



Bioethics Herald

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Message from the IACB Director

I am heartened by the growing interest in the activities of the IACB shown by bioethicists around the world. This issue highlights plans for the next International Colloquium in the U.K. and progress in forming a vision and agenda for research collaborations. An important event for the IACB has been the first meeting of bioethicists on the Governing Council of the IACB. Topics discussed at the Sept. 16 meeting in Toronto included a review of the IACB statutes and state of finances, publications, the 2007 and 2009 International Colloquia, possible regional colloquia in the future, and the formation of research networks. For this extraordinary fruitfulness, we marvel and give thanks to God and his generous human cooperators. Let us continue striving, by God's grace, to be a community of bioethicists living our faith and calling to increase understanding of what we believe and to serve those in need. *Bill Sullivan*



3rd INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM FOR BIOETHICISTS

Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine: How Far Should We Go?

St. Mary's College, University of Surrey, Twickenham (South West London), U.K., July 1-5, 2007

Sponsored by the British Association of the Order of Malta (BASMOM) and the School of Theology, Philosophy, and History at St. Mary's College.

IACB Associates and other interested bioethicists are invited to participate in the 3rd International Colloquium.

Participants will receive background technical and ethical papers in advance of the Colloquium to prepare for the group discussions and debates that are the main focus of the Colloquium. The IACB promotes a frank exchange of views in a prayerful and friendly academic environment. Participants will review the latest developments in science and ethics, probe the basis of agreements and disagreements among bioethicists, consider fresh insights, and identify questions for further research. **For details, please go to the colloquium website: www.iacbweb.org/london2007.html.** To keep discussion groups to a reasonable size, there is a limit on the total number of participants. **Please e-mail secretariat@iacbweb.org as soon as possible to express your interest in participating.** Registration will begin in January 2007. A generous grant from the BASMOM has reduced costs to the participant considerably. The registration fee is £265, and includes the academic programme and materials, 4 nights in residence at St. Mary's College, all meals, and special events. The IACB is working towards adequate representation from different regions of the world. **Immediately following the IACB colloquium, the Linacre Centre will host a conference on 'Incapacity and Care' from July 5-7 at the same location (separate registration required). For details, visit www.linacre.org.**

Report from the Functional Specialties Working Group

Because of the global reach, the multidisciplinary nature, and the complexity of questions in contemporary bioethics, collaboration among bioethicists has become a necessity. The Canadian Association of the Order of Malta sponsored a meeting in Toronto from August 15-18, 2006 at which participants discussed **eight key 'functions' or sets of skills** that contribute to any comprehensive investigation in Catholic bioethics: **research** (reviewing the status of scientific and ethical knowledge), **interpretation** (understanding sources), **history** (studying the development of bioethical problems and of the Catholic moral tradition), **dialectic** (probing the root of controversies), **foundations** (considering the basis of Catholic positions), **positions/policies** (formulating Catholic stances for the world today), **systematics/planning** (integrating and resolving apparent inconsistencies in Catholic positions, and judging the best ways to implement policies), and **communications** (using means to reach various audiences and translating words into action). The IACB hopes to bring together bioethicists with strong skills in one or more of these areas to form networks that will explore particular questions. We will soon post on the IACB website a summary of the Toronto meeting.

Introducing some new IACB Associates

Associates normally are Catholics who work in bioethics or a related professional field and who accept the IACB Statutes. They join a community of supportive peers, receive information relevant to their work, and participate in IACB-sponsored colloquia and research projects. There is no fee to be an IACB Associate at this time. Beginning in July 2007, there will be an annual fee but those unable to pay the full amount may apply for a reduction. If you wish to become an IACB Associate, please e-mail secretariat@iacbweb.org to receive information and an application.



Joaquim Clotet is rector of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS) in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where he has taught bioethics for many years. He has been Visiting Professor in Spain, Peru, and Argentina and is the author of numerous books and articles on topics such as genetics. He has also served as the vice-president of the Sociedade Brasileira de Bioética.



Ben Fanaye, O.P. teaches at the Dominican Institute in Ibadan, Nigeria. He completed his doctorate in Health Care Ethics at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, U.S.A. with a dissertation on ‘The Process of Informed Consent in End-of-Life Care: Improving Care Options for Patients and Families.’



Christine Jamieson teaches theology at Concordia University in Montréal, Canada. She is interested in how theology mediates contemporary cultures and prepared a background paper for the Functional Specialties Working Group meeting in Toronto last August based on her experiences on a research ethics review board and as a consultant for the Canadian government on ethical issues in genetics.



