

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

1812 Lynn Avenue • Altoona, Wisconsin 54720 Vol. 44 • No. 45

FROM FATHER SAKOWSKI

End of Life Health Care Issues

As we continue our November reflections on the Last Things, we turn our attention this week to health care issues at the end of life.

What care do we have to provide for ourselves or our loved ones? The basic answer to that question is simple. We must provide "ordinary care," but we do not have to (and in some cases shouldn't) provide "extraordinary care." The difficulty lies in distinguishing those two categories.

Here is what the Catechism says on the subject: "Distinguishing medical procedures that are burdensome, dangerous, extraordinary, or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be legitimate; it is the refusal of 'over-zealous' treatment" (CCC 2278). However, "Even if death is thought immanent, the ordinary care owed to a sick person cannot be legitimately interrupted" (CCC 2279). The adjectives are very helpful here: burdensome, dangerous, and disproportionate.

"Dangerous" is a clear enough term. Some procedures are simply not worth the risk involved. That can be judged on a case-by-case basis.

"Burdensome" is less clear; it suggests a number of things, including unaffordable or painful. It is possible that a medical procedure holds the prospect of extending someone's life by 20 or 30 years, but is exceedingly expensive. In such a case, it seems reasonable for the patient to choose either way. If he wants to live another 30 years, it is hard to fault him for taking donations from family and friends and striving to stay alive. But it also seems legitimate to turn down an extremely expensive procedure in order to allow this money to go to other people in need. Similarly, some procedures are highly invasive and painful. A patient might legitimately decide, for example, that he would rather take his chances with his cancer than undergo a long-term radiation treatment, especially in those cases where that treatment doesn't even guarantee success. Again, these are usually case-by-case judgments, guided by the overarching principles.

"Proportionate" must not be misunderstood. The Church condemns "proportionalism" (a moral theory that allows us to use evil means to accomplish a good end). For disciples of Jesus, the end never justifies the means. We can never choose or intend the death of a patient, no matter how "proportionate" we might think the reasons are. We can, however, consider how proportionate a treatment is – sizing up the cost, the risks, the invasiveness, the pain, and the prospect of success. As a person gets older (or more gravely ill), it makes less and less sense to have major surgeries or to pursue aggressive treatments. Similarly, one never has to undergo a high-risk or expensive procedure that has a very low chance of success.

There is no official Catholic list of "ordinary" versus "extraordinary" treatments. First of all, medicine continues to change. Many things that were once "burdensome" or "dangerous" are now quite simple (for example, preventing the spread of infection with antibiotics, or providing food and water by means of a feeding tube). Secondly, there are few moral absolutes in the area of medical ethics. Even if a particular treatment is "ordinary care" 99% of the time, it is often possible to think of one exceptional case.

That said, there are several points of "care" that are quite ordinary in the vast majority of cases: a clean and comfortable bed, appropriate temperature and lighting in (Cont. on pg. 2)

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Schedule of Masses

Weekend:

Saturday (vigil) 4:00 pm
Sunday 11:00 am
1:00 pm (Spanish)
*Mass at St. Raymond's Sat. 6:00 pm
Sun. 8:30 am*

Sacramental Celebrations

Confession: St. Mary's: Saturday from 10:00 am –12:00 pm or by appointment.
St. Raymond's: Thursday at 7:00-9:00 pm
Baptism: Call parish office for appointment.
Marriage: At least six months advance notice. Call parish office for appointment.

MASS INTENTIONS

November 14/22

Sat. 4:00 pm † William Bluem
Sun. 11:00 am † Amilia Al Abbas
1:00 pm Spanish Mass: St Mary's & St Raymond's Parishioners
Mon. No Mass
Tue. 8:00 am Mass at St. Raymond's
Wed. 8:00 am † Cherie & Steven Boley
Thu. 8:00 am Mass at St. Raymond's
11:00 am Mass at Oakwood Villa
3:00 pm Mass at Fall Creek NH
Fri. 9:00 am † Gilbert & Florence Pitt
Sat. 4:00 pm Priest's Intention
Sun. 11:00 am † Bonnie Laporte
1:00 pm Spanish Mass: St Mary's & St Raymond's Parishioners

(Cont. from pg. 1) the room, human affection, love, respect, and (finally) food and water.

