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Doctors' religious beliefs influence their views on end of life care

END LIFE CARE AND POST- MORTEM EXISTENCE Dr James Paul Pandarakalam

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Medical scientists who are non-religious and espouse a strict biological model of the mind tend to care less for prolonging life is a serious statement. Theoretically this could be true of mental health professionals who are sceptical about post mortem existence while they deal with suicidal behaviour. The age-old belief in human spiritual existence has weakened with the growth reductionist views of mind. Right from the beginning of their medical education, medical professionals are exposed to reductionist models of mind and consequently, the concept of spirituality becomes inappropriate in their thinking. The concept of a Supreme Being becomes irrelevant if there is no life after death. After completing the anatomy dissection and physiology classes, I used to wonder where the soul in all these is. For mainstream scientists to accept survival after physical extinction and spirituality, they have to abandon a neutral position on the fence, metaphorically launching themselves on to the side of the following: a. The possibility of some form of limited communication between discarnate beings and living beings. b. The existence of an imperceptible discarnate dimension. c. The existence of a non-physical component that is in union with brain and body - a non-reductionist model of mind. d, The existence of a Divine Intelligence.

The prevailing reductionist model of mind has been recently challenged satisfactorily ^{1,2,3} We are now in a position in which it may be postulated that there is scientific evidence to enable a suspension of disbelief in life after death.⁴ The commonly cited types of evidence for discarnate existence are as follows: a. Clinical death experiences, b. Pre -death visions, c. Collective apparitions, d. Some forms of mediumistic incident, e. Children's memories of previous lives.

Unfortunately in survival research there are many phenomena that have multiple alternative explanations, and these augment the complexity of this immensely significant area of scientific enquiry. Instead of illuminating the survival hypothesis, some kinds of alleged evidence have compounded academic confusion. All the postulated types of evidence in favour of discarnate survival are simultaneously a form of evidence of a non-biological component that operates in association with the brain, and vice versa. In other words, proving post-mortem existence is another route to establish empirically that humans have a higher consciousness that survives physical extinction. The likelihood that Marian apparitional experiences are authentic has been demonstrated scientifically.⁵ If we supplement the categories of evidence itemised by survival researchers with the phenomenon of the Marian apparitions of the recent centuries, we find that there are compelling reasons to support those who are proponents of a belief in universal and eternal discarnate survival. They prompt us to revise our physicalist model of mind and scientific scepticism in a Divine intelligence. Marian apparitions compel us to believe in the sanctity of life and help us to appreciate the

meaning of bodily life with sufferings. Bernard Haisch (2006, 2010) has recently brought the concept of God into realm of physicist's imagination. 2,3 In the absence of spiritual convictions, human sufferings have no deeper meaning and death becomes the ultimate tranquiliser; prolonging life at any cost would be perceived as a worthless endeavour.

1. Kelly Edward; Kelly Emily Williams; Crabtree Adam; Gauld Alan; Grosso Michael; Greyson Bruce (2006) *The Irreducible Mind*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Inc.

2. Haisch Bernard (2006) *The God Theory*. San Francisco: Wheel/Weiser LLC.

3. Haisch Bernard (2010) *The Purpose-Guided Universe*. New Page Books: Franklin Lakes, N.J.

4. Brude Stephen (2003) *Immortal Remains*. New York: Bowman & Littlefield Publishers.

5. Laurentin Rene and Joyeux Prof. Henrv (1987). *Scientific and Medical Studies on the Apparitions at Medjugorje*, Dublin, Mount Salus Press.

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