



In “The Right to Pain Control,” Eugene Diamond, MD, holds that with the advent of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, it is all the more important to secure appropriate pain relief for patients. The new health care law appears likely to withhold expensive treatments on the grounds of cost containment, thus necessitating the use of pain killers to alleviate symptoms. The recognition of a right to pain relief would help patients cope with the trials of health care rationing and also thwart the efforts of those who will cite the unbearable suffering of untreated patients as a reason for advancing the cause of euthanasia.

Rev. Javier Bustos argues in “The Uncertainty of Living Wills” that the theological implications of death and dying, often overlooked in the preparation of these instruments, are critically important for Catholics. Although living wills had their origins among “right to die” groups, Catholics have come to accept some versions, and certain dioceses within the United States have attempted to provide guidance to Catholics for their use. A living will, Bustos notes, does not consist of a set of commands, but provides others with guidance that must be carefully assessed and applied by the family and health care professionals in the light of conscience.

Swallowing is a complex physical process that has implications for participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist. In “Sacramental Swallow: How Swallowing Informs Eucharistic Theology,” Nancy Rourke and Paula Leslie examine the physiology of swallowing and the communal and cultural dimensions of eating. The swallow has aspects that are both aggressive and submissive, intentional and autonomic, life-giving and death-dealing. These elements are incorporated into the symbolic and mystical aspects of the Eucharist. The authors provide encouraging thoughts on the reception of the sacrament by patients who are NPO (who can take nothing by mouth) and by those who suffer cognitive disabilities.

In “Discerning the Future of the American Catholic Health Care Ministry,” John Gallagher looks at the role of the principles of cooperation within the successive waves of institutional reorganization that have marked Catholic health care in the United States. Catholic health care has had a long history in this country, with the

first major disruption of its organizing principles occurring in the early part of the twentieth century, when the American College of Surgeons demanded the standardization of care. A second rupture arose in the 1960s and 1970s with the supplanting of hospitals with “major health care centers.” Gallagher uses these events, and the thought of Bernard Lonergan, to offer predictions and cautions about the future of Catholic health care in the United States.

Archbishop Gerhard Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, offers words of encouragement to his fellow bishops in “Bioethics through the Eyes of Faith.” Mining *Gaudium et spes* for insights on how to exercise the teaching authority of the Church, he laments the de-Christianization of the West and the appearance of the utopian ideologies of atheism, socialism, and scientism. The true measure of man is found not in these ideologies but in the dignity of the human person, especially as revealed in the light of conscience. Fidelity to conscience shows itself first of all in the responsibility to teach the truth about Christ. *Dignitas personae* likewise stresses human dignity, but also speaks to the intimately personal nature of the sexual act. These ideas are easily grasped, appeal directly to the life of reason, and find ready reinforcement in the revealed teachings of the faith. Müller concludes with some comments on the well-known metaphor of the “seamless garment.”

Taking his cue from the perspective of the husband, Rev. Paschal Corby considers the possibility of embryo adoption in “Estranged Fathers: The Alienation of Men in Heterologous Embryo Transfer.” He argues that the intention of heterologous transfer is not to rescue or adopt a child but to become pregnant, which introduces a genetically foreign embryo into the marriage. This violates the duty of a married couple to engender a child only through each other. As the father plays no role in gestation, his relationship to a child relies on the genetic and social factors of parenthood. The genetic is not present in heterologous transfer. This debilitating factor produces a disconnect between the father and the child, between the husband and the wife, and between the couple’s procreative acts and the beginning of new life through God’s infusion of the soul. The abandoned embryo must therefore be left to what *Dignitas personae* calls an “absurd fate.”

Stanislaus Dundon, in “Prudent Policy Formation on Minimizing Clerical Child Sexual Abuse,” tackles the difficult and controversial problem of abusive clergy. Taking as his starting point the John Jay College of Criminal Justice report, issued by City University of New York, Dundon invokes the principle of prudence laid down by St. Thomas Aquinas to organize a response and suggest practical guidelines for diminishing this scourge within the priesthood. After reviewing previous failed efforts, the author considers what would constitute an ideal policy and the obstacles to its application, and lays out a profile of the abuser based on the John Jay data. Those who are sexually abusive within the priesthood are typically highly intelligent, manipulative, and narcissistic individuals. They are also sexual “generalists,” whose appetites seek indiscriminate gratification. The most effective methods of deterrence, Dundon concludes, are public exposure, laicization, and the imposition of civil and criminal penalties.

EDWARD J. FURTON, MA, PhD
Editor-in-Chief