Letter to the editor Practical resource for creating a Catholic living will

PATRICK YEUNG, JR.

Saint Louis University

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the recent issue of the *Linacre* dedicated to geriatrics and end-of-life care. This is such a timely topic!

With the implementation of Obamacare – which is government-run health care funded at the rate of economic inflation, *not the more rapidly increasing* healthcare inflation – there will be ever-increasing healthcare rationing. This will lead to escalating pressure to withhold life-preserving treatment (including food and water) especially to vulnerable populations including the elderly, the disabled, and the poor. As a result, end-of-life documents are already incredibly important and will become ever more so.

The article by Dr. Morrow articulates several key principles that should be present in an end-of-life document that adheres to Catholic principles – one that recognizes and respects the inherent dignity for

human life *for its own sake*, one that ensure ordinary care and comfort care, and one that is “personalized” by appointing a healthcare proxy who understands and can implement your wishes according to the situation at hand. While there are several end-of-life document templates available, most do not adhere to the principles outlined in Dr. Morrow’s article.

A practical, easy-to-use resource for developing an end-of-life document that adheres firmly to the principles outlined in Dr. Morrow’s article is the Will To Life Project developed by the National Right To Life Committee. From this website, one can download a legally valid document for any of the fifty states. While creating a Catholic end-of-life document can be daunting, this resource provides a practical starting point and a template anyone can complete. For more information, check out: <http://www.nrlc.org/medethics/willto live/>.