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Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute Institut canadien catholique de bioéthique

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Message from the Executive Director

Mailing Address:

81 Saint Mary Street
Toronto, Canada M5S 1J4

Location:

95 Saint Joseph Street,
Third Floor

Telephone: 416-926-2335

Fax: 416-926-2336

Email:

bioethics.usmc@utoronto.ca

Website:

www.utoronto.ca/stmikes/bioethics

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MISSION

To promote and protect the dignity of the human person through interdisciplinary ethics research and education in health care and the life sciences.



Dear Friends of the CCBI,

I hope each of you is enjoying these early days of summer! Jo-Anne, Rose and I spent many

months organizing our first pan-Canadian conference in Calgary, June 1 - 3, and we were delighted with the response. We have made many new friends from British Columbia to Newfoundland, and everywhere in between, and we hope to maintain and develop these relationships over the years.

Our speakers, on the theme *True Compassion: End of Life Care for Body and Soul*, were uniformly excellent, and the workshops and small group discussions were of a high standard. We were fortunate to have liturgies presided over by Fr. Stefan Ganowicz, Fr. Raymond de Souza and Fr. Leo Walsh, and these contributed greatly to the overall friendliness and good spirit of the participants. We are very grateful to Bishop Henry of Calgary for his ongoing support, and to Julie Kohler, Director of the Life and Family Resource Centre, Diocese of Calgary, the Alberta Catholic Health Corporation, the national executive of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, Foley Inspection Services Inc., and some donors who wish to remain anonymous, for their generous financial sponsorship. Our second conference will take place in Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 23-26, 2007.

Our *For People in the Pews* programme (Introduction to Catholic Bioethics) has

been successful, and we have programmes already booked for Fall 2006. It has been a pleasure meeting so many interested parishioners in many different dioceses, and we are looking forward to visiting many more parishes in as many dioceses as possible. *Have programme, will travel!* Please call us if you would like to arrange a bioethics presentation in your area.

As Director, I am privileged to be the recipient of visits and calls from many individuals and institutions, Roman Catholic and otherwise, the media, etc., concerning many diverse, moral and bioethical questions. I have been honoured to make many presentations to several groups on different bioethical topics, and have also participated in several interdenominational panels and committees. I try to present the Roman Catholic stance in these engagements to the best of my ability, and on each occasion I have become increasingly aware that the CCBI is very much a joint venture, depending on people like you, our supporters, dedicated members of the Canadian Catholic community. I am grateful to you, the many individuals and organizations who support us morally, spiritually and financially. I realize this support reflects our shared belief in certain Catholic values, and our shared desire to ensure their continuing existence in this country and beyond. Thank you to our Board of Directors chaired by Cardinal Ambrozic for the work you do to support our mission, and grateful thanks to all of you for the trust you place in us. The staff of the CCBI promises to guard it carefully.

Bioethics Conference 2006

True Compassion: End of Life Care for Body and Soul



The CCBI hosted its first general conference in Calgary from June 1 - 3, 2006. More than 90 people from across Canada participated in three days of discussions and workshops on issues relevant to the medical and spiritual care of persons at the end of life. Dr. Rory Fisher, a Geriatrician at the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto set the stage in his opening speech “End of Life Care: A Longstanding Catholic Tradition”. During the next few days, presentations by experts from a variety of disciplines followed with such themes as Ethical Issues in Non-heart Beating Organ Donation (Dr. Hazel Markwell), Terminal Sedation (Prof. Joe Boyle), Spirituality (Br. Tom Maddix), End of Life Care Policies for Health Care Facilities (Laurie Hardingham), and Compassion (Dr. Mary Vachon).

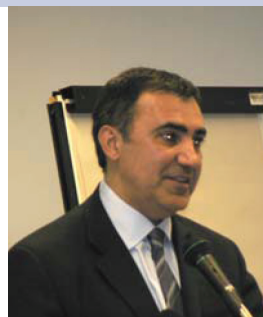


Moira McQueen (CCBI) and Shirley Hazen (CWL) enjoying a break during the conference.

