



**THE ROLE OF THE
CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN**
FR JP LYTTLE



**THE BIOETHICS
COLUMN**
THADDEUS



THE BOOK REVIEW
GREGORY
SCRIPTORUM



**CONFERENCE
REPORT**
A MEDICAL STUDENT

SEMPER IDEM

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION'S COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION



The Annunciation by Fra Angelico (1387-1455)

**THE CMA'S COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION
AIMS TO SUPPORT YOUNG CATHOLICS IN HEALTHCARE**



The Editor Writes

Our Catholic Faith, or rather a caricature of it, has been given much airtime in the past few months. Recently there was the case of Alfie Evans. Meanwhile in Ireland the abortion referendum was voted in with a clear majority. All of this was playing out

against the backdrop of talk in the Vatican about priestly celibacy, sexual issues in the preparatory document for the upcoming Youth Synod and a kerfuffle regarding Holy Communion for divorced Catholics and Protestants in Germany.

However, despite all the negative news, on the Feast of St Joseph 2018 a very exciting thing happened in the life of the Church in England and Wales: having been suppressed at the Reformation almost 500 years ago, the Conventual Franciscans returned to Walsingham to be chaplains to the National Shrine of Our Lady¹. The Conventual Franciscans have recently re-established friaries in Oxford and Aberdeen, and now they have had the vision to accept an invitation to care for the pilgrims visiting Walsingham. The date of the return of the Franciscans is significant: St Joseph is the father of the New Evangelization. This New Evangelization is close to the hearts of the Conventual Franciscans of the Province of Great Britain and Ireland.

At our recent pro-life youth conference at Tyburn Convent (see the report by a young medical student in this issue), we heard from Mother Thomasina, a Tyburn Benedictine nun, about the sacrifice of religious, such as the Conventual Franciscans, during the Reformation. At that time all 60 of the Conventual Franciscan friaries were closed. It would have seemed unbelievable then that in 2018, a convent on the site of the Tyburn gallows would be thriving, and Conventual friaries would be reopening. (As well as the Conventuals' new friaries, in the last few years the Immaculate Franciscans opened their friary in Gosport and then set up Radio Immaculata, at the invitation of Bishop Egan.)

It is Pope John Paul II who popularised the term 'New Evangelization'. He also did the same with the term 'culture of life' (contrasting it against the 'culture of death') in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* in April 1995². However, it has always been the teaching of the Church that each human being has a soul and has an inherent dignity and worth regardless of his/her perceived usefulness to society.

"There are two Ways: one of Life and one of Death, and there is a great difference between the two Ways..."

- The Didache (1st Century AD)

This is the reason why the Catholic Church is the largest charity in

Why *Semper Idem*?

Semper Idem is the name of the quarterly newsletter of the CMA's Committee for the New Evangelization (CMANE). The CMANE supports young Catholics in healthcare.



Semper Idem takes its name from the motto of Cardinal Ottaviani (b. 1890, d. 1979).

The Latin phrase means in English 'always the same'. We chose this as the name of the publication to emphasise the timelessness of the Catholic Faith and the Church's teachings. What was true yesterday, is just as true today. The Faith remains the same. This message is especially pertinent in our own time, when the Church's teachings on bioethical issues are particularly unpopular.

Semper Idem focuses a great deal on contemporary bioethical issues to help young Catholics build a culture of life.

As Catholics in healthcare, we can often feel very isolated as we strive to be saints in a culture which can be quite hostile to the Catholic faith.

In such times, let us recall the constancy of the Faith and the saints who have lived by this same Faith, and know that there are other young Catholics out there in healthcare experiencing the same struggles.

the world, and more relevant to our readers, the largest non-governmental provider of health care services in the world³. As Catholic healthcare workers we are at the forefront of this clash.

It is not always easy to go against the tide and to fight for those who have given up hope, or to love the unlovable.

We have a responsibility to see as God sees, and to treat every human being with love and respect, especially those rejected or deemed useless by society.

