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have to trust that every bit counts, one parish or group at a time!

My latest article for "Bioethics Matters" looks at the controversial Liverpool Care Pathways, a method for helping people decide when to stop certain treatments that Catholic teaching would call "disproportionate," i.e., the treatments are not curative and will not provide meaningful benefits, instead appearing to prolong life rather than helping the person flourish in any meaningful way. Recognizing that these decisions cannot be the product of any calculation, but that each situation needs to be assessed on its own merits, I concluded that any such schema is ethically sound when those making the decisions have the true welfare of the patient in mind, have a good intent in protecting the patient's life, and appreciate the sacredness of human life. If any of these conditions is not met, the schema could be abused,

and evidence suggests that this happens all too frequently. People have legitimate concerns that some decisions are made on a quality of life basis that views some patients as "bed-blockers," not worth the use of any further resources. Catholics are distinctly called to a higher standard, and some using the method do take that stance. As usual, the rightness of any moral decision depends on who is making the decisions. To discuss this further, Dr. Tony Kerigan has agreed to make a presentation on this topic at one of our seminars co-sponsored with the Order of Malta, on February 27.

Finally, a most important announcement! We are honoured that Cardinal Collins has generously consented to give our Cardinal Ambrozic Lecture on April 25 at 7pm. We are hoping that many people will attend his talk, and we are all greatly looking forward to it. We are planning this event in conjunction with the Sovereign Order of Malta, which celebrates the 900th anniversary of its official founding this year. We extend a special welcome to all members of the Order, of which Cardinal Collins is the Grand Prior, Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion, as well as to everyone who recognizes the important link between faith and medical morals.



Moira McQueen



CANADIAN CATHOLIC BIOETHICS INSTITUTE
INSTITUT CANADIEN CATHOLIQUE DE BIOÉTHIQUE
UNIVERSITY OF ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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Spring
2013

Upcoming Events

February 27, 7pm
CCBI and Order of Malta seminar:
Dr Tony Kerigan
Faculty of Theology
95 St Joseph Street, Room 101

April 25, 7 pm
Cardinal Ambrozic Lecture
in Bioethics
Guest Speaker:
Cardinal Thomas Collins
Madden Auditorium, Carr Hall
100 St Joseph Street



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Executive Director's Message

In this part of the Year of Faith, 2012-2013, CCBI plans to continue its focus on evangelization through promoting a better understanding of Catholic teaching in the field of bioethics, and we are hoping to make this Year meaningful in any way we can. Opportunities abound for all of us: in our families, in the workplace, in our parishes, in our volunteer work, our charitable donations and in the media. Sometimes we are afraid to speak the truth of which we ourselves are convinced, giving way to other people's seemingly assured stance on various moral issues. We can take heart from the angels' message at Christmas: fear not! I read an important insight in Fr. Adrian Van Kamm's book *The Music of Eternity* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1990), where he observes: "Life without conflict is unthinkable. Conflict itself is not bad. What we do with it is the question. Conflict is not an obstacle; it is an opportunity for fidelity." Fidelity—what could be more fitting for the Year of Faith!

We extend our thanks to all who came out to listen to Rick Firth's lecture in December. His cogent survey shows the power of bringing as many voices as possible round the table in support of a common goal, in this case palliative care. He let us know the status, plans and needs

of such care in Ontario, and since CCBI is constantly promoting palliative care as a human and moral need, his talk was of especial value. It is reassuring to know that strides are being made in the provision of quality palliative care, since that is our best bulwark against those who promote the killing of selves or others to achieve what they call a "good death" through euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. CCBI pledges to continue its work of educating people both in Catholic moral teaching aimed at helping us make good end-of-life decisions, and in promoting palliative care and those who work in that area. Over the years, speakers such as Dr. Rory Fisher, Dr. Marissa Zorzitto, Dr. Christine Newman, Bishop Noël Simard, palliative nurse Rowena Thirlwall, Saint Elizabeth Chaplain Susan Morgan, St. Joseph Hospital bioethicist Fr. Joseph Chandrakanthan, Senator Sharon Carstairs and myself have all spoken about different facets of palliative care at CCBI Lectures, and Rick was the latest in this long line.

Dr. Fisher, Dr. Bridget Champion, Professor Emeritus Barry Brown and myself devote one session of every CCBI People in the Pews programme to this topic on a regular basis, as well as promoting it in other venues, and we will continue to do so. We

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World Day of the Sick

One of our colleges is offering a grant for a study on the effect of spirituality on health, physical and/or mental. I decided to make a start by Googling this subject, to see what studies had already been done. There were 83 pages, all containing at least 10 studies each. Wow!! There are many interesting entries, with different groups of patients and with different methodologies of study and with different notions of what is to stand for spirituality.

My own interest will be with a special group of patients in hospital, those who will be cared for in a new palliative care unit in a Catholic hospital. My precise interest is with the sacrament of the sick and its observable effects on patients.

Certain things should be made clear. First, sacraments do not exist to be the material for studies and their effects may not be observable at all. Second, God is calling home all the patients in this unit, many of whom are non-Catholics and so will not receive the sacrament of the sick, but who are His sons and daughters. The study, then, will not be a comparative study, comparing Catholics and non-Catholics. It will be concerned with individuals and their response to the sacramental grace.

