

Moral perspectives

Religion must look at life and death ethics

In a recent column, I raised the question "What are medicine and morality to do when the obligation to preserve and sustain human life clashes with the obligation to relieve pain?"

At what point is medicine morally authorized to withhold life-sustaining treatments which would intentionally end life, but which would thereby relieve suffering? When can the physician legitimately say that nothing better can be done than to terminate the treatment which prolongs life?

When this issue has come before the judiciary, the courts have backed away from trying to make specific medical judgments which would limit the options of the physician.

The law cannot provide a "quality of life" definition that would define a point at which the level of one's consciousness or usefulness would warrant life termination. Since the courts cannot practice medicine, they have wisely referred such judgments to standard medical practice and the good judgment of the physician.

THE COURTS cannot advise the physician about specific treatment. They can and they have stated the limits beyond which a physician may not go.

The outer limit placed upon the physician by law is that he must not engage in an action which causes death. The defenseless patient's life must be accorded protection, equally and without discrimination under law. The physician cannot terminate life, even with merciful intent, and by law cannot willfully omit any action which would sustain life.

Do we conclude, therefore, that the physician can never legally, but only illegally, terminate any life-sustaining treatment? Are we therefore forced by the equal-protection clause and the standards of medical practice to fill our hospitals with dying people on respirators and to sustain dysfunctional human organisms indefinitely at all costs? Neither the law nor the code of morality should require this of physicians. If either of them did, society would find remedies.



By RABBI
IRWIN GRONER

UNDER WHAT circumstances does the withholding of life-sustaining treatment become legitimate? This question is closely related to the definition of what treatment is to be considered extraordinary. Please note that we are discussing the withholding of life-sustaining treatment, that is, treatment without which life is not likely to continue.

The courts have said that this decision is a medical determination, yet it is one which deserves to be informed by moral understanding. There is no single answer. Medical opinion is, in my view, as divided as moral opinion.

The most cautious opinion says: "Never stop trying to sustain life. Unforeseen medical possibilities may emerge even in cases thought to be irreversible. And even in irreversible cases, medicine is committed to the sustaining of life. Do not pull the plug on a living person, no matter how gross the lesion or degenerative, or unless that person may appear to us. Terminate treatment only at death."

At the opposite extreme is the theory of euthanasia, which would support efforts, now illegal, for the physician to end life directly or to omit actions which clearly sustain life. This is not acceptable medical practice, and most moral theorists oppose it. Even those who sincerely believe in euthanasia do not practice it legally, if at all.

BETWEEN THESE two views is the ambiguous area of "judicious neglect" sometimes called "withholding of extraordinary treatment."

This involves the discontinuance of life-sustaining measures such as not

resupplying oxygen tanks for respirators, or failing to renew batteries in pacemakers, or not providing for kidney dialysis. In each of these instances, the attitude of passivity and non-intervention of the physician will lead to the onset of death.

Several conditions are said to justify withholding life-sustaining treatment as in the examples above. These include cases in which irreversibility is clearly established, with no hope of recovery of a useful life, when death is imminent, or the dying process has set in so immediately that nothing remains for medicine but to offer comfort, and when heroic treatment involves grievous burdens to oneself or others, including intolerable financial hardships of the family. There also are the instances when there is a complete and irremediable loss of all cognitive function and when the patient is in terrible pain with no means of relief and no hope of recovery.

As a whole, the case for "judicious neglect" has argued that the more these conditions are present, the better is the moral case for the withholding of treatment.

CAN JUDEO-CHRISTIAN ethics subscribe to a theory of "judicious neglect?" Theologians and moral philosophers are examining this question from the perspective of the values of religion and the current development in medical practice.

Sophisticated life-support technologies have ushered in a new era in which we no longer stand passive and powerless before the onset of death. Monumental spiritual and moral issues confront us.

Neither the courts nor the physicians can provide definitive answers. We must turn to the wisdom preserved by churches and synagogues to find a proper judgment. We need to educate ourselves and then our society in the responsible stewardship of birth, life and death.

Vermont got its name from the French. *Green Mountain*, *vert* means green mountain.



Hadassah goes fashionable

Contributors who have given generously of time and money will be honored by the Metropolitan Detroit Chapter of Hadassah at a brunch at 11 a.m. Tuesday, in Congregation Sharey Zedek, Southfield. "The Inside Story" a fashion show by Lingerie will feature designer wares. Guest commentator will be TV-2 weatherman, Barry ZeVan.

RELIGION CALENDAR

ST. MARY UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, Evergreen and Mada between Eight and Nine Mile, will sponsor a Ukrainian ethnic fair Saturday and Sunday. Ukrainian music and dances, a cultural exhibit and ethnic foods and artifacts will be featured from 1-10 p.m. both days.

In addition, there will be a film, "Journey to Ukraine," at 5 p.m. Saturday and 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. Sunday, and special concerts both days.

There is no admission charge, and plenty of parking is available.

