



ProLife Office <prolife@archkck.org>

Biweekly Ethics Update

1 message

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THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC BIOETHICS CENTER

Biweekly Ethics Update



Making Sense of Bioethics

To Be or Not to Be — Parsing the Implications of Suicide

Father Tad Pacholczyk, PhD

In recent years we have witnessed a growing tendency to promote suicide as a way of resolving end-stage suffering. Physician-assisted suicide is now legal in a handful of states and a number of other jurisdictions are considering laws to legalize the practice. A few years ago on *Nightline*, Barbara Walters interviewed an assisted suicide advocate who summed it up this way: "We're talking about what people want. There are people who, even suffering horribly, want to live out every second of their lives, and that's their right, of course, and they should do it. Others don't want that. Others want out!"

...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](#).

Announcements

The NCBC Partners with The Catholic University of America on Master's Degree in Moral Theology/Ethics

BROOMALL, PA, August 24, 2026—The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) is pleased to announce a new academic partnership with The Catholic University of America (CUA). Starting with the 2026–2027 academic year, students who complete the NCBC's National Catholic Certification Program in Health Care Ethics can transfer six credits toward CUA's master's degree in moral theology/ethics.

Job Opening: Donor and Member Relations Manager

Come work at The National Catholic Bioethics Center! We are looking for a full-time Donor and Member Relations Manager. If you love the Church, are committed to upholding the dignity of the human person, and are interested in sharing the work of the NCBC with others, this may be the role for you! To learn more, click [HERE](#)!

Upcoming Events

NCBC at End-of-Life Decision Making Workshop

Baton Rouge, LA, October 31, 2026

NCBC Director of Education Joe Zalot will be the main speaker at the "End-of-Life Decision Making and the Dignity of Human Life" workshop. It is jointly sponsored by the Dioceses of Baton Rouge and Lafayette. Topics to be addressed include determining ordinary and extraordinary means of care, advance directives, euthanasia and assisted suicide, and palliative care and hospice. For more information and to register for the event, please [click here](#).

Sponsored by:



The Roman Catholic Diocese of

BATON ROUGE



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OFFICE OF PRO-LIFE APOSTOLATE

in partnership with:



THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC
BIOETHICS CENTER

End-of-Life Decision Making and the Dignity of Human Life

“Let us care for one another as Christ cared for us.” - Romans 15:7

When: Saturday, October 31, 2026

Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
(Lunch Provided)

Where: Tracy Center Auditorium
Catholic Life Center
1800 S. Acadian Thruway
Baton Rouge, LA



Registration is required

Use the QR Code or this link:

<https://diobr.org/rlc-event>

The talks will include:

- Ordinary and extraordinary end-of-life care: Nutrition & hydration and pain medication
- Advance directives: Power of Attorney and living wills
- Catholic teaching on euthanasia and assisted suicide
- Ethical challenges w. palliative care and hospice



Meet our speaker:

Dr. Joe Zalot is a nationally recognized Catholic ethicist and the Director of Education at The NCBC. He lectures across the country, and has provided more than 2,200 ethics consultations, helping many make faithful medical decisions in accordance with Catholic teaching.

“The important thing is to give people good and faithful information so they can make good decisions in line with the teachings of the Church.” - Dr. Zalot

NCBC Speaker Highlight

Joseph Meaney, PhD, KM

Catholic Bioethicist and International Pro-Life Expert

Dr. Joseph Meaney is Past President and Senior Ethicist with The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC). He has spent over 28 years speaking and going on missions in 82 countries. His experience working with the NCBC and with Human Life International as director of international coordination have covered a vast array of pro-life and ethical issues. He is a dual US and French citizen and is fluent in English, French, Spanish, and Italian. He can do speaking engagements in all these languages.



Dr. Meaney is a dynamic speaker available to address banquets and motivational and educational events on the topics of abortion/assisted suicide, conscience rights, end-of-life care, ethical approaches to treating infertility, AI ethics, and Catholic bioethics. He has been a frequent guest on EWTN television programs and Relevant Radio and writes a popular ethics column called The Moral Mind.

Invite Dr. Meaney to speak at your event.

Education Corner



The NCBC is hosting Two-day Seminars at the University of Mary in Bismarck, ND on Oct. 1-2, 2026, and at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, NY on Oct. 23-24, 2026. These seminars, which address current topics in bioethics, will benefit health care professionals, medical and nursing students, clergy and religious, those involved in research in the life sciences, and those who provide spiritual support and counsel to patients and their families. Up to ten clinical medical education units (CMEs) are available for physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and nurse practitioners. Individuals who seek to better understand and advance the Church's moral tradition in health care will also find the seminar accessible, educational, and informative.