These last two have been the source of great controversy, but the Catholic Church has made it abundantly clear that food and water are ordinary care – even if they have to be administered by “artificial” means. John Paul II (in March 2004) affirmed that even those in a “vegetative state” must normally be given food and hydration, and Benedict XVI (in Aug 2007) emphasized that food and water (even when given artificially) are ordinary and proportionate means as long as they accomplish their purpose. In other words, we can cut off food and water only if they are no longer doing any good for the patient – as sometimes is the case when someone is immanently dying.

The question is whether the immanence of death is due to some other pathology or whether we are actually causing it by removing hydration – in a person who would otherwise live for quite some time. We must be quite clear about our intentions, and must know the medical facts well.

You can also see how challenging it can be to make decisions. We must be guided by absolute moral norms, but use our conscience to apply them to very complicated situations. That leads us to our next point.

Sign a Power of Attorney for Health Care Document!

If you are an adult (even if only 18), the time has already come to think about making advance directives for health care – well before anything bad happens.

Deacon Dan Gannon spoke last week at St. Mary’s on this very topic. He and the Wisconsin bishops have been cautioning the faithful strongly against making a “living will” or filling out POLST forms (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment). Both of these approaches leave far too much leeway for the possibility of indirect euthanasia. They were originally pushed by pro-euthanasia groups like the Hemlock Society (now called “Compassion and Choices”). The problem with living wills and POLST is that they indiscriminately give permission to stop “life sustaining treatments” – including food and water. Once authorized, they hand the decision-making over to the health care professionals, (not all of whom respect the Church’s teachings), rather than keeping the decision in the hands of a trusted family member or friend.

It is impossible to know in advance all of the circumstances of any illness or injury we might sustain. We can have much more direct control over these decisions by signing a Protective Power of Attorney for Health Care, and then talking to that person verbally about our wishes. This document will place all the important decisions into the hands of a family member or friend that you can trust. If (God forbid) you ever become non-responsive, then the person you appoint can analyze the situation at hand, consulting a priest or other ethicist if needed, and can make sound moral decisions on your behalf.

I have been dealing with these matters firsthand, as I care for my 92-year old great uncle. While it is overwhelming at times, I can see how wise it was for him to choose a trusted relative to advocate and make decisions on his behalf. In the concrete, things are so much more complex than in the abstract. And, as I have found, not all health care providers have equal respect for the dignity of life or for informed consent rights! I’ve had to do some advocating on his behalf.

My recent personal experiences confirm what Deacon Gannon strongly recommended during his presentation, namely, that one’s POA for Health Care document should be as general as possible. By general, I mean that it gives full leeway to your decision maker rather than checking off various “yes” or “no” boxes – which then become legally binding in the future, even if (given the circumstances) you would have chosen the opposite. Thankfully my great uncle’s POA document gives me fairly broad decision-making authority, but even the few boxes that were checked have the potential to tie my hands in ways that he never could have foreseen.

If you have already signed a living will or POLST or other similar document, I strongly encourage you to revoke it and sign a Protective Power of Attorney for Health Care document. I am planning to put sample copies in each parish’s gathering space. Please plan ahead – but plan wisely!

BINGO VOLUNTEERS



Bingo is every Tuesday evening. Begin selling at 6:00 pm. Early bird bingo starts at 7:00 pm. Regular bingo starts at approximately 7:30 pm. Bring the

family and enjoy a fun evening together. Thank you to our bingo workers for their dedication: Barb Chilson (supervisor); Carol Mastej (caller); Linda Schuh, Joyce Oates, Jackie Behounek, Jean Ryan, Kelly Semerad, Becce Woestman, John Blackmon (workers); Margaret Skwierczynski (pull tab); Knights of Columbus (concession). Thank you.