John Lee from Singapore is a medical doctor and has been involved for many years in promoting bioethics as past president of the Asian Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (AFCMA) and member of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (FIAMC).



Paul Schotsmans is the director of the Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Law, vice-dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, and president of the Belgian Advisory Committee on Bioethics. His research mainly applies personalism as an ethical framework for considering reproductive technologies and genetics, organ transplantation and decisions concerning the end of life. He is the author and co-editor of several books in bioethics and papers in leading journals.



Brigid Vout is executive officer of the Life Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia. She is a medical doctor with graduate training in bioethics. She has written several articles on end-of-life decision-making and recently presented in Manila at an international bioethics congress organized by the University of Santo Tomas.

Upcoming Lectures, Workshops, Conferences, Call for Papers

October 13-15, 2006 Freiburg, Germany at the Katholische Akademie Freiburg
 “Gesundheit im Wandel: Politikum—Ware—Religionsersatz?”: <http://www.katholische-akademie-freiburg.de/>

October 18, 2006 New York City, U.S.A. at St. Catherine of Siena Church, 411 East 68th St., 1.30 p.m.
 Inaugural Lecture of the Dominican Friars Health Care Ministry of New York by Dr. Edmund Pellegrino. Dr. Pellegrino will also give a lecture on “The State of Catholic Bioethics Today and in the Future” at the newly established Institute of Catholic Bioethics at St. Joseph’s University, **Philadelphia** on **Nov. 8, 2006** at 7 p.m.

October 27-28, 2006 Córdoba, Spain

International Federation of Institutes and Centres of Personalistic Bioethics (FIBIP) 4th International Congress:
<http://www.bioeticacs.org/fundacion/congreso/congreso.htm>

February 6-8, 2007 Nairobi, Kenya at Catholic University of East Africa

“Natural Law Symposium”: <http://www.cuea.edu/news/advertsnl.htm>

News from the Holy See

A working group of the **Pontifical Academy of Science**, meeting Sept. 11-12, 2006, acknowledged the difficulties in determining the degree of brain damage and level of functioning of patients in a coma or in a persistent vegetative state (PVS)/state of post-coma unresponsiveness but also reaffirmed that complete and irreversible brain death is an acceptable sign of the death of the person. Read <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0605285.htm>

To participants in a congress on stem cells, Sept. 14-16, 2006, sponsored by the **World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (FIAMC)** and the **Pontifical Academy for Life**, Pope Benedict XVI noted the Church’s “constant support for research dedicated to the cure of diseases and to the good of humanity.” He urged “approval and encouragement” of scientifically valid, technically sound, and ethical research on somatic stem cells, and “praise” for those engaged in such research. He reiterated that there can be “no compromises or prevarications” in opposing human embryonic stem-cell research: “The human being is not a disposable object, but every single individual represents God’s presence in the world.” Read http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060916_pav_en.html

Literature Scan: BOOKS

De Malherbe, Brice. *Le respect de la vie humaine dans une éthique de communion : Une alternative à la bioéthique à partir de l'attention aux personnes en état végétatif chronique.* Paris: Paroles et Silence, 2006. 254 pages. [*Fr. de Malherbe explains why he thinks an ‘ethics of communion’ can correct oversights in some Anglo-Saxon approaches to bioethics and he offers a different analysis and conclusion on artificial nutrition and hydration for PVS or post-coma unresponsive patients than the ones in Kelly’s book, listed below.*]

Kelly, David F. *Medical Care at the End of Life: A Catholic Perspective.* Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006. 180 pp. [*Kelly reviews the distinctions between ordinary and extraordinary means and between killing and allowing to die; issues relating to patient competence, advance directives, artificial nutrition and hydration, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, and medical futility. Kelly argues that the Catholic tradition does not require feeding PVS or post-coma unresponsive patients.*]

Lolas, Fernando; Álvaro Quezada; Eduardo Rodríguez, eds. *Investigación en salud: Dimensión ética.* Santiago, Chile: CIEB, 2006. 390 páginas. [*Topics considered by various authors include public health research, experiments involving animals, conflicts of interest, and multi-centre investigations.*]

Shah, Sonia. *The Body Hunters: How the Drug Industry Tests Its Products on the World’s Poorest Patients.* New York: The New Press, 2006. 208 pp. [*Shah is not a bioethicist but, as a journalist, she presents the results of a careful investigation into a growing trend in biomedical research that merits ethical reflection and debate.*]

Sulmasy, Daniel P. *A Balm for Gilead: Meditations on Spirituality and the Healing Arts.* Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006. 160 pp. [*A book of prayer and reflection that draws from a variety of Jewish and Christian sources.*]; See also **Sulmasy, Daniel P.,** *The Rebirth of the Clinic: An Introduction to Spirituality in Health Care.* Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006. 262 pp.

