



ProLife Office <prolife@archkck.org>

Biweekly Ethics Update

1 message

The NCBC <info@ncbcenter.org>

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THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC BIOETHICS CENTER

Biweekly Ethics Update



The Moral Mind

Promethean Medical Temptations

Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

Superheroes attract us. From Greek gods to Superman and Spiderman, our fascination with the awesome deeds of superheroes beckons us to become Masters of our own destiny. Yet even as we enjoy the fantasy of acquiring Promethean powers to combat our enemies and conquer evil, we have legitimate misgivings about mere mortals taking on god-like powers in real life. We are concerned about those who play with fire just like Prometheus did, at the risk of harm and great destruction. Today, as modern medicine tries to rebuff death and control our humanity in ever more sophisticated ways, new temptations arise that challenge us to choose between life and death, between living in reality and living in a fantasy world where we elevate ourselves as “Masters of our own destiny.”

...to continue reading, click [here](#).

This installment of *Making Sense of Bioethics* is reprinted from an earlier version of Father Tad's column. Reprints and subscriptions to this series are available from the NCBC for newspapers, parish bulletins, newsletters, or journals. For information regarding subscriptions and permissions, please contact [Elizabeth Lee](#).

Upcoming Events

Conference on Unsettled Issues in Catholic Bioethics & Gala

Jackson, MI

On March 21, 2026, Catholic Healthcare International (St. Pio's CHI) is hosting its First Annual Conference on Unsettled Issues in Catholic Bioethics & Gala, convening Church leaders, physicians, ethicists, theologians, and advocates for an examination of today's most pressing and unsettled moral challenges in healthcare. NCBC President Dr. John Di Camillo is among the featured speakers.

Education Corner

We will be hosting another two-day seminar in Chicago, IL, on April 24-25, 2026, to address current topics in bioethics. These seminars are intended to benefit students, health care workers, clergy, those involved in research in the life sciences, members of ethics committees, and others who provide spiritual support and counsel to patients and their families. Those interested in understanding and advancing the Church's moral tradition in health care will also find them accessible, educational, and informative. For more information on our two-day seminars, click [here](#). To register for this seminar, click [here](#).



NCBC
Bioethics Seminar
 Continuing Education Credits
 9 CMEs Available
 Registration Now
 Open!
 Friday & Saturday
 APRIL 24 & 25, 2026
 St. John Cantius Church
 Chicago, IL

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Bioethics and Public Policy

Bioethics Public Policy Report

The NCBC's update on public policy developments in bioethics and health care on the state, federal, and international levels.

[Purchase NCBC Books and Resources](#)

Recent Events

Joe Zalot and Sr. Dede Address Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

On February 14th, Joe Zalot, NCBC Director of Education, and Sr. Deidre (Dede) Byrne, POSC, tag-teamed to address euthanasia and assisted suicide at the "Evangelium Vitae at 30" conference hosted by the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Office for Life & Family. Over 200 people attended the day-long event that was held at the Our Lady of Czestochowa Shrine in Doylestown, PA. Joe's presentation was titled "No Mercy: How Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide Contribute to the Culture of Death."

Converging Roads: The Future of Hippocratic Medicine

On February 28th, Joe Zalot, NCBC Director of Education, addressed "The Primacy of Virtue and Navigating Moral Cooperation in Medicine" at the *Converging Roads* Conference in Austin, TX. In his talk, Joe encouraged participants to more fully develop the theological and moral virtues proper to health care in order to foster relationships with, and to more fully respect the dignity of, the patients they serve. He also spoke of how health care professionals can employ the principle of cooperation to navigate complex ethical quandaries they face in clinical practice.

Converging Roads is an initiative of the John Paul II Foundation

whose president, Arland Nichols, is an NCBC author and **Certification Program** graduate.

Video, Radio, and Podcasts

Canada's "Medical Aid in Dying," and Mental Illness

Catholic Connection with Teresa Tomeo on EWTN Radio

Father Tad joins host Teresa Tomeo to discuss a **recent news story** about grieving parents who are demanding changes after their 26-year-old son, who had a history of mental illness, was euthanized under Canada's Physician-Assisted Suicide Law. They look at the need to protect and exclude, in a particular way, those vulnerable individuals struggling with various mental health issues, such as depression, from accessing approval for poison pills from the medical establishment in Canada in order to then end their own lives. Segment begins at 0:33:00.

The Ethics of Killing Yourself, and Donating Your Organs for Transplant

LA Catholic Morning on Archangel Radio

What about the recent decision by **two individuals in Australia** to do physician-assisted suicide who also sought to have several of their organs be harvested afterwards? Father Tad and hosts Ellen and Todd look at various notable ethical issues that surround the controversial idea of permitting people who commit suicide, especially physician-assisted suicide, to donate organs following their death/suicide. Because the suicide typically needs to happen in the hospital in order for the organs to be harvested freshly and in a timely manner, what concerns arise in regard to the hospital staff who cooperate in the process and their culpability?

[Invite an NCBC Speaker](#)

NCBC in the News

Where does the Catholic Church stand on vaccines?

EWTN News

NCBC Executive Vice President Dr. John Brehany is quoted at length clarifying the complex ethics of vaccination, suggesting a 'virtuous' approach comprised of careful assessment of the available information about all of the benefits and risks (or side effects), ensuring the trustworthiness of one's sources, and making "a decision that best promotes health, first and foremost of oneself or one's dependents and then of the community." He also discusses the complicated question of whether a Catholic may refuse a vaccine.

Assisted suicide increases rates of non-medical suicide, statistics show

Crux

NCBC Senior Ethicist Dr. Joseph Meaney was interviewed to comment on the legalization of physician-assisted suicide increasing the rates of non-medicalized suicides; the 40% increase in US suicides in the first two decades of the second millennium; and the phenomenon of 'copycat suicides' that are committed by an individual when they learn of a suicide committed by a prominent individual or even by someone within a few degrees of social separation.

Assisted Suicide Is Not Compassion—It's Cultural Surrender

The Catholic Telegraph

The author cites NCBC Senior Ethicist Dr. Joseph Meaney and his recent *The Moral Mind* article "**The General Rise in Suicides and Legalized Assisted Suicide**" in pointing out the incoherent situation of communities investing enormous resources into preventing despair-driven suicides while simultaneously being contradicted by public policy that promotes physician-assisted suicide as 'therapy.'

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Are you a doctor, nurse, patient, health care power of attorney, scientific researcher, medical student or resident, or someone else facing tough ethical decisions in health care and biomedical research? Are you a priest, chaplain, friend, family member, or someone else asked to advise on these matters? Our team is here to help you understand and apply the moral teachings of the Catholic Church to the challenges you face:

Request a Free Ethics Consultation

Please pray for our work and consider financially supporting our mission of defending the dignity of the human person in health care and biomedical research!

Make a Financial Gift

The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) provides education, guidance, and resources to the Church and society to uphold the dignity of the human person in health care and biomedical research, thereby sharing in the ministry of Jesus Christ and his Church. The NCBC envisions a world in which the integral understanding of the human person underlying Catholic teaching on respect for human life and dignity is better understood and more widely embraced in America and worldwide.

The NCBC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all donations are tax-deductible.



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