The workshops were selected from submissions received following a call for abstracts sent out earlier in the year. The topics were varied and included some of the most current issues in health care today. We would like to thank the presenters: Jane Tse (Caring for End of Life Chinese Seniors), Dr. Gillian Currie and Dr. Roger Thomas (End-Stage Renal Disease and Patients’ Wishes), Dr. Jaro Kotalik, Dr. Russ Sawa and Dr. Eric Wasylenko (Ethical Issues in Responding to Influenza Pandemic), Dr. Kim Adzich and Dr. Nancy Goddard (A Hybrid Model for Ethical Decision-Making in End-of-Life Care).



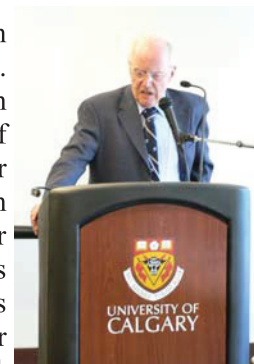
Workshop participants led by Fr. Leo Walsh (standing in centre)



Dr. José Pereira

Dr. José Pereira, a well-known palliative care expert was the keynote speaker at the Thursday Gala Dinner. His speech provided our guests with some insight into the challenges of palliative care and the need to listen and continue to treat dying patients with dignity to ensure that euthanasia does not become the option. Dr. Pereira is currently the Director of Palliative Care at the Vaudois University Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland.

We are grateful to Fr. Stefan Ganowicz of Calgary, Fr. Raymond de Souza of Kingston and Fr. Leo Walsh, csb of Windsor, who presided at our liturgies, thus providing us with the means of expressing our spiritual values. Those values ensure that our ethical reflections would be matters not only of our minds, but also of our bodies and souls.



Prof. E. J. McCullough of St. Mary’s College, Calgary

ADVANCE NOTICE

Bioethics Conference 2007

Mark your calendars!

It’s official. The next CCBI Conference will be held in Halifax at St. Mary’s University from Wednesday, May 23 to Saturday May 26, 2007. A call for abstracts will be issued once the conference theme has been approved by the Academic Advisory Committee.

For updates, visit our website.
Looking forward to seeing you there!

For updates and current bioethics news, visit
www.utoronto.ca/stmikes/bioethics

EVENTS AND EDUCATION

CARDINAL AMBROZIC LECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

PALLIATIVE CARE AND END OF LIFE CARE IN CANADA



On March 3, 2006, the Honourable Sharon Carstairs, P.C. was invited by the CCBI to speak about the State of Palliative Care in Canada. In her speech Senator Carstairs stressed that the aim of care, is to achieve the best possible quality of life for both the person who is dying and for their family by addressing their physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and practical

expectations and needs. Patients of all ages suffering from life-threatening illnesses can benefit from access to palliative and end-of-life care.

Senator Carstairs emphasized the need to standardize quality end-of-life care across the country, provide ongoing education and training of health care professionals and to continue research in this important area. She also noted that there is a need to support family caregivers who are assuming a greater portion of the responsibility for health care as more care is delivered in the home and community, by providing information on services available to them.

Senator Carstairs is the author of the 2005 report "Quality End-of-life Care: The Right of Every Canadian". The report examines the progress on implementing recommendations made in the Senate of Canada Committee's original report tabled in 1995. Senator Carstairs' report makes 10 new recommendations for improving end-of-life. The 52-page report is available on her website: http://sen.parl.gc.ca/scarstairs/PalliativeCare/PalliativeCare_e.asp

CCBI NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

The goal of the CCBI is to increase awareness and understanding of bioethical issues from a Catholic perspective through multidisciplinary research with the aim of promoting and protecting the dignity of the human person. Through CCBI publications and by offering lectures and courses to groups across Canada we hope we are making a difference.

Please consider supporting the work of the CCBI.
Your donation would be greatly appreciated.

EDUCATION

"FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEWS" SEMINARS

One of the goals of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute is to help Catholic lay people increase their awareness and understanding of church teachings regarding current bioethical issues.

For this purpose the CCBI has developed an educational programme entitled "For People in the Pews: An Introduction to Current Issues in Bioethics from a Roman Catholic Perspective". This four part series presents relevant church teaching on bioethics topics such as reproductive technology, euthanasia and end-of-life issues. The goal of the programme is to provide participants with some guidance on specific issues, especially in light of impending legislation on euthanasia.