I come to this study with prejudices born of experience. When I have been privileged to celebrate the sacrament of the sick with very sick people who are conscious and responsive, these effects at least have been observable. People find a sense of peace coming from an experience of God's presence and a sense of community, knowing that they are not alone in their struggle. In terms of bygone language, they receive sanctifying grace (a deeper sharing in God's life) and the actual grace of this sacrament, allowing them to live their dying. In the first reading of Wednesday after the Epiphany, St. John has these words, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts our fear." The sacrament of the sick deals with the increase and deepening of love, and the response-love of the human to his or her God. God's love calms the human fear of dying, lest this be an impediment to the relationship between the patient and God.

Pope Benedict has spoken recently about the lack of knowledge Catholics have of their faith. (I would add, mostly through no fault of their own.) Teaching people about this sacrament will be essential, especially in terms of Edward Schillebeeckx's describing a sacrament as an encounter with Jesus. The sacrament of the sick is no mere ritual. (Edward Schillebeeckx is the great sacramental theologian of the last century.)

Many of the studies mentioned above speak about the kind of spirituality demanded of the carers—true compassion for the dying is of the utmost importance, and this will certainly provide the appropriate context of the reception of the sacrament of the sick. In other words, the sacrament is no quick fix. It is a privileged moment of God's entering into our human living and dying.

Leo Walsh, CSB



World Day of the Sick Events

February 10, 11

World Day of the Sick

"Go and do likewise," from the story of the Good Samaritan, is the theme chosen by Pope Benedict XVI for the 21st World Day of the Sick, held annually on February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The University of St Michael's College Campus Ministry is hosting two special events to celebrate the 2013 World Day of the Sick.

Sunday, February 10, 8:30 pm

We wish to extend a warm invitation to join us at the Student Mass on Sunday, February 10, at 8:30 pm which is held in the University of St Michael's College Chapel, located under St Basil's Church. Father François Mifsud, OP, and Dr Moira McQueen of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute and member of USMC's Faculty of Theology will share reflections on the experiences of suffering, illness, caregiving and spirituality.

Monday, February 11, 4 – 5 pm,
Charbonnel Lounge

Campus Ministry has invited Dr McQueen to the weekly interfaith gathering, "Living a Life of Faith" to open the discussion on illness and spirituality.

2012 Annual Lecture 2012: Hospice Palliative Care in Ontario

On December 5, 2012, Rick Firth delivered the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute's Annual Lecture. Titled, "High Quality, High Value—Hospice Palliative Care in Ontario," the presentation provided an overview of the changing landscape of end-of-life and chronic care in this province.

Rick is the Executive Director of Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, an organization that has a membership of nearly 500 individuals and over 200 institutions. It provides information and education for those interested in hospice and palliative care, including training for in-home hospice volunteers. As well, it advocates for increased support of hospice and palliative care. Given health care's emphasis on acute care, Rick explained that it is important to have a unified voice for care that is directed to improving the quality of life and the quality of dying, that takes a holistic approach to patient care, and focuses on symptom management rather than cure.

Rick distinguished between palliative care, that is, the ongoing care of individuals suffering from chronic disease where the emphasis is on helping patients to maintain a high quality of life even where cure is not possible, and hospice care which cares for patients in their dying. Hospice care is currently provided in a number of settings, including hospitals, long-term-care facilities, residential hospices, and patients' homes. Rick reminded us that even "home" can have many meanings as residents may live in retirement homes, prisons, group homes and shelters.

With its emphasis on caring for patients in their dying, hospice care attends to pain and symptom management and offers bereavement care for families. As Rick pointed out, aside from providing high quality holistic care, hospice care is cost-effective. While the cost of an acute care bed is upwards of \$850/day in Ontario, a residential hospice bed costs \$430/day. Furthermore, as staff increase their skills sets, more complex interventions can be accommodated in residential hospices, keeping hospice patients out of hospital emergency rooms.

At this time, there are twenty-nine residential hospices in Ontario providing a total of 219 beds for patients at the end of life. Rick estimates that there is a need for closer to 900 beds. But even at 219 beds, government funding does not completely cover the cost of residential hospices. This is one challenge that his organization faces. Another is that people often do not know that hospice and palliative care exist. Rick observed that because most people will not experience a sudden death, it is important to engage in death planning and to learn about palliative and hospice care (which, Rick explained most emphatically, do not include euthanasia and assisted suicide). And it is essential to advocate for more accessibility to this specialized care, whether it is provided in the home or an institutional setting.

Bridget Campion, PhD

For People in the Pews

For People in the Pews (FPIP) is an "everyday bioethics" lecture series designed by the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute for parishes. Understanding bioethical principles has become increasingly important as science and medicine develop new techniques. Sometimes these raise moral questions that seem to challenge Catholic teaching on the dignity of life.

February 14, 21, 28, March 7, 7 pm
For People in the Pews, St. Timothy's, Orangeville, Ontario, March 7
Information: 519-941-2424 at Ext 221

For more information on FPIP visit cbbi-utoronto.ca/fpip/.

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