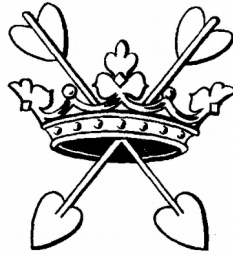


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

UPDATE

May 4, 2004 - **St. Monnica, the Mother of St. Augustine of Hippo**

June Schedule

June 6	Sunday	-	Trinity Sunday / The Octave Day of Pentecost
June 10	Thursday	-	Corpus Christi
June 11	Friday	-	St. Barnabas, the Apostle
June 13	Sunday	-	The First Sunday after Trinity
June 20	Sunday	-	The Second Sunday after Trinity
June 24	Thursday	-	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
June 27	Sunday	-	The Third Sunday after Trinity
June 29	Tuesday	-	St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles

Service Times and Location

(1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.

(2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**

(3) On weekdays - **Holy Days** and **Days of Obligation** (Diocesan Ordo) - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** when the Chapel is available - please phone to confirm.

Notes and Comments

- 1) Coming soon - our **Cyberspace Library** - we will be adding a Library to our Parish website - a list of books, owned by parishioners, that will be available for borrowing. More details, shortly.
- 2) Don't forget - **The Bishop is coming - May 16** - Easter V!
- 3) Unfortunately the **Quiet Day**, originally scheduled for June 26, has been cancelled.
- 4) Our Ordinary's **Bit** - **Adult Confirmation: Ottawa** - this page.
- 5) A press release by the Catholic Civil Rights League - **A Chill is in the Air** - see page 3.
- 6) The second of three parts of the piece by Fr. Eglington - continuing his commentary on 'Anglicanism' in the U.S.A. - **The Vocation of Canadian Continuers** - see page 4.
- 7) A chapter in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* - **On the Relation Between the Eucharist and Mary** - see page 5.
- 8) Don Feder on marriage - **Remarks by a famous Jewish conservative columnist** - see page 6.
- 9) Charles W. Moore examines the statement that "Christians have no right to impose their morality on society" - **No Neutral Ground: Which Morality Will Be Imposed?** - see page 8.
- 10) A 'must read' by Fr. Raymond DeSouza - **People in a vegetative state** - see page 9.

The Bishop's Bit

Adult Confirmation: Ottawa

Revelation 1,13: "And in the midst of the seven golden lamps I saw one like unto the Son of Man".

Revelation 4,5: "And there were seven lamps burning before the throne of God, which are the seven spirits of God".

In the old Jewish temple there was a golden stand which held seven lamps of burning oil.

For the author of *Revelation* seven flames serve as a symbol of God the Holy Spirit. John does not mean that there are seven Holy Spirits. He means that the one Holy Spirit has a sevenfold activity. Or put in another way, he means that the one Holy Spirit does seven distinct things, or that He gives seven different gifts. The hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus** sings, "Who dost Thy sevenfold gift impart". The idea for seven comes from the prophet *Isaiah* (11,2), who says that the Spirit of God will fill the Messiah with seven characteristics.

In any sacrament the prayer immediately before the action is vital.

So just before the pouring of water over the head, we find this prayer at baptism: "Lift up your hearts. It is very meet, right and our bounden duty. We beseech Thee to sanctify this water to the washing away of sin." (B.C.P. p. 536)

Just before the eating of bread and drinking of wine, we find this prayer at communion: "Lift up your hearts. It is very meet, right and our bounden duty. Looking for His coming again in glory we make here the memorial He commanded." (B.C.P. p. 78 and p. 82)

Just before the laying of hands upon the head, we find this prayer in ordination: "Almighty and most merciful Father Who hast given Thy only Son, Who after he was ascended, poured down His gifts. Grant we beseech Thee to these Thy servants". (B.C.P. p. 654)

Just before the laying on of hands upon the head, we find this prayer at confirmation: "Almighty and everliving God, Who hast been pleased to give new birth to this Thy servant by water and the Holy Spirit, and hast given unto her forgiveness of all her sins: Confirm and

strengthen her we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Spirit the Comforter, and daily increase in her the manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill her, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear". (B.C.P. p. 559) Did you notice the request for the sevenfold activity of the one Holy Spirit, for the seven gifts of the one Spirit?

