

Bio of Jim Towey

2023

Jim Towey was a trusted advisor and personal friend of Mother Teresa of Calcutta for twelve years and did the first reading at her Mass of Canonization in Saint Peter's Square in 2016. He previously headed the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives under George W. Bush for four years and served on his senior staff. His career includes the presidency of two Catholic colleges for thirteen years, a seven-year stint as a US Senate staffer, and the leadership of Florida's 40,000-employee health and human services agency.

In 1996, with Mother Teresa's encouragement, he founded the nonprofit advocacy organization *Aging with Dignity*, where he currently serves as its CEO. Two years later, he created the *Five Wishes* advance directive, which has sold over 40 million copies and is available in 30 languages. Catholic University of America, Franciscan University, and five other institutions of higher learning have conferred honorary degrees upon Towey, and Pope John Paul II awarded him a papal medal for distinguished service.

Towey and Mary Griffith met while volunteering in Mother Teresa's Washington, DC, AIDS home and were married in 1992. They have five children and three grandchildren. He authored, *To Love and Be Loved: A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa*, published by Simon and Schuster and available in numerous languages. He and his wife are donating all royalties from the book to charities associated with the saint.