It is not always easy to go against the tide and to fight for those who have given up hope, or to love the unlovable. However, the role of the Church is to transform culture, and not the other way round. So we should endeavour to build a culture of life! In this edition of *Semper Idem*, a Catholic priest gives his experience of bringing the culture of life and love into the hospital by bringing a message of hope to the dying.

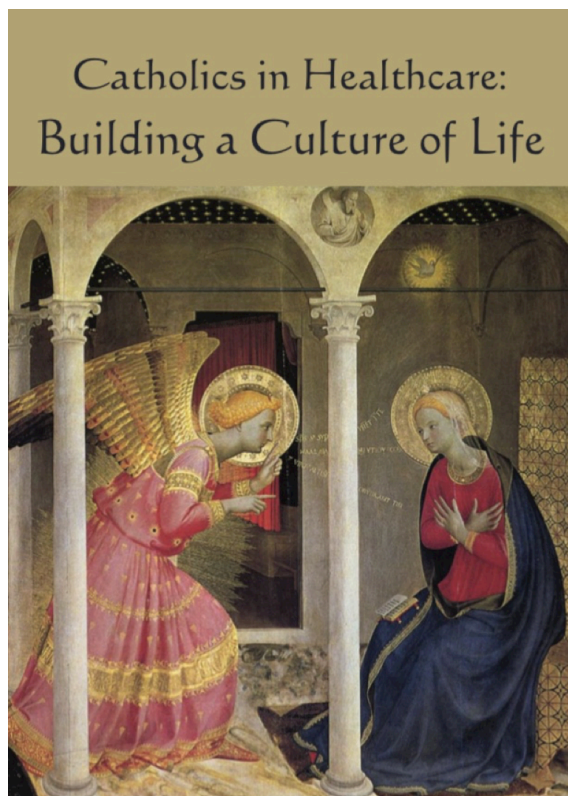
The Committee for the New Evangelisation have been organising conferences for young people in healthcare in order to inform and to provide support, and to try to build a culture of life and love. Our third annual CMA youth conference will be focused on building a culture of life. (For more details please see the advert in this issue of *Semper Idem*). We are delighted that at this event we will host a newly ordained Conventual Franciscan from the new Walsingham friary to speak about the New Evangelization, as well as talks on the culture of life. We hope to see you there!

Tianxiang - Editor

¹ <http://www.olaprovince.org/2018/04/23/greyfriars-return-to-walsingham/>

² http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html

³ <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/february-17th-2017/a-worldwide-force-for-good/>



**Catholics in Healthcare:
Building a Culture of Life**

The Third Annual CMA Youth Conference
for juniors and students (18 - 35)
of the healthcare professions
(doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, medical
students, nursing students etc)

Saturday 29th September 2018
St Aloysius' Catholic Church,
Euston, London

Save the date! More details to follow...

 facebook.com/CMAEnglandandWales

 Events@CatholicMedicalAssociation.org.uk

**There are two Ways: one of Life and one of Death, and
there is a great difference between the two Ways...**
The Didache

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Supporting Catholics in Healthcare
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Building a Culture of Life: The Role of the Catholic Chaplain



By Fr John-Paul Lyttle

Catholic Chaplain, Royal Berkshire NHS Hospital Trust

*"We are not **human beings** having a **spiritual experience**. We are **spiritual beings** having a **human experience**."*

- Fr Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

In this quote the French Jesuit philosopher playfully emphasised the importance of a person's spiritual life. For good healthcare to be holistic (ie to care for the 'whole'), it surely needs to care for the physical, psychological as well as the spiritual well-being of the patient.

As the hospital's chaplain, my role is to help care for the spiritual needs of those in the hospital. I am a Catholic Priest so my role then is to be an *alter Christus*, to be another Christ, walking the hospital corridors spiritually supporting the patients and even the staff. How do I do this? I pray for all those who work in the hospital and their patients when I offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and pray the Divine Office. When I visit the sick I remind them that they are

When I visit the sick I remind them that they are children of God

children of God with an inherent dignity as such, for we believe that life is sacred from conception to natural death.