In a few moments you and I shall ask for the Holy Spirit to give these seven characteristics to Judy, which characterize our Messiah: (1) wisdom, the ability to make right decisions. (2) understanding, an insight into the ways of God. (3) counsel, the ability to receive opinion from our Advocate. (4) strength, the stamina to persevere. (5) knowledge, to know right from wrong, truth from error. (6) godliness, to have a character like Christ's. (7) holy fear, awe-filled reverence.

We shall then go on to pray: "Continue Thine. Daily increase in Thy Spirit". We are not immediately and totally full of wisdom and understanding. For us to absorb such gifts the Spirit may need to rough us up a bit. Pride must be humiliated, coldness must be fired up. We have been bent out of shape by sin. Callipers on the legs, braces on the teeth, a metal corset round the spine, are not necessarily full of fun.

Let us get on, then, with this prayer and with this laying on of hands. But first, the three vows.

+Robert Mercer, CR

* blue *Canadian Book of Common Praise* #480, green *English Hymnal* #153

By **The Bishop Ordinary - The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada**

A Chill is in the Air

***Press release by the CCRL
dated April 29, 2004***

The prolonged efforts of numerous citizens and groups, including the Catholic Civil Rights League, to oppose the passage of Bill C-250 have failed with the final 59-11 vote of the Senate of Canada on April 28 to approve the bill into law.

Proponents and supporters of Svend Robinson's "symbolic" amendment to add "sexual orientation" to the list of classes protected by the hate provisions of Canada's Criminal Code have made numerous assurances that such charges will only apply to the most obnoxious or severe critics of homosexual behaviour. Those assurances seem rather weak in light of efforts to limit the freedom of commentators around the world:

Last fall, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Peter Forster, Anglican Bishop of Chester, England was investigated under hate crimes legislation and reprimanded by the local Chief Constable for observing that some people can overcome homosexual inclinations and "reorientate" themselves. (The Telegraph, 10/11/03)

Belgian Cardinal Gustaaf Joos faces a lawsuit under that country's discrimination laws for his remarks about the nature of homosexuality and the Church's teaching published in a Belgium magazine. (CWNews.com, 01/26/04)

Cardinal Antonio Maria Rouco Varela of Madrid is facing a suit in Spain for preaching against homosexuality in a homily he gave in the Madrid Cathedral on the feast of the Holy Family. (Washington Post, 01/03/04)

In Ireland, clergy and bishops were warned that the distribution of the Vatican's publication on public recognition of same-sex relationships could face prosecution under Irish incitement to hatred legislation. (The Irish Times, 07/02/03)

With the passage of Bill C-250, Canada has now embarked upon a course of criminalization of dissent.

CCRL President Tom Langan commented: "We do not hate persons who may have homosexual inclinations or who engage in such behaviour. Likewise, we do not hate persons who engage in adulterous relationships, or other illicit sex outside of marriage. But we will continue to reject such behaviour, whether on religious or other grounds. Canada's adoption of measures to allow potential criminalization or prosecution for such views is to its shame."

Are such expectations misguided? It remains to be seen. We have seen comments from leading Canadian gay advocates such as the Rev. Brent Hawkes of the Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto in which he suggested last year that Vatican statements or a Catholic bishop's commentary on homosexuality are "expressions of hatred". We suspect Canadians will soon discover the extent of the new peril imposed on their freedom of speech only after they receive that knock on the door to answer to the authorities.

Thanks to **+Robert Mercer, CR**

The Vocation of Canadian Continuers

No. 2: More Background: The State of Play in the United States

The second of three parts

Also to be noted is a new entrant, the Fellowship of American and Canadian Prayer Book Churches, sponsored by the Prayer Book Society in the USA (PBS). It is deliberately open to congregations in ECUSA, the REC, the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), the Continuing Churches, AMinA, the AAC, FinF and so on. It might be thought that this is a duplication of the work of Anglicans United in trying to bring the Anglican diaspora together, but it must be remembered that Anglicans United is not in any way committed to the classical Books of Common Prayer. Indeed, the opposite would seem to be

the case.

As I write there is a rather unedifying battle going on between the AAC and the AMinA. It is clearly the AAC's objective to discredit AMinA despite the fact that it is answerable to and has the support of two overseas Primates (Koloni of Rwanda and Yong Ping Chung of SEAsia). The AAC also has support from several overseas Primates, but it is in no way accountable to them, as AAC is not an ecclesial body at all but a para-church organization, just like the PBS. It professes to be made up of people who wish to remain within ECUSA, but it is in no way accountable to that church's bishops or apparatchiks. AAC has called in its heavy guns, Fr. Radner and Professor Seitz, to blow AMinA out of the water, and the two Archbishops, Koloni and Yong Ping Chung, have responded with a ferocious barrage of their own. The AAC seems to be particularly concerned that congregations will seek to join AMinA even in the dioceses of bishops who are members of AAC. AAC is clearly determined to be the top dog on the "orthodox" front, and to put AMinA, which has come out against ordination of women to the presbyterate, in its place. The possibility of a serious division between orthodox Primates at the international level is now very real.