Literature Scan: ARTICLES

Allen, Paul. “Upholding the *Humanum*: Science and Theology’s Foundational Character”, *Heythrop Journal* 47:3 (2006): 367-386. [Allen attempts a viable theological anthropology based on “a scientifically informed approach to nature”, which may guide reflection on ethical issues such as those arising in genetic research. He proposes that “emergence” and “complexity” are concepts within biology that can be used to counter reductive materialism.]

Burack, Jeffrey H. “Jewish Reflections on Genetic Enhancement”, *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 26:1 (2006) 137-161. [Burack highlights a sense of giftedness and humility as central aspects of a Jewish approach to considering the benefits and harms of genetic enhancement.]

Garcia, J.L.A. “Sin and Suffering in a Catholic Understanding of Medical Ethics”, *Christian Bioethics* 12:2 (2006): 165-186; **Jones, David Albert.** “Sin, Suffering, and the Need for the Theological Virtues”, *Christian Bioethics* 12:2 (2006): 187-198. [Garcia situates natural law in the Catholic moral tradition within a broader discussion of virtues. In medical ethics, this amounts to placing emphasis less on moral transgressions or sin and more on promoting virtues in health care providers and good relationships between them and patients. The second part of Garcia’s article adds to this framework the meaning and value of unavoidable suffering. Jones’ response suggests that a Catholic understanding of medical ethics cannot overlook the theological and infused virtues nor downplay the necessity of grace in overcoming the effects of personal and corporate sins that contribute so often to ill health and suffering.]

Keown, John. “Back to the Future of Abortion Law: Roe’s Rejection of America’s History and Traditions”, *Issues in Law and Medicine* 22:1 (2006): 3-37. [Keown questions the view that a constitutional right to abortion is consistent with the history and traditions of Anglo-American law.]

Selling, Joseph A. “Distinct But Not Separate: The Subject-Object Relation in Contemporary Moral Theology”, *Studia Moralia* 44:1 (2006): 15-40; **Johnstone, Brian V.** “The Subject-Object Relation in Contemporary Catholic Moral Theology: A Reply to Joseph A. Selling”, *Studia Moralia* 44:1 (2006): 41-62. [Both articles address Johnstone’s claim that underlying three main approaches in Catholic moral theology is an emphasis either on the objective character of acts or on the knowing and choosing subject, and hence they presuppose a dichotomy of subject and object. Among the points offered are Selling’s explanation of how proportionalism “restores our understanding of human activity to an integrated whole” in which act, circumstance and end are different aspects of a single moral event, and Johnstone’s suggestion that object- and subject-oriented underpinnings are present in *Veritatis Splendor* but poorly related. Both articles provide an analysis of the case of ectopic pregnancy. Although the same conclusion is reached, the analysis of each author is markedly different.]

Smith, Janet E. “Condom Use and HIV”, *The Thomist* 70:1 (2006): 27-69; **Keenan, James F.** “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics”, *Louvain Studies* 30:3 (2006):180-197; **Salzman, Todd A. and Michael G. Lawler,** “Catholic Sexual Ethics: Complementarity and the Truly Human”, *Theological Studies* 67:3 (2006): 625-652; **Knight, Christopher C.** “Natural Law and the Problem of Contraception: Some Neglected Perspectives”, *New Blackfriars* 87:1011 (2006): 505-514. [Smith, and Salzman and Lawler deal, in different ways, with the nature of a truly human sexual act. Smith defends her natural law approach from criticisms of “physicalism” while Salzman and Lawler examine notions of complementarity. Knight writes from yet another starting point. He proposes an approach to Catholic sexual ethics that accepts the significance for natural law of God “working his creative will through the developmental processes of human evolution”. His opinion on the ends of the human sexual act follows from this. Keenan proposes a framework for sexual ethics that focuses not so much on acts but on virtues such as chastity, justice, fidelity, self-care and prudence, as informed by mercy.]