, who have felt increasingly vulnerable since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak and amid attacks on churches by hard-line Islamists and repression by Egypt's security forces.

The rise to power of conservative Islamist parties has also raised concerns that Egyptian national identity is becoming more closely bound to Islam.

"It's an injection of uncertainty for Copts at a time of transition in the country," said Michael Wahid Hanna, a fellow at the Century Foundation. "Whether people were fond of him or not, this will cause anxiety."

On Saturday night, hundreds of Coptic Christians gathered at Cairo's main cathedral to grieve.

Samir Youssef, a physician, called the pope "an intellectual, a poet—strong, charismatic."

"On a personal level, I'm worried about the future. I think there will be a conflict, the same chaos that followed the 25th of January," he added, referring to the start of the uprising last year.

In a statement, President Obama praised Pope Shenouda as a beloved "advocate for tolerance and religious dialogue." Egypt's interim rulers, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, called on Egyptians to "come together in solidarity and be tolerant, to take Egypt toward security and stability."

Pope Shenouda, who became patriarch in 1971, was known as a charismatic, conserv-

ative leader for Egypt's Copts, who make up about 10 percent of the population in the majority Sunni nation.

He filled a leadership vacuum as Copts—along with most Egyptians—retreated from public life under authoritarian rule, and he expanded the church's reach, especially in North America. At the same time, he was criticized for what were seen as his autocratic tendencies, which stifled internal church changes, and his support for Mr. Mubarak's government, given in return for a measure of protection that Copts increasingly felt was insignificant.

The failure to distance the church from Mr. Mubarak led to greater disillusionment with the pope after the revolution, especially among younger and more secular Copts.

Pope Shenouda was born on Aug. 3, 1923, as Nazeer Gayed in the city of Asyut, Egypt, according to a biography of the patriarch posted on the church's Web site. He attended Cairo University and became a monk in 1954.

In 1981, Pope Shenouda was sent into internal exile by President Anwar Sadat, with whom he clashed after complaining about discrimination against the Copts. Mr. Mubarak ended that exile in 1985, with an informal understanding that Pope Shenouda would be less vocal in pointing out discrimination, according to Mariz Tadros, a researcher at the University of Sussex and the author of a forthcoming book on the Copts.

That understanding was severely strained in the past decade after a series of deadly clashes between Copts and Muslims, and charges that the state, and especially its security services, stoked the sectarian divide. After 21 people were killed in a church bombing last year, some Copts criticized the pope for not confronting the government.

The Coptic Church's own policies, including its almost total ban on divorce, have also increased tensions. Some have left the church specifically to divorce, either choosing another denomination or officially converting to Islam, then sometimes converting back after the split.

The conversions have incited rumors that have led to episodes of Muslim-Christian violence.

The next pope will face a growing desire among many Copts to expand the community's leadership, analysts said. Under Pope Shenouda, "the church became the de facto political representative of the Copts," Mr. Hanna said. "That became increasingly problematic."

OCTOBER BABY: EVERY LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

(Mr. ADERHOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to one of the most important issues of our time and to remind my colleagues and my fellow Americans that "every life is beautiful."

This weekend, a film called "October Baby" will be in theaters across the country to tell the beautiful, heartfelt story of Hannah, a young woman who learns she was adopted after a failed abortion. While this film captures her journey to discover her hidden past and find hope for her unknown future, it takes a clear stand for life, something we often don't see at the movies.

I believe protecting unborn life is a universal issue and has become one of

the most unifying causes in recent decades. I'm grateful to all those that are involved in the making of the movie, especially the Erwin brothers from Alabama for making "October Baby" and their willingness to put this important issue in the spotlight.

A FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO JOHN W. ROWE AS HE RETIRES FROM EXELON

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. John Rowe, as the chairman and CEO of Exelon, is retiring upon closing of the company's merger with Constellation Energy.

John joined Unicom, the parent company of Commonwealth Edison, in 1998. He was hired to help fix its troubled nuclear fleet and prepare the company for deregulation.

