

Italy grants citizenship to Alfie Evans in attempt to guarantee his care

VATICAN CITY — The Italian government granted citizenship to Alfie Evans, a seriously ill British toddler, in a last-minute effort to prevent doctors in England from withdrawing life-support.

The Italian foreign ministry, in a brief note April 23, said Angelino Alfano, the foreign minister, and Marco Minniti, the interior minister, “granted Italian citizenship to little Alfie.”

“The Italian government hopes that being an Italian citizen would allow the immediate transfer of the baby to Italy,” the foreign ministry said.

The baby’s parents, Tom Evans and Kate James, lost their latest legal battle April 23 to prevent doctors from removing Alfie’s life-support when the European Court of Human Rights refused to intervene.

Doctors in the U.K. have not been able to make a definitive diagnosis of the 23-month-old child’s degenerative neurological condition, but they have said keeping him on life-support would be “futile.”

A high court judge backed a lower court’s ruling that the hospital can go against the wishes of the family and withdraw life-support.

Tom Evans flew to Rome and met Pope Francis April 18, begging the pope to help get his son “asylum” in Italy. The Vatican-owned Bambino Gesù hospital in Rome has offered to care for Alfie. Three specialists from Bambino Gesù had flown to Liverpool and examined Alfie. According to the president of Bambino Gesù, “a positive outcome would be difficult, but the baby’s suffering can be alleviated.”

Also see:

Father of Alfie Evans meets pope, begs for help to save his son

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