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

- Nov. 17, The Bible Timeline Study**, 9 a.m.
All women are invited to participate.
- Nov. 17, Financial Peace University**, 6:30 p.m. For more info, call 715-379-6792.
- Nov. 17, Young Adult Meeting** 7:30-8:30 p.m.
- Nov. 18, RCIA**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., every other Wednesday. For more info, email frsakowski@gmail.com or go to www.srsmRCIA.com
- Nov. 19, 33 Days to Morning Glory Retreat**, 7 p.m. at St. Raymond’s.
- Nov. 19, Understanding the Scriptures Bible study**, 6:30-8p.m.
- Nov. 23, ABCD’s of Medicare** 1–3 p.m.
- Dec. 2, “The Liturgical Year”** a talk by Fr. Sakowski in the Center, 6:30-7:30 p.m. No registration fee. All are welcome!
- Dec. 9, Adoration** 8:30 a.m.—8:30 p.m. Please sign-up for an hour with our Eucharistic Lord. *The sign-up sheet is in the narthex.* Adoration is on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.
- Dec. 10, Mission Ladies**, 10-2 p.m. Potluck luncheon at noon. All women invited. This event has been changed to the second Thursday of the month.
- Dec. 13, Social Sunday after 11 a.m.** Mass in the Community Center.
Please check out the bulletin board for detailed information.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Week of November 15, 2015

- Sun: Dn 12:1-3/Heb 10:11-14, 18/Mk 13:24-32
- Mon: 1 Mc 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63/Lk 18:35-43
- Tue: 2 Mc 6:18-31/Lk 19:1-10
- Wed: 2 Mc 7:1, 20-31/Lk 19:11-28
- Thu: 1 Mc 2:15-29/Lk 19:41-44
- Fri: 1 Mc 4:36-37, 52-59/Lk 19:45-48
- Sat: 1 Mc 6:1-13/Lk 20:27-40
- Sun: Dn 7:13-14/Rv 1:5-8/Jn 18:33b-37

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Classes, Nov. 18, grades 1-8 meet 6-7 pm & gr. 9-10 meet 6-7:30 pm.

Sunday School – *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* program has begun. Registration forms are in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Becky at 715-832-9798 or thurner@charter.net.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

The Weekend of November 21/22

Lectors

4:00 pm J Spalding
11:00 am M Doney

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

4:00 pm R Kneer
11:00 am D Effertz

Servers

4:00 pm M Talley, B Lecher, T Perkins
11:00 am T Doney, H Johnson, G LeGore

Attendant Servers

4:00 pm R Kneer
11:00 am C Thurner

Organists

4:00 pm S Alexander
11:00 am J Gallagher

Cantors

4:00 pm M Welle
11:00 am L Gallagher

Ushers

4:00 pm M Rohn, J Hayden, R Meyer,
R Verdegan
11:00 am T Buck, D Kamrowski, J Cooley,
B Behounek

Counters C Mastey, J Thom, R Olson

BAPTISM PREPARATION

Expecting a child? Begin the baptismal preparation now. At St. Raymond's, the baptismal prep class is on **Thu., Dec. 10**, at 6-7 p.m. and the luncheon is on **Sat., Jan. 17** at 9:45-11:30 a.m. At St. Mary's, the next baptismal prep class is on **Mon., Jan. 11**, 6-7 p.m. and the luncheon is on **Sun., Feb. 12**, 9-10:45 a.m. Baptism information, forms, and documents are available online at www.stmarys-altoona.com. At least two (2) months advance notice needed. See website for details, or contact parish office now to start the process.

KNIGHTS NEWS

Regular Monthly Meeting, Mon., Dec. 7, 6 p.m. Officers meeting in the Knights room, followed by regular meeting at 7 p.m.



STEWARDSHIP

Last Week

Adults	\$7,174.00
Endowment Fund	\$100.00
Young People.....	\$1.00
Children	\$6.75
Offertory.....	\$726.63
Total	\$8,008.38
Capital Campaign (Rec'd to Date)	\$268,532.91

ELIZABETH MINISTRY



- To add a name, due date/birth date, request a meal, or to volunteer, please call Emily Thurner at 715-864-3048.
- Please pray for those who are expecting.