Meanwhile, within the AAC itself, there is skirmishing between those favouring a "forward" policy, and those counselling caution. The latter is a hard sell when ECUSA bishops across the States have stepped up their persecution of orthodox parishes and clergy and are making pre-emptive strikes to disestablish parishes and seize property.

All the while, the commission set up at last October's International Primates' meeting to map a way for the Anglican Communion through all the turmoil, impairment and breaks in "communion" is lumbering into action under the consummate church diplomat and master of the fudge, Robin Eames, Archbishop of Armagh.

Having built up a head of steam and a considerable momentum through highly

attended congresses and the support of the Anglican Communion Institute (a merger of the Anglican Institute and SEAD [Scholarly Engagement with Anglican Doctrine]), the AAC had to do something positive or stall, or even disintegrate. It also needed to maintain pressure on the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Eames Commission, and on ECUSA itself. And so it launched the Network of Anglican Communion Dioceses and Parishes (NACDP). It is claimed that the Archbishop of Canterbury himself wanted such a network formed, but it is highly likely that all he wanted was a single focus of dissent within ECUSA with which to deal, rather than having to cope with, meet and be civil to a stream of deputations from hither and yon in the USA. The idea of a Network being within both the Anglican Communion and ECUSA seems to owe something at least to the Anglican Communion in New Westminster (ACinNW) which by its very name makes out its claim to be within the Communion (and the Anglican Church of Canada while it refuses gay unions and ordination), while at the same time rejecting the jurisdiction of the apostate Bishop of New Westminster.

The Network, NACDP, has now been formally launched with its own Charter and Theological Statement, and with the support of some thirteen dioceses. It has selected a "Moderator", Bishop Duncan of Pittsburgh, and it is now in business, as they say in the USA. Since, as an outgrowth of AAC, it is the leading brand in the business, it is worth noticing a few things about the Charter.

Article I of the Charter expressly states that the Network "shall operate in good faith within the Constitution of the Episcopal Church" of the USA. This is immediately followed in Article II by a declaration that the "associated Dioceses and Convocations" of the Network will themselves "constitute a true and legitimate expression of the world-wide Anglican Communion". This is a claim to be a (more authentic) church within a (less authentic) church. There is lots of room here for future manoeuvring, not to

mention argument and discord. In defining itself in terms of ECUSA, the Network would seem expressly to be excluding Canadian "affiliate" parishes and congregations. Yet, four Prairie priests of the Anglican Church of Canada were among the founding signatories to the Charter.

By **The Rev. Graham Eglington** -
Chancellor of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

On the Relation Between the Eucharist and Mary

ROME, MAY 7, 2003 (Zenit.org) - In his encyclical "Ecclesia de Eucharistia" John Paul II dedicates Chapter 6 to the "School of Mary, 'Woman of the Eucharist.'"

To understand in greater depth the relation between the Blessed Virgin and the Eucharist, ZENIT interviewed Discalced Carmelite Father Jesus Castellano Cervera, president of the Teresianum School of Theology and an expert in Marian studies and consultor of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Q: Don't you consider somewhat singular the Pope's decision to dedicate a whole chapter to Mary in an encyclical on the Eucharist?

Father Castellano: Mary's relation to the Eucharist is evident, especially if two fundamental aspects of the Eucharist are considered.

The first is the continuity of the mystery of the Incarnation, exactly as John presents it in Chapter 6 of the Gospel: indissoluble connection between the Word made flesh [see John 1:14] and the flesh that he gives for the life of the world [see John 6:51 and following]. The chapter in the prologue of the Gospel, verse 14, uses the same expression "the Word became flesh," and also "I shall give you my flesh."

In the measure that the mystery of the

Incarnation is connected to the Virgin, of whom the Word takes flesh, we can say that it is a central aspect of the Eucharist, and not a devotional aspect.