In both 2008 and 2009, Institutional Investor named John the best electric utility CEO in America. In the 14 years of John's leadership, Exelon has been named by Forbes as one of "America's Best Companies," a "Global 2000 Company," the "Best Managed Utility Company," to Fortune's list of the World's Most Admired Companies, one of Businessweek's Top 50 companies, and Utility of the Year by Electric Light and Power.

Throughout John's career, he has been an active leading voice in energy and environmental policy, delivering policy addresses and testifying before Congress, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and State regulators.

John and his wife, Jeanne, are committed participants in civic and cultural activities. They are committed to a wide range of a variety of civic activities, with a focus on education and diversity. The Rowes are particularly proud of their substantial commitment to founding the Rowe-Clark Math and Science Academy. And he is a board of trustees chairman of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Mr. Speaker, I have come to know John Rowe during my tenure in Congress. I can say that his impact on the energy industry will be long felt by both policymakers and Exelon customers. I wish him and his family well in their future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about someone that I have come to know through my work on the Energy and Commerce Committee over the years, John W. Rowe. Mr. John Rowe, the chairman and CEO of Exelon, is retiring upon closing of the company's merger with Constellation Energy. His retirement marks the end of nearly 14 years at Exelon and his 28-year tenure as the longest-serving electric utility CEO. It also brings to a close a long career in the utility business in which Rowe has distinguished himself as both an industry and civic leader.

John joined Unicom, the parent company of Commonwealth Edison in 1998. He was hired

to help fix its troubled nuclear fleet and prepare the company for deregulation. He shepherded the merger of Unicom and PECO Energy and has led the combined company, Exelon, since its formation in 2000. The Unicom-PECO merger is widely regarded as the most successful merger in the industry's history. The combined company serves 5.4 million customers and operates the largest fleet of nuclear power plants in the country.

In both 2008 and 2009, Institutional Investor named Rowe the best electric utility CEO in America. He has also received the Edison Electric Institute Distinguished Leadership Award, Keystone Center Leadership in Industry Award, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Burnham Award for Business and Civic Leadership, induction into the Chicago Business Hall of Fame, University of Arizona Eller College of Management Executive of the Year Award and the Union League of Philadelphia Founder's Award for Business Leadership.

In the 14 years of John Rowe's leadership, Exelon has been named by *Forbes* as one of "America's Best Companies," a "Global 2000 Company," and "Best Managed Utility Company" to *Fortune's* list of the "World's Most Admired Companies," one of *BusinessWeek's* "Top 50" companies, and "Utility of the Year" by *Electric Light and Power*.

Mr. Rowe served as chairman of the Nuclear Energy Institute, the Edison Electric Institute (EII), the Commercial Club of Chicago, and the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

Rowe and his management team succeeded in turning around the ComEd nuclear fleet—increasing the capacity factor from less than 50% in 1997 to more than 92% in every year since 2000 and average refueling outage days were reduced by half. Exelon today is the largest and widely regarded as the best nuclear plant fleet in the U.S.

Responding to massive reliability issues in ComEd's service territory in 1998 and 1999, Rowe spearheaded the effort to improve system reliability that has helped reduce the frequency and duration of customer outages by 20% since 2001. ComEd has spent more than \$5 billion on improving the system since 1998. ComEd now performs in the top quartile of its peer companies for reliability.

Under Rowe's leadership, PECO has been an industry leader in reliability performance, moving from the top quartile to top decile in infrastructure modernization and the use of equipment to eliminate and reduce the length of outages for customers.

Throughout his career, John has been a leading voice on energy and environmental policy delivering policy addresses and testifying before Congress, the Federal Energy Regulation Commission, state regulators and other. He was a pioneer on industry efforts for utility restructuring and a fierce advocate for environmental stewardship and diversity.

Perhaps more than any other CEO, Rowe has made environmental stewardship a hallmark of his tenure at each of his companies. While at CMP, he refocused its energy procurement strategy to conservation, energy efficiency and cogeneration.

John and his wife Jeanne are committed participants in civic and cultural activities. They are committed to a wide variety of civic activities with a focus on education and diversity.