For general information on NCBC Two-Day Seminars, click [here](#).

To register for the Bismarck seminar, click [here](#).

To register for the Rockville Centre seminar, click [here](#).

[Sign Up for NCBC Education Programs](#)

NCBC Publications

Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, Seventh Edition

This seventh edition of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* (ERDs) was approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in November 2025. The ERDs distill authoritative Church teachings and resources from the Catholic moral tradition to help Catholic health care address clinical issues across the lifespan, as well as in organizational ethics, with fidelity and integrity.

The ERDs present a theological basis for Catholic health care ministry together with specific directives that "promote and protect the truths of the Catholic faith as those truths are brought to bear on concrete issues in health care" (Preamble, p. 5). They are an indispensable resource for health care ministry sponsors, trustees, administrators, chaplains, physicians, health care personnel, and patients, as well as for all professionals, ethicists, educators, and others interested in the principles and practice of Catholic health care.

The seventh edition of the ERDs includes updates and new content on topics including referral for immoral procedures, assisted reproductive technologies, palliative and hospice care, and medical interventions for those who experience gender incongruence.

Standard Pocket Size Version

**Ethical and
Religious
Directives for
Catholic Health
Care Services**

Seventh Edition

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF
CATHOLIC BISHOPS

To purchase, please click [here for smaller orders](#) (1-5 copies) or [here for bulk orders](#) (6 or more copies).

Purchase NCBC Books and Resources

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.

Video, Radio, and Podcasts



Faith & Science Panel | Faith & Science Conference

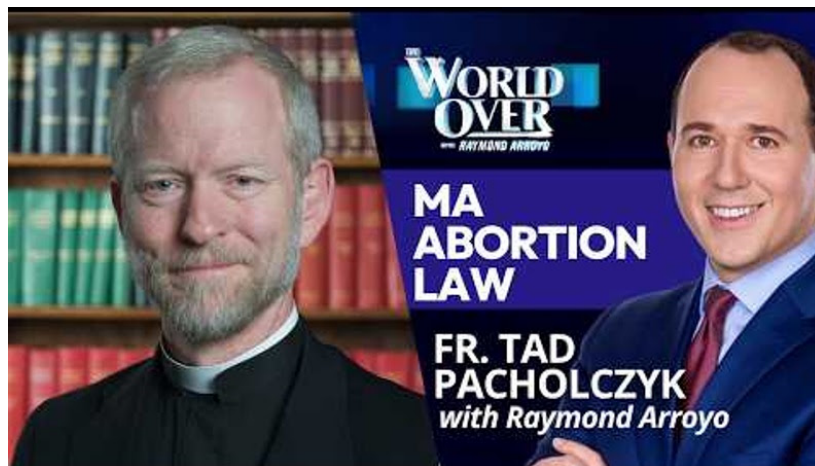
Christendom College - YouTube

Father Tad Pacholczyk, Senior Ethicist at the NCBC, joined Christendom President Dr. George Harne and a distinguished panel of commentators for a discussion of the relationship between faith and science, with a special emphasis on the seemingly central place of mathematics as providing a kind of architectonic structure to the entirety of scientific investigation.

Medical Fraud in Gender “Medicine”

Driving Home the Faith

NCBC Director of Education Joe Zalot and Ken Kraycraft discussed the HHS report "Wolves in White Coats: How Doctors and Hospitals Pushed and Profited from the Fraud of 'Gender Medicine'" on Sacred Heart Radio's (Cincinnati) *Driving Home the Faith* program. They focused on how medical professionals steered children and their parents into accepting so-called transitioning interventions and how they manipulated diagnostic and procedure codes to be compensated for illicit and immoral procedures.



Massachusetts Abortion Law, Federal Defunding of Sex-Rejecting Procedures, and a New Program at Texas Children's Hospital for those seeking to Gender Detransition

The World Over with Raymond Arroyo

Father Tad joins Raymond Arroyo to discuss the meaning of theological scandal when Catholic politicians promote abortion, as well as the logical thread that connects any direct attack upon vulnerable life in the womb to subsequent attacks coming from physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. They also look at a recent policy change that precludes reimbursement through Medicare and Medicaid for sex-rejecting procedures and surgeries for minors, as well as discussing a new detransition program that will open in Texas. They additionally review a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* considering the possibility of causing

death by organ donation/extraction and the apparent willingness of some to bypass the Dead Donor Rule.