During the past year, the course has been held at parish halls in Burlington, Calgary, Toronto and Windsor. Lay group leaders who are interested in booking an educational series for parishioners should contact the CCBI. A course outline is available on our website.

Currently, Michelle Davis, a CCBI researcher, is helping to develop a parish resource manual to accompany the "People in the Pews" programme. It will contain key Church documents and relevant articles that address the bioethical matters covered in the programme.

PROFESSIONAL COLLOQUIA

During the past year, the CCBI invited members of the Catholic community to meet and discuss topical issues from a Roman Catholic perspective.

With the XVI International AIDS conference taking place in Toronto during August 2006, the use of condoms for people with HIV/AIDS has become an important issued and it is important that the Catholic community becomes aware of the Church's position on this matter.

The ethical issues of non-heart beating organ donors have also been addressed and during discussions the need to create an ethics based policy and Catholic protocols was recognized. At this point there is no medical consensus as to the time of brain death, yet hospitals are being asked to devise protocols. We will keep you informed of possible developments in this problematic area.

UPDATES

WANTED

Health care professionals, bioethicists, students, pastoral care workers, educators, and others interested in bioethics

The annual discussion series hosted by the CCBI will begin on October 7, 2006. These meetings are an opportunity for an interdisciplinary group to meet and discuss bioethical issues ranging from beginning of life, to end of life care. The purpose is to explore scientific, clinical and medical issues from a faith perspective in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Each session begins with a presentation by an expert in a specific discipline followed by a lively discussion.

During the most recent sessions, Dr. Bridget Campion, CCBI Researcher, led a discussion on the issue of adopting or rescuing the so-called “spare” embryos. Susan Morgan, a Chaplain with St. Elizabeth Health Care, provided an insight into how spiritual care can be incorporated into quality in-home medical care.



Dr. Bridget Campion

Dawn Dudley Oosterhoff, from the Hospital of Sick Children, took the participants through the process of preparing their Powers of Attorney for health care and Advance Directive for care at the end of life. These monthly Saturday morning meetings are held at the University of St. Michael's College. If you are interested in attending, please call for details.

Our grateful thanks to the Saint Elizabeth Health Care Foundation for their generous grant and continued partnership that will assist the CCBI in providing education through research. To learn more about this organization, visit their website at www.saintelizabeth.com/

PUBLICATIONS

Reflections on Artificial Nutrition and Hydration

Dr. Bridget Campion and Fr. Leo Walsh are currently editing the proceedings of the 2004 CCBI Colloquium for publication. The papers in this publication are a result of discussions that identified some issues concerning artificial nutrition and hydration (ANH) for the frail elderly. An important context for this colloquium was the speech made by Pope John Paul II earlier in the same year in which he presented some general moral considerations and addressed a particular medical condition called persistent ‘vegetative’ state or post-coma unresponsiveness.

Ethics and the New Genetics: An Integrated Approach

The University of Toronto Press has recently approved the CCBI manuscript, “Ethics and the New Genetics: An Integrated Approach” for publication.

“Ethics and the New Genetics” is a collection of papers presented at the 2002 Guelph colloquium that outlines the clinical possibilities arising from genetic discoveries. This peer-reviewed publication walks the reader through a range of relevant scientific, legal, and economic issues, and then places all of this information within a moral and spiritual context. A thought-provoking read for students, health care professionals, bioethicists, philosophers, theologians, clergy and laity.

Dr. Daniel Monsour is currently editing the book which is expected to be available by mid-2007.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Social at the RCYC

The annual Fundraising Social in support of the CCBI will be hosted by the St. Joseph Moscati Toronto Catholic Doctors' Guild and the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club on Wednesday, September 6, 2006. All friends of the CCBI are invited to gather and enjoy the sunset from the island clubhouse, a gourmet dinner and a keynote speaker.

Annual CCBI Fall Lecture

the CCBI will host a evening lecture on Friday, November 17, 2006 to discuss the pros and cons of a two-tier health care system in Canada. The lecture will be held at the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto.

Bioethics Conference 2007 - Halifax (See page 2 for details)