Ultimately I have the privilege of administering the Sacraments of the Church. Through these means then I help to care for the souls of those in the hospital.

*"Always be ready to give an account for the **hope** that is in you!"*

- 1 Peter 3:15

Despite being in this role now for some time, I remain no less in awe at witnessing when life is drawing to an end than when I started. After sometimes many weeks of journeying through the profound human experience of sickness and suffering, and the medical options having been exhausted, for the patient and their family it often seems as though hope too is apparently coming to an end. Without negating the profound pain the family have experienced and loss they will soon go through, it is nonetheless the case, that death is not the end.

*"I can do **all things** through Him who gives me **strength**."*

- Philippians 4:13

I was recently phoned in the early hours of the morning to ICU. As I arrived, I saw a distraught family and on seeing me, they all respectfully moved aside so I could get to the patient. I spoke to the man telling him who I was and told him that Christ was very near and would touch his life. I assured him there was nothing to be afraid of any more. Then I administered the Apostolic Pardon, which is a beautiful gift to the Church by which the priest grants a full remission of sins, after which I gave the man the Sacrament of the Sick, his 'last rites'. I then prayed the Prayers of

Commendation and told the patient that he could go to God's Kingdom in peace.

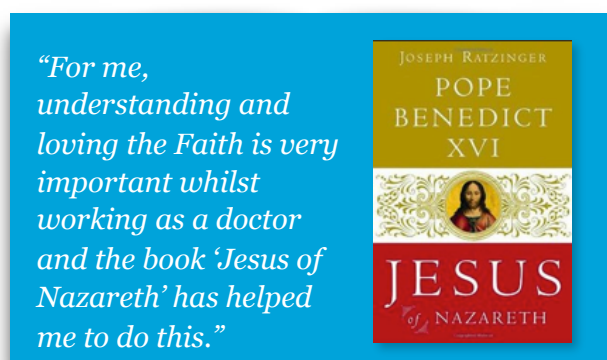
After this I lead the family in prayer around his bedside and then explained to them what I had done. As Catholics we pray for a 'happy' death, however this is a seemingly inappropriate word at such a time. What we mean by this though is that we hope that the person receives the Sacraments of the Church, is surrounded by their loved ones and goes forth in peace. Before I got to the front door of the hospital I found out that the man had died. This is an example of how the Catholic chaplain can promote a culture of life: caring for, valuing and loving life.

Recently I was involved in a discussion about whether the Catholic chaplain to a hospital should wear his clerical collar. In my view, I am a Catholic priest and this is a bold witness in our secular culture: one of sacrifice. Far from being less accessible due to wearing a collar, I am in fact more accessible as I am easily identifiable.

The Book Review

By Gregory Scriptorum, a Junior Doctor

'Jesus of Nazareth' by Pope Benedict XVI



When I was at medical school (I am a FY1 doctor now) I became curious about deepening my faith. I began by reading all the books of the New Testament and was astonished at their profound

beauty. Soon after this, I read 'Jesus of Nazareth' by Pope Benedict XVI. This is a three book series as follows: Book 1: The Infancy Narratives; Book 2: From the Baptist in the Jordan to the Transfiguration; and Book 3: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.

I was enthralled by the books and they made me want to read more and more. The clarity of thought that Pope Benedict is able to convey when explaining the key events in the life of Jesus is amazing. He is able to link together history, theology, philosophy and linguistics when discussing and explaining the mysteries of the Faith. However, these books did not simply help me to understand these events academically, they were able to help me deepen my faith and relationship with Jesus Christ. Pope Benedict's deep faith is certainly apparent in his writings, and this is a great inspiration to me.