ST. MARY PREPARATORY SCHOOL, one of the units of Orchard Lake Schools, will be the setting for a Polish country fair to be sponsored by the St. Mary Monks and Dads Club, Friday-Sunday. Polish bands, Polish food, exhibits and games will be featured, starting at 5 p.m. Friday and running noon to 11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

CLARENCEVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 2030 Middlebelt, Livonia, will host Al Kuhnle in a family life conference Sunday, June 4, through Wednesday, June 7.

Kuhnle is executive director of Voice of Christian Youth, a non-denominational youth organization serving youth in the Detroit metropolitan area for 40 years. The visiting evangelist will open his conference with a breakfast talk at 6:45 a.m. Sunday, and then will address the church's worship services at 9 and 11 a.m. Sunday school at 10:15 a.m. and evening worship at 5:45 p.m. He also plans talks at 7:30 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and a luncheon session with women of the church at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Subjects he will consider include the family and marriage challenge, dealing with rebellious children, and resisting pressure to give up.

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Welcome Wagon

Your Invitation to Worship

For Church Directory Information Please Call: Debbie 644-1100 Ext. 217		ANTIOCH LUTHERAN CHURCH 13 Mile & Farmington Rd. Worship 8:30 & 11:00 Sunday School 9:30 Nursery Provided Pastor Bertil Anderson LEA 625-7006		"I AM THAT I AM" TEACHINGS OF THE ASCENDED MASTERS "SCIENCE OF THE SPOKEN WORD" STUDIES OF THE AURA • STUDIES IN ALCHEMY • MANIFESTING "I AM" • TRANSFORMING KARMA (SIN) • KEEPERS OF THE FLAME STUDIES DECKLES & SHINOBU NEW STUDENTS MON 7:30-9:30 TUE 7:30-9:30 WED 7:30-9:30 THU 7:30-9:30 FRI 6:00-9:30 SAT 10:00-12:00 THE SUMMIT Lighthouse OF DETROIT 23847 WILLOWARD AVE. at 9th Mile 545-4769		BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH 5631 North Adams Road 1 1/2 Mile North of E. Long Lake Rd. Sun. 8:30 AM Matins Communion 1st Sunday 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 MORNING WORSHIP COMMUNION 1st SUNDAY Fred W. MacLean, Pastor Diane E. Scholer, Pastor MI 6-5241		EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH 23415 Lehigh Road (just N. of 9 Mile) Sun. 8:30 AM Church School 10:45 AM The Service The Rev. A. Laiden Erickson		COVENANT BAPTIST Covenant is a church where Christian Education is important. There is a place for you and your family to study and grow. Church School 9:45 Worship 11 AM & 6:30 PM 900 W. Maple Rd. W. Bloomfield, Mich 48003 1 1/2 Mile W. of Orchard Lake Rd. 455-9181									
CLARENCEVILLE UNITED METHODIST 2030 Middlebelt, Livonia Pastor Gerald Fisher 474-3444 9 a.m. First Worship Service 10:15 a.m. The Church School 11:15 a.m. Second Service 6:30 p.m. Youth Meetings 7 p.m. Sunday Evening Service 7:30 p.m. Wed.-Thurs. Midweek Service Nursery Provided at All Services		NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 26275 Northwestern Highway near Lahser Southfield Mich. Phone EL 6-1660 Come worship with us, let our choir thrill you with their glorious music. Rev. Paul H. Young, Jr. Pastor Dr. Harry M. Langford, Music Dir. Morning Worship 10:30 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Ample Parking Nursery Care No Stars. Provided		NORTH BROOK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 14 Mile and Lehigh Roads Morning Worship and Church School 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. Pastors: L. J. Peterson E. W. Dorn Phone: 642-0280		ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH 355 W. Maple Birmingham SUNDAY SERVICES 8:30 A.M. Holy Communion 9:15 and 11:00 A.M. Morning Prayer (1st 1st Sun. of month) 9:15 and 11:00 A.M. Church School (Infants through 8th grade) WEDNESDAYS 10:00 A.M. and 11:30 A.M. Holy Communion		ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 165 E. Square Lake Road Bloomfield Hills (2 1/2 Mile East of Woodward) 338-8233 Minister: Dr. Roger Iveson Church School 9:45 A.M. Worship Service 11:00 A.M. Pastor: Class - 10 A.M. - New Testament		Bethlehem Lutheran Church 33300 Eight Mile Road Farmington Hills Rev. J. H. Tucker, Pastor 474-2379 Worship - Sunday School 10:30 A.M.		FARMINGTON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH 28301 Middlebelt Road, 1/2 Mile N. of 12 Mile A FULL-SERVICE CHURCH SUNDAY GRADED BIBLE SCHOOL Worship Services CHILDREN'S CHURCH WEDNESDAY FAMILY NIGHT Douglas B. Brown, Pastor Nursery Provided at All Services Ample Parking C.B.A. Affiliated No Steps							