St. Augustine himself said in the Commentary on Psalm 98:9: "Of the flesh of Mary, he took flesh, in this flesh the Lord walked here, and he has given us this same flesh to eat for our salvation; and no one eats that flesh without having first adored it . . . as we do not sin adoring it but sin if we do not adore it."

The second fundamental aspect is that the Eucharist is the memorial of the death of Christ, and in that moment of Calvary, John recalls Mary's presence at the foot of the cross. It is a presence in which the Virgin is associated with the mystery and with the offering of Christ to the Father, and in the offering of herself to the Father.

We cannot not think of the Virgin Mary, present in this mystery, of which the Eucharist is the sacramental connection; therefore, either because the Incarnation or because of the sacrifice of the cross, Mary is present.

Moreover, there are numerous expressions of the Fathers of the Church that bring the mystery of the Incarnation closer to that of the Eucharist.

Q: Could you give an example?

Father Castellano: Peter Chrysologus said that Christ "is the bread that sowed in the Virgin, leavened in the flesh, kneaded in the Passion, baked in the oven of the sepulcher, kept in the Church, taken to the altars, gives the faithful heavenly food every day."

In the Summa Theologiae, St. Thomas Aquinas made a comparison between the virginal birth, which is of a supernatural order, and the eucharistic conversion, which is also supernatural.

The relation between the Eucharist and the Virgin is an integral part of the whole Tradition. In some Eastern rites, for example in the Ethiopian liturgy, they

recite: "You are the basket of this bread of burning flame and the cup of this wine. O Mary, who produce in your womb the fruit of the oblation."

And also: "O Virgin, who brought to fruition what we are about to eat and who made to gush forth what we are about to drink. O bread that lives in you: life-giving bread and salvation for the one who eats it with faith."

Q: However, we must admit that at present this relation between Mary and the Eucharist is not known or reflected upon.

Father Castellano: In reality, the Pontiffs have always stressed this aspect of Tradition. Paul VII, for example, in "Marialis Cultus" exhorted [us] "to live the Eucharist with the sentiments of faith and love of Mary, Virgin who listened, Virgin of prayer, Virgin who offered, Virgin Mother, as well as Virgin model and teacher of spiritual worship in daily life, transforming herself in a pleasing offering to God."

We could also refer to John Paul II, who introduced the Institution of the Eucharist among the luminous mysteries of the holy rosary.

Thanks to **The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon**

Remarks by a famous Jewish conservative columnist

Defending Marriage

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to stand here today with my Catholic friends - and those of other faiths - in defense of an institution to which we are all devoted.

We need to remind the justices of the Supreme Judicial Court that marriage did not originate with the Massachusetts Constitution. In fact, it considerably predates that document.

At the beginning of time, God ordained marriage as the union of a man and a

woman because He knew that in their joining humanity finds its destiny. Genesis says a man and a woman shall be one - not two men or two women, or any other assortment or conglomeration.

Marriage is a Jewish institution bestowed on the Western world by Christianity. Who taught us about marriage? Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah - not Bob and Barney.

Marriage - and only marriage - creates the nurturing environment for all of those things that our Judeo-Christian heritage holds sacred - sexuality restrained by the bonds of matrimony, pro-creation, child-rearing, faith and family.

Prior to Judaism, sex had no moral content. After the light of God entered the world, it did. Now, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court would forcibly drag our society back to the degeneracy of the ancient Canaanites. Let me tell you something, my friends, these judges may think they're God, but compared to the Supreme Being, the SJC really isn't that supreme.

The Torah calls homosexual acts an abomination, a word of censure reserved for the gravest offenses. God told the Children of Israel that if they followed the ways of the Canaanites, the land would vomit them out. Is that what we want for America?

God bless America? How can we ask Him to bless a nation that makes a mockery of the institution He ordained? John Adams - the original author of the Massachusetts' Constitution - said the United States Constitution "was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Remember those commercials for Hebrew National hotdogs that said the company wouldn't adulterate its product because it "answered to a higher authority?" Well, my friends, we too answer to a higher authority. And we won't let a gang of judicial tyrants adulterate the institution

on which America will stand or fall.

