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He made me proud to be a Catholic

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I don't often cry when a public figure dies. This morning, I cried when I heard the news that Senator Ted Kennedy had passed away.

I "grew up" with the Kennedy Clan. I remember how John Kennedy broke the "Catholic barrier" with his election in 1960. I remember Robert Kennedy's prophetic words as he ran for President in 1968? his fearless embrace of the "least of these" and his opposition to the War in Vietnam. And I remember the wrenching agony of the two Kennedy assassinations.

But today feels a bit like the end of an era. Ted Kennedy, like his brothers, was a champion of civil rights, women's rights, and the welfare of the "least of these." He strongly and eloquently opposed the war in Iraq. Because his life (and the lives of others in his family) embraced the great Catholic social justice tradition, they have made me proud to be a Catholic.

So I guess now? the torch has been passed? to us.

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