First United Methodist Church 1589 West Maple at Pleasant Ministers: James W. Wright, G. Bryn Evans John H. Bunce, Thomas R. Beaven Harold E. Weemhoff Worship Services 8:30, 9:30 & 11 a.m. Church School 9:30 and 11 a.m. Nursery Care Provided		First Baptist Church Bates and Wilbur, Birmingham, Mich. Robert G. Maloney, Minister David W. Smith Glen H. August Jr. Home & Community Services		Bloomfield Hills Christian Church The Community House 380 South Bates, Birmingham Sunday 10:10 A.M. Bible Study 11:20 A.M. Worship 6:00 P.M. "Praise Service" Wednesday 7:15 P.M. Bible Study 851-8516		The Orchard United Methodist Church 30450 Farmington Road (between 12 and 13 Mile) Morning Worship 9:30 and 11 a.m. Church School & Nursery 626-6820 Ministers: Robert L. S. Brown James F. Thomas		Salem United Church of Christ Oakland at 6th Row, Farmington Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. Worship Service at 10:15 A.M. Church Office GR 4-8480 Pastor: Charles O. Erickson Rev. James A. Bates Minister Pastor: James 476-2364		St. John American Lutheran Church 23215 Oak Road Farmington Hills Pastor: Dennis E. A. 474-0584 or 474- Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. Nursery Provided		St. Andrew Lutheran Church LEA 6555 Telegraph Rd. Birmingham N. of 6 Mile Worship Services at 8:30 A.M. Thursday Church School Charles William Richter 648-5267		Beverly Hills United Methodist Church 29800 N. 12 Mile at Evergreen 644-1777 Worship 10:30 a.m. Church School 11:00 a.m. Nursery through High School Kathie Wilson, Youth		First Church of God 25117 Power Road Farmington Hills, MI 48034 Phone: 474-5619 Morning Worship 11:00 AM Evening Service Wednesday Prayer 7:30		Princeton of Peace Lutheran Church Missouri Synod 12 Mile & Farmington Roads Behind Crowley's The Rev. R.A. St. Pierre, pastor Sunday Worship 8:30 and 10:45 A.M. Sunday School and Bible Class 9:30 A.M. Church Phone: 553-3380	
WARD UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LIVONIA Farmington Road & Six Mile Road Worship & Sunday School 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. 422-1150		"Israel's Deliverance" Dr. Bartlett L. Hass 7:00 p.m. "The New Jerusalem Players" Drama - Testimonies - Music 8:15 p.m. Farewell Reception for Thelma Crans Administrative Assistant Air Conditioned Sanctuary Nursery Provided at All Services		The Congregational Church of Birmingham, U.C.C. Woodward at Crenbrook Bloomfield Hills MI 6-4511 Worship and Church School 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. Minister: Charles O. Erickson Minister of Education: Rev. Allen V. Walker		Dynic Science Church 1128 West Maple Road Birmingham, Mich. Sunday Service at 11 A.M.		FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CHURCH United Methodist on Franklin & Village Green services at 9:15 and 11:15 a.m. Nursery care at both services Sunday School at 11:15 a.m. Junior High at 10:15 a.m. Adult Education at 10:15 a.m. Family Hour at 10:15 a.m. Senior Minister Frank E. Conch Associate Minister J. Chester Stubbs		FARMINGTON HILLS CHRISTIAN CHURCH Orlando Road at Freedom Farmington Hills, MI 48034 Phone: 478-1511 Edmond Linder, Pastor Rev. John Walcott Associate Pastor Sunday, June 4, 1978 9:45 AM Sunday School-session continues all summer. 10:45 AM Communion "THE EFFECTS OF PREVAILING RAIN" 7:00 PM GOSPEL RALLY Sponsored by Choir and Orchestra Message and Song OUTDOOR SPACE ON DUNER FATHY The Pastor ministers in both services Water Baptismal Service will Thursday 7:30 PM Expanded Family Activities Closing June 11 - "TIE UP THE NIGHT"		Christian Science Churches FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST BIRMINGHAM 191 Chester on Willis SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M. WEDNESDAY TESTIMONY MEETING 8:30 P.M. CHILD CARE ROOM Sunday 10:15 A.M. - Wed. 7:45 P.M. READING ROOM • 355 East Maple • 644-7935 Open Mon. & Tues. 9:30-5:30 & 7-9 Wed. & Sat. 9:30-5:30 Thurs. & Fri. 9:30-9:00 except Sunday and holidays FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST FRANKLIN-MERIDOWAQUE Maple or Inkster SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M. WEDNESDAY TESTIMONY MEETING 8:15 A.M. CHILD CARE ROOM Sunday 10:15 A.M. - Wed. 8:00 P.M. READING ROOM in Pine Lake Mall • 851-7740 Orchard Lake Rd. at Lone Pine Rd. Open Mon., Tues., Wed., Sat. 10:00-5:30 Thurs. & Fri. 10:00-9:00 All are welcome at our Church Services and the Reading Rooms							