By **Don Feder** at a rally in Boston on February 8, 2004

From here and there

a) Brevity is not only the soul of wit, it is also the soul of preaching and of writing.
+Robert Mercer, CR

b) **American Airlines** saved \$40,000, in 1987, by eliminating one olive from each salad served in first-class. [Imagine the savings if they had removed them from martinis! GF]

c) Congratulations to **St. George's Reformed Episcopal Church** in Hamilton who have just secured a mortgage to purchase St. Margaret's Church from The Anglican Church of Canada. (The ACCC and the REC have a friendly relationship.)

d) It is possible to lead a cow up stairs but not down stairs.

e) The highest exercise of charity is charity towards the uncharitable. **J.S. Buchminster**

f) America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter, and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves. **Abraham Lincoln**

g) Unthinking respect for authority is the greatest enemy of truth. **Albert Einstein**

No Neutral Ground: Which Morality Will Be Imposed?

A frequently bandied-about bit of stop-thought conventional wisdom contends that "Christians have no right to impose their morality on society."

The principal conceit behind this assertion when it is uttered by secular humanists, who are its most frequent locutors, is the implied notion that secular humanism

occupies some sort of neutral ground upon which it stands in Olympian grandeur above the fray.

That is poppycock. The proper rejoinder is: "what right do secular humanists have to impose their moral values on society?" The point being that unless we are to live in a state of moral anarchy, establishment of laws and statutes inescapably requires the imposition of someone's particular moral beliefs upon others. There is no legitimate "neutral ground."

Unfortunately, too many professed Christians have allowed themselves to be duped into believing that vigorous advocacy of Christian morality in the public square is something to be shunned. Never mind that the moral and cultural concepts that founded our society and that have sustained Western civilization for the past 1500 years were and are largely distilled from Christian ideas, and are emphatically nothing to be ashamed of or apologized for.

Then there is the implicit subtext to the "Christians have no right . . ." argument to the effect that Christian assertiveness in public life amounts to an attack on non-Christian religious belief and on religious freedom. This is particularly disingenuous given the strong likelihood that the context of discussion is some hot-button moral issue like same-sex marriage, on which nearly all major religions - at least the branches faithful to their traditional beliefs and standards, are in remarkable agreement. The main battlefield of the culture Wars is not between Christianity and other traditional religions, but rather between all traditional religions and secular humanism.

However, it does bear noting that religious freedom has tended to flourish only in cultures that are Christian or at least post-Christian.

As a Christian I believe that other religions are mistaken on points where they deviate from Christian teaching and belief, but I would vigorously and respectfully defend their right to be

mistaken and to worship as they choose without impediment or harassment. Religious freedom is a Christian standard. Genuine faith cannot be coerced.

This brings us to another falsehood propagated by advocates of secular humanism, to wit: that there are substantial numbers of non-Christian religionists whose rights are being infringed and sensibilities injured by the presence of Christian ideas and motifs in the public square - say Christmas concerts in schools.

The fact is that outside certain neighborhoods in large cities, non-Christian religions represent a minuscule minority in Canada. In 1993, the MacLeans Magazine/Angus Reid survey of religion in Canada found that all non-Christian religions combined represented less than 3 percent of the general population. In the 2001 census a whopping 74.6 percent of Canadians still identified themselves as Christian. The combined percentage of non-Christian religious membership in Canada, including Judaism, Islam, Hindu, Buddhist, New Age, Sikh, Spiritualist, Soka Gakki, North American native religion, Theosophy, paganism, Baha'i, humanist, agnostic, Wicca, Lemurian, and New Thought, is still less than five percent.

That doesn't mean that they shouldn't be treated with respect and sensitivity, but with three-quarters of Canadians still affirming some sort of Christian affiliation or self-perceived identity (the other 15-20 percent are professed atheists or agnostics) it is absurd to impose a ban on our heritage of Christian cultural traditions out of exaggerated multicultural hypersensitivity.

Or even less so cynical secularist "defense of religious minorities" employed as a stalking horse to advance an agenda of driving religion out of the public arena altogether.

As noted above, moral neutral ground does not exist. A society dominated by secular humanist ideologies will be very

different from a society dominated by Christian ideas. The political process should be about determining democratically which worldview should be imposed. If, in a democratic system, the majority make an informed choice to live in a society based on secular humanist concepts, then fair enough. Everyone will have to live with the consequences.

However, I don't believe that Canadians have ever made such an informed choice on that issue. Did Canadians ever democratically determine to purge Christianity from the country's public life? Nope. They've just been progressively brainwashed into assuming that they did. They have been badgered, bamboozled, and propagandized into supposing that freedom of religion means freedom from religion.

So the the dynamic is: "which set of values and principles should be imposed in our laws and statutes?" The set that founded, built, and sustained Western civilization, or the relativist, revisionist set that seeks to demolish those foundations?