Thank you for giving of your time to this ministry.

It is appreciated by those who are blessed.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please Pray For... Please keep Cliff Abrahamson, Pat Gerseth, Richard Lasniuk, Betty Nelson, JoAnn Deters, Sr. Theodore Nelson, Karen Solberg, Shelly Allen, Sheila Lehnen, Foresten Family, Lucille Welter, Mary Beth Pierce, Pat & Don Kamrowski, Lee & Darlene Henrichs, Linda Gesche, Eileen Niehoff, Megan Olszewski, Roger Forcier, Jeanne Reali, Clarence Nowobielski, Julie Rohn, Arla McFadden, Duane Fanetti, Walt Nguyen, Linda Gabriel, Rose and Kevin Sigmund, Dick Sires, Sarah Marble, Bob & Betty Haas, Plets family, Erica Nerbonne, Judy Ciske, Kelly Hawker, Maureen Kollar, Ed Hofacker, Sam P, Eleanor Wildrick, Dave Rosener, Mike Moses, Carol Bridges Rothfusz, Abby Williamson, infant Elizabeth and her parents, Laurie, Lucille Plautz, Kip Schultz, Doreen Bauer, Kristin Soley, Dylan Snyder, Sue Arrell, Pabich intention, Melgard intention, Sue Lippold, David Schwartz, Garret Soley, Jarett Londre, Steve & Ella May Kassa, Rita Collier and their families in your prayers.



REMINDERS & TIDBITS

Check out St. Mary's new app on your smartphone! Download MyParish app from the App Store. You will have access to St. Mary's bulletins, homilies, religious education cancellations and more.

Mission of Mercy to a Ukraine in Crisis: On Wednesday, Nov. 18, hear about the dramatic situation in the war-torn country of Ukraine and the role of Chalice of Mercy in bringing both humanitarian relief and spiritual conversion. Our speaker, founder **Valentyna Pavsyukova**, immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 18, with almost no English skills and no religious background, except for the "Our Father" prayer she had memorized at her grandmother's knee as a little girl. Far from family and friends, she was homesick and hurting. But God knew how desperately Valentyna's homeland, Ukraine, needed His Love and Mercy, and He was preparing a beautiful mission for this humble young woman. **Her joyful story will inspire you!** Please join us at 7 PM at St. Patrick Parish, 1031 Main Street, Onalaska, on Nov. 18.

Did you attend St. Mary's Elementary School? We want to connect with you as we work to grow our St. Mary Parish Endowment Trust. Please check out the information sheet in the Narthex and connect with your classmates.

Salvation Army 2015 Christmas Bell Ringers Needed Dec. 24 in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls. Register online: www.ringbells.org or call 715-834-1224.

Concluding Mass & Celebration at St. Patrick Church, with the Most Reverend William Callahan on Sunday, Nov. 22, begins with a Rosary Walk at 9 am; Mass at 10 am; Dinner at 11:30 am; Tour at 1 p.m. Reservations required for dinner. Call 715-832-0925 by Monday, November 16.

Community Christmas Fair, Sat., Dec. 5, 9-2 p.m. at Fall Creek Fire Hall.

Regis Catholic Schools... There's an App for That! You can now keep up with all of the who, what, when, and where for RCS with our app by SchoolInfoApp, available on all mobile devices! Scan the QR code to download the app on your iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry or Windows device.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Fall Clean-up for St. Mary's! We ended the day with 116 bags of leaves! Thank you for your help and commitment to St. Mary's!

\$CRIP NEWS

\$crip Volunteers for next weekend,
4:00 pm (Mary Kneer and volunteer),
11:00 am (Loann Sumner and volunteer)

Last Week

Number of Orders.....	15
Amount Sold	\$7,915.00
Profit (approximately).....	\$395.75
Monthly Profit	\$808.50

Thank You!

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