

January—2010

Iowa District West

Human Care

Health Care—Life Issues...be informed *(LCMS Reporter—Oct. 09)*

Just how might a new national health insurance program impact sanctity of life issues? Now that health care reform debate is commanding center stage in Congress, Maggie Karner (LCMS Life & Health Ministries Director) urges all LCMS members to “stay informed and make your voices heard with your own legislators.” Karner goes on to say, “This debate has the potential to radically change how issues of sanctity of human life are dealt with in our country. While our legislators are wrestling with the nuts and bolts of the economics and logistics of health care reform, our job as good Christian citizens is to look into the potential impact on issues concerning the beginning and end of life and other ethical concerns.”

The proposed bills before both the house and senate are huge...thousands of pages in length. They are so confusing that even our legislators had trouble explaining them in their 2009 town meetings around the country. In order to help us all “cut through the rhetoric” of the proposed legislation, and understand the potential impact on pro-life issues, LCMS World Relief/Human Care is providing regularly updated information and analysis on their website at www.lcms.org/healthcare. Whether you’re a district leader, pastor, congregational leader, or whoever visit this website and read the updates so that you can be informed. The impact of this proposed legislation will affect us all for years to come, whether good or bad.

Maggie Karner and Dr. Matthew Harrison (LCMS Director—World Relief/Human Care) cite three specific sanctity of life concerns in the proposed health care reform legislation, which are spotlighted on the WR/HC web pages.

- 1) **END OF LIFE ISSUES AND THE ELDERLY**
What are the details of these “discussions” between Medicare patients and their doctors, concerning end-of-life services and support about? Will they include family members? Will there be pressure to sign documents such as living wills and durable powers of attorney?
- 2) **PROTECTION OF THE UNBORN**
Where a proposal refers to taxpayer-funded “family planning services,” will that include or exclude abortion counseling, services, clinics, etc? We deserve to know. We need to know what lies within all these proposals.
- 3) **PROTECTION OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS’ “CONSCIENCE RIGHTS”**
Critics fear that proposed legislation may force insurance companies, employers, and individual medical professionals to provide, pay for, and/or participate in medical procedures contrary to their personal beliefs.

We certainly want everyone to have access to good, affordable health care. Everyone seems to agree that we need health care reform. Our goal is that we be lively participants in this debate. We want to encourage our legislators to offer good, solid health care to people who desperately need it, but to do so in a way that is Biblically correct. We want to separate the political matters from the moral issues. We want to model good Christian citizenship and encourage member involvement in the debate, but it’s very hard to be involved if we don’t understand what’s going on. Continue to check the website (www.lcms.org/healthcare) as this debate goes on.

"Life Thoughts" from Lutherans For Life

"Be quiet" is often spoken harshly. But Zephaniah speaks it for comfort. "He will quiet you with his love" (3:17). Because of God's love demonstrated in Christ, we need not "be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6). No matter what sin may burden us or what circumstances may overwhelm us, God speaks through His living Word, "Be quiet," and again in Psalm 46, "Be still and know that I am God." "The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress," and Jesus' own Word in Matt. 28:11, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."



When Joseph and Mary brought their baby Jesus to the temple, most of the people there probably thought He was just another baby, but Simeon saw in Jesus, his salvation (Luke 2:30). Now he could "depart in peace" (2:29). Here we see the simple beauty of death with dignity, dying with the knowledge of our salvation and according to God's timetable. Our times are truly in God's hands (Ps. 31:15), not just our earthly times, but our eternal time! Praise the Lord for His salvation...and ours!

Building Healthy Families...(from Lutheran Family Service of Iowa)

If you are a divorced parent, keep your children out of the middle of your problems. Children frequently share that being caught in the middle of their mom and dad's ongoing anger is one of the most difficult things they have to cope with after a break-up. Here are 3 "never ever" rules to live by.

- 1) Never ask them to carry messages between parents ("Tell your dad I need to pick you up early");
- 2) Never involve them in disputes about money ("Ask your mother to pay for it—that's what child support is for");

- 3) Never criticize the other parent, even if it's true, or quiz your child about what the other parent is doing.

Lutheran Family Service of Iowa has an office and Christian counselors near you. Call their toll free number: 1-800-622-7285.

**For your questions or comments,
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A prayer for your kitchen table

Lord, for those who plow, we eat from the sweat of their brow.
They from their bounty with us share, lest our cupboard would be bare.
Let us, oh Lord, never forget we are to others much in debt.
Open our eyes, help us to see. We all owe our lives unto Thee.
Oh, give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good, and His mercy endures forever. Amen.

