

SUFFERING WITH DIGNITY (Posted 25.01.10)

“A central element of the essence of our humanness is that we are meaning-seeking beings. The challenge is to find meaning in dying – to make dying the last great act of living. A lethal injection is a simplistic, cheap, quick technological fix. Finding meaning in dying is none of these. But it's probably necessary if we're to find meaning in life and pass on ways we can do this to future generations.”

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/suffering_with_dignity/

EUTHANASIA AND THE PUZZLE OF HUMAN DIGNITY (Posted 30.11.09)

Both sides of the euthanasia debate claim to be advancing the cause of human dignity, so who should we believe? One side upholds our fundamental prohibition on all killing except in self defense, while the other side allows this prohibition to be breached on a number of grounds. So one side claiming to uphold 'human dignity' actually contradicts this basic ethical principle.

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the_puzzle_of_human_dignity/

WOULD EUTHANASIA DAMAGE DOCTORS? (Posted 25.11.09)

“The euthanasia debate has been focused, almost entirely, on the impact that legalizing euthanasia (a term I use in this article to include physician-assisted suicide) would have at the individual level. But we must also consider the impact legalizing it would have at institutional, governmental and societal levels. We need to explore not only the practical realities, such as the possibilities for abuse, that allowing euthanasia would open up, but also, the effect that doing so would have on important values and symbols that make up the intangible fabric that constitutes our society.”

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/would_euthanasia_damage_doctors/

THE EUTHANASIA DEBATE RE-SURFACES (Posted 25.11.09)

Why does the Western world keep coming back to debate euthanasia over and over again? Margaret Somerville suggests this reflects some deeply-held fears and misconceptions which have wide-spread effects on the ethics of our entire Western culture.

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the_euthanasia_debate_resurfaces/

MANIPULATING PAIN (Posted 25.11.09)

“The pro-euthanasia lobby has deliberately confused pain relief treatment and euthanasia in order to promote their cause. Their argument is that necessary pain relief treatment that could shorten life is euthanasia . . . [But] We need to distinguish treatment that is necessary to relieve pain, even if it could shorten life (which is a very rare occurrence if pain relief is competently prescribed), from the use of pain relief treatment as covert euthanasia. The former is not euthanasia, the latter is.”

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/manipulating_pain/

ARE YOU ‘PAST YOUR USE-BY DATE’? (Posted 25.11.09)

“Legalizing euthanasia and assisted suicide causes death to lose its moral context and us to lose our proper emotional response to it, a loss which recent research shows detrimentally affects our ethical judgment. . . . People who oppose euthanasia and assisted-suicide believe these interventions are inherently wrong -- they can't be morally justified, and that even compassionate motives do not make them ethically acceptable -- the ends do not justify the means.”

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/past_your_use_by_date_whats_next/

THE LAST GREAT ACT OF LIVING (Posted 25.11.09)

“Euthanasia allows people to feel that although they can't avoid death, they can control its manner, time and place. It's a terror reduction or terror control mechanism that operates at both the individual and societal level. So if we believe legalizing euthanasia would be a very bad idea, we need to develop and communicate other ways to deal with our fear of death.”

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the_last_great_act_of_living/

DEATH TALK IN A SECULAR AGE

Arguments against euthanasia often stumble over the religious block: many supporters of euthanasia do not share our sense of the sacredness of life or death. As pressure for euthanasia mounts in many countries, Margaret Somerville challenges us to develop more universal and secular arguments to defend human dignity to the point of natural death.

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/death_talk_in_a_secular_age/

WHO DARE CALL IT FUTILE?

Withdrawing life-sustaining treatment can be a difficult decision at the best of times, but it is doubly so when the patients family and the hospital staff disagree over what ought to happen. While there are ethical principles to help steer a way through these minefields, the interpersonal conflicts can remain. Margaret Somerville analyses such situations and suggests some general rules.

http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/who_dare_call_it_futile/