For example, in the book 'Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection' Pope Benedict dedicates a few pages specifically to when Jesus dies on the cross (pages 223-226). He explains the totality of Jesus' love for humanity so eloquently by saying "He has truly gone right to the end, to the very limit and even beyond that limit ... He has given Himself". What a beautiful image this evokes! Pope Benedict goes on to explain that at the Crucifixion "the new cosmic liturgy is accomplished" thus understanding this mystery sacramentally. He then ends this section by linking Jesus' death to the birth of the Church.

For me, understanding and loving the Faith is very important whilst working as a doctor and the book 'Jesus of Nazareth' has helped me to do this.

To my junior colleagues I would encourage you to go into the CTS bookshops or St Paul's bookshops and thumb through the books until you find one which looks interesting to you. In this series in Semper Idem I will review books, which have helped me deepen my faith and might be able to help you too.

The Bioethics Column

By Thaddeus, a young Catholic bioethicist

Why should young Catholics in healthcare learn about bioethics?

Whether you are already working as a healthcare practitioner or are still a student, sooner or later you will encounter ethical problems relating to patient care. These might be of a diverse nature, e.g. relating to the choice of treatment, allocation of resources, or deciding to highlight a particular behaviour (either of the patient or another staff member) to someone higher up.

While your professional training should include some ethics education, being a Catholic adds another dimension to the whole process. While it might be useful to know what one or another professor thinks about a particular bioethics issue, as Catholics we recognise that our primary relationship is with God. We are called to be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13), and following Christ (Luke 2:34), signs of contradiction to the world. We know that the decisions we make should be for the glory of God and our own salvation, but they should also enlighten (cf Matthew 5:14-15) those around us so that they may also see the truth, love and good we found in Christ.

This is not to say that we cannot look for useful insights in the works of secular writers, but that we should always have the guidelines that God gives us through His Church in front of our eyes. It is the aim of this series of short articles to prompt you to reflect on some of the issues we are currently facing in bioethics and on the guidance the Church offers us on these issues. In the next instalment we will consider what healthcare is,

and what that means for us as Catholics working (or training to work) in healthcare.

Conference Report

Catholics in Healthcare:
Men and Women of Conscience

By a young medical student



On the 10th March, the CMA hosted a day conference for young healthcare professionals at Tyburn Convent. The conference started with Mass in the extraordinary form, complete with Gregorian chant, a wonderful opportunity to expose young professionals to a beautiful celebration of the Mass they may seldom have encountered in their own parishes. In the first talk of the conference, one of the Tyburn nuns reminded us of the historical precedents of conscientious objection in a fascinating and moving account of the lives of the Tyburn martyrs. Her talk was a reminder of three important facts: firstly, whilst we may feel challenged at times, our lives are not literally on the line; secondly, the battle has already been won, just as the blood of the martyrs is now glorified, so will our small battles give way to glory in the future; lastly, we have the prayers of so many religious (and lay)

people around the world to support us in our endeavours to do what is right.

The ensuing discussion on conscience was thus set up in the context of eternity and placed us in a humbling lineage of figures now gone before us, who had remained true to their convictions to the last - the martyrs of course, but also more contemporary figures such as Dr Jerome Lejeune who fought so voraciously to defend the rights of people with Down's Syndrome.



The two talks on conscience, delivered by Dr Joseph Shaw from the Anscombe Bioethics Centre and Mr John Smeaton from SPUC provided us with a thorough philosophical grounding and practical grounding in the nature of conscience within the healthcare setting, both what it is, and perhaps more importantly, what it is not. The day ended with a panel discussion enabling the

Overall, the day was a great success...

attendees to enquire about some of the practicalities raised by the talks and so engage directly with the speakers. The Q&A session also provided the opportunity for various professionals from the floor to offer their insights, demonstrating the diverse range of knowledge and experience present at such a meeting.

Overall, the day was a great success and it was a real privilege to listen to such fantastic speakers in such a beautiful and apt venue. Many thanks to the Tyburn nuns for their hospitality and prayers, they are, of course, assured of ours. Many thanks also to the CMA for organising such a stimulating conference!

www.SemperIdem.co.uk

**The Website of the
CMA's Committee for the New
Evangelization**