The Rowes have established the Rowe Family Charitable Trust. Over the past dec-

ade, the Rowes and the family Trust have contributed more than \$19.7 million to organizations including the University of Wisconsin, the Illinois Institute of Technology, the Chicago History Museum, the Field Museum, Misericordia, the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Metropolitan Family Services and Northwestern Hospital.

The Rowes are particularly proud of their substantial commitment to founding the Rowe-Clark Math and Science Academy, and is a Noble Street operated charter school and the Rowe Elementary School, a Northwestern University Settlement Association operated charter school. In addition, John Rowe serves as Chairman of New Schools Chicago, an organization that promotes and funds Charter Schools in the City of Chicago.

Rowe also serves as Chairman of the board of trustees of the Illinois Institute of Technology and as President of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. He is a Vice Chairman of the Field Museum and has previously served as Chairman of the Commercial Club of Chicago and its Civic Committee and as Chairman of the board of the Chicago History Museum. While CEO of CMP, Rowe served as the Chairman of the Fort Western Museum capital campaign. At NEES, Rowe served as President of the USS Constitution Museum, Chairman of the Mechanics Hall capital campaign, a member of the board of the Massachusetts Natural Conservancy and on the board of Trustees at Bryant University.

Under Rowe's leadership and strong belief that utilities can and must have a commitment to their communities, Exelon has become a major part of the social fabric of the communities it serves. Exelon companies granted over \$270 million to non-profit organizations serving our communities over the last eleven years including a \$70 million donation to fund the Exelon Foundation.

Since the program's inception in late 2005 Exelon employees have tracked over 318,000 hours of community service. Exelon employees serve on over 350 non-profit boards across the service area, making an impact at the community level.

In recognition of Rowe's dedication to the community he has received the Civic Federation of Chicago's Gage Award for Outstanding Civic Leadership, the Citizen of the Year award from the City Club of Chicago, and the Heart of Mercy Award from Misericordia. Under his leadership, Volunteer Match has recognized Exelon as the Corporate Volunteer Program of the Year. Exelon has also received the Ron Brown Award for Corporate Leadership and was named to Corporate Responsibility Magazine's Best Corporate Citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I have come to know John Rowe over my tenure in Congress and I can say that his impact on the energy industry will be long felt by both policy makers and Exelon's customers. I wish him and his family well in their future endeavors.

DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS DAY

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to a very special day in our country. Yesterday marked the

seventh anniversary of Down Syndrome Awareness Day.

There are over 400,000 people living in the United States with Down syndrome. This equates to one out of every 700 new babies born in America.

Many of us personally know friends and loved ones with Down syndrome. Those with Down syndrome lead active and productive lives, attend school and work, participate in decisions that affect them, and contribute to society in so many wonderful ways. That's why I am a proud supporter of the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act, the ABLE Act, and I will continue to do my part to spread the word about this and other important legislation that will help those with Down syndrome have the tools to succeed.

Please help me celebrate the importance of Down Syndrome Awareness Day, and let's join together to champion every individual in this country, especially those with Down syndrome.

□ 1320

JUST SAY "NO"

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, we've just had a vote on H.R. 5, something very important. It's one of the horrible parts of the ObamaCare bill that we would have a board that would dictate to people what they could or could not have in the way of treatment or care.

The Federal Government has no business getting between people and their doctor. They have no business taking over health care, because if the Federal Government has the right to take over people's health care, then they'll have the duty to tell people how to live, what they can eat, what they must do.

But I had to vote "no" on this bill for this reason: in order to pay for this bill, under our rules, they added a provision that has the Congress dictating to every State in the country what their State med-mal tort laws have to be.

In Texas, we did tort reform, and we have doctors coming back. Some say, well, LOUIE, other States don't have it. That's fine. It's their right. Their doctors can come to Texas.

But when Congress wants to usurp State law, I have to say, "No."

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as the 2-year anniversary of the President's so-called Affordable Care Act approaches, we're reminded of the unkept promises. It almost seems like yesterday when we heard the line, "We have to pass the bill so we can find out what's in it." That prediction