Invite an NCBC Speaker

NCBC in the News

Pope Leo XIV appoints the leader of the Knights of Columbus as a member of the Dicastery for the Family and Life

InfoVaticana

The Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, Patrick E. Kelly, was appointed by Pope Leo XIV as a member of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. He has been a member of the NCBC board of directors since 2013.

GUEST VIEW: The Human Embryo Created by God is Sacred

Odessa American OA Online

Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of San Angelo, discusses the notion that every embryonic human being has an inherent, equal, and inalienable dignity, which has served as the principal foundation for recognizing and defending universal human rights across diverse cultural and legal contexts. The Bishop references the comments of Father Tad addressing a set of disturbing experiments carried out at Columbia University that involved genetically modifying human embryos.

EWTN News explains: Why does the Catholic Church oppose surrogacy?

EWTN News

NCBC Senior Ethicist Joseph Meaney and Director of Education Joe Zalot are interviewed to explain why the Catholic Church forbids surrogate motherhood as a practice contrary both to the unity of marriage and to human dignity.

Surrogate mother faces \$100,000 lawsuit from biological parents for refusing to abort baby

EWTN News

Commenting on the case of a surrogate mother who refused to abort the baby she was gestating, the NCBC's Joe Zalot said it demonstrates "how commercial surrogacy denigrates the surrogate, seeking to reduce her to subservient role vis-a-vis the genetic 'parents,' as well as how surrogacy contracts denigrate the dignity of the preborn child through the demand that it be killed if a prenatal anomaly is diagnosed" and that this scenario "is a textbook example of what is wrong with surrogacy."

US Dioceses Vary in Granting, Denying Religious Exemptions to Vaccines

National Catholic Register

Discussions regarding the ethics of vaccines and mandates involve some complexity and nuance. Matt McDonald of the National Catholic Register looks at the variability of exemptions to mandates in Catholic dioceses, and Father Tad comments on some of the challenges surrounding universal vaccine mandates, especially in circumstances where a novel pathogen may have rapidly triggered the development of a new form of vaccination.

Saint Vincent College Alumni Spotlight: Phil Tran

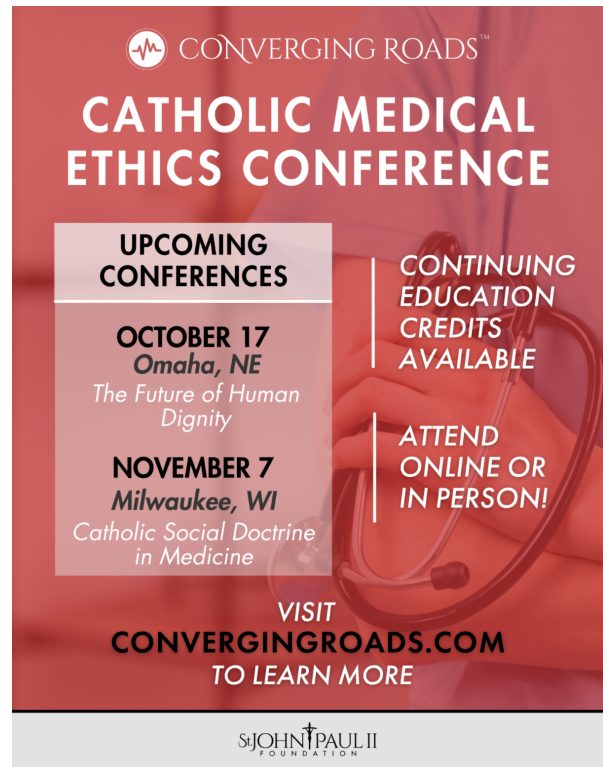
Saint Vincent College Public Relations

Phil Tran, the NCBC's Manager of Ethics Operations & Resources and a staff ethicist, was highlighted by his alma mater, Saint Vincent College. He mentions his longstanding interest in bioethics and how the NCBC crucially facilitated his formation in this field.

[Sign Up for NCBC Membership](#)

From Our Collaborators

Converging Roads is a regional conference series offering continuing education for health care professionals that equips them to practice the highest ethical and medical standards of their profession. It is an initiative of the **St. John Paul II Foundation**. Registration is now open for their two fall conferences. Joe Zalot, the NCBC's Director of Education, will be speaking at the November 7 conference in Milwaukee, WI.



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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!

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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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