What too many people fail to grasp, due to ignorance and/or intellectual laziness, is that Christianity was instrumental to creating the sort of tolerant, free civilization that allowed liberal ideas to develop and flourish in the first place. You can have civilization without Christianity, but what we recognize as Western civilization cannot be sustained without continued re-affirmation of the Christian principles that formed it.

By **Charles W. Moore** in the January 15, 2004 issue of the *Saint John Telegraph Journal*

People in a vegetative state

Can a human person ever become a vegetable? And be treated as such?

We use the term "vegetative state" to describe patients who are alive but have no apparent awareness of what is going on around them. Lacking intellectual

functions or even consciousness, our vocabulary suggests they have somehow slipped out of the human realm into a lower form of life. The question then arises: Do they still enjoy a right to life as all human beings do? Or has that ceased when their injuries or disease have rendered them a "vegetable"?

The issue is a critical one. High-profile euthanasia cases have skewed popular perception. Jack Kervorkian grabbed headlines with his "suicide machines" and Robert Latimer became a national figure when he killed his disabled daughter with carbon monoxide, but such cases are rare. The more common situation is the one in which allowing someone to die without aggressive treatment instead becomes killing due to withholding basic care. And the latter happens more than we would care to admit.

Those questions were examined last week at a major palliative care conference held in Rome, sponsored by the World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations and the Pontifical Academy for Life. The thorniest question was whether patients in a vegetative state are entitled to nutrition and hydration (usually intravenous or through an abdominal tube).

Pope John Paul II gave a definitive answer when addressing the group, saying that "sick people in a vegetative state, waiting to recover or for a natural end, have a right to nutrition, hydration, hygiene, warmth, etc [W]ater and food, even when administered artificially, are a natural means of preserving life, not a medical procedure and as such, [are] morally obligatory."

The remarks clarified a (minor) debate amongst moral theologians about the necessity of artificially administering food and water. It has always been recognized that heroic measures are not required to preserve life, and that allowing someone to die without aggressive treatment is a legitimate moral option in view of various other factors: the burdens of treatment, physical and emotional condition,

suffering, pain, age, side effects of therapy, limited prognosis for improvement, expense. But food and water? Food and water are not medicines; they are basic care for life.

A good rule of thumb is whether, by withdrawing nutrition and hydration, the cause of death will be starvation or dehydration, rather than the injury or disease afflicting the patient. If so, such withdrawal is no longer allowing the patient to die, but active killing, no matter how well-intentioned. Similarly, if the withdrawal will hasten death without any other benefit to the patient, such as reducing pain or infection, it too becomes active killing.

The importance of this issue will only grow as the population ages. The weakest among us - and the vegetative state is as weak as it gets - challenge us, in their dependency, to see that human dignity and the right to live are not conferred by conformity to an external standard of quality, but are rooted in the inherent being of a human person. The weak among us test the strength of our common humanity,

It is never necessary to take heroic clinical measures, but such cases do call forth from us heroic virtue - the compassion to accompany the weak and the suffering. Care and support - spiritual, emotional and practical - for the families of such patients is necessary to help them avoid crossing the line from allowing-to-die to active killing.

As a priest, it sometimes falls to me to accompany families to meetings when decisions have to be made about continuing care. Well-meaning and honourable doctors (who have no intention of euthanasia) often say things like "he's not there anymore" or "she's no longer with us." But of course they are. Communication might no longer be possible, and the possibility of recovery remote, but sick people, including those in vegetative states, are still with us, still

alive, still persons, still bearers of human dignity, still entitled to compassion and care.

"The intrinsic value and the personal dignity of every human being do not change, no matter what the specific circumstances of his life," John Paul said. Despite grave injuries or the ravages of disease, such patients "are and always will be human beings and will never become 'vegetables' or 'animals.' "

Today, somewhere, in a hospital not far away, decisions are being made about persons in a vegetative state. It is critical to remember that "person" is the noun, and "vegetative" is the adjective.

The news this past week from Calgary that two patients died after being inadvertently injected with potassium chloride has raised proper outrage. What could be a more grotesque turn of events than to be accidentally killed in a hospital by medical personnel? Only being killed in a hospital by those who know what they are doing.

By **The Rev. Raymond J. De Souza** in the March 27, 2004 issue of *The National Post*

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The Diocesan Circular
The Annunciator
The Traditional Anglican