

September 1934

Guild Notes

Catholic Physicians' Guild

Follow this and additional works at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq>

Recommended Citation

Catholic Physicians' Guild (1934) "Guild Notes," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 2: No. 4, Article 2.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol2/iss4/2>

FORMER PHYSICIAN SINGS HIS FIRST MASS. Dr. W. D. O'Leary returned to his home at Augusta, Georgia, last July to sing his first solemn High Mass as a Jesuit priest. He was graduated from the Georgia Medical College in 1921 with the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine. It will be recalled that our quarterly takes its name from a doctor who was Royal Physician to Henry VIII and founder of the Royal College of Physicians. When he was about sixty years of age he became a priest, devoting the rest of his life to caring for souls as well as bodies.

GUILD NOTES

SAN FRANCISCO joins the movement.—On May 2nd last, in the auditorium of St. Mary's Hospital, San Francisco, California, there was inaugurated a Guild of Catholic Physicians, which will be an outstanding unit in the Federation. The reason is that San Francisco is a medical center for the whole Pacific Coast and many Catholic physicians have attained distinction there. Dr. Milton B. Lennon, Chief of the Neurological Clinic and Professor of Neurology in the Medical School of the University of California, was elected Master of the Guild. Dr. Eileen M. Leonard, on the staff of the Children's Hospital and prominent in medical circles, was elected Secretary. The Federation hopes for big things from the California unit. Welcome, California!

THE PHILADELPHIA GUILD.—The Guild of Sts. Luke, Cosmas and Damien of Philadelphia has held three meetings since October, 1933, and its usual retreat in Cathedral Chapel. The Chaplain, the Rev. John W. Keogh, A.M., gave the retreat in four exercises, the subjects: "Religion"; "The Passions and Morality"; "Love and Self-Control," and "No Perfection Without the Seven Fundamental Virtues."

On May 5th the Guild held what was declared the most interesting meeting of its history. The subject was "Sterilization of the Feeble-minded," and excellent papers were read by Michael A. Burns, M.D., Professor of Neurology of Jefferson Medical College; by the Rev. John Keenan, C.M., J.C.D., Professor of Moral Theology of St. Vincent's Seminary, Germantown, and by John B. Gest, Esq., whose paper was entitled "Legal Status of Sterilization Laws." After the papers the subject was discussed in open forum. One voice from the floor was that of Agnes Kemper, Ph.D., psychologist and social worker for the state, who said "that social workers generally believe that sterilization is a physical and mental help to the feeble-minded." She stated that doctors usually use only two approved tests in cases of mental defec-

tives, whereas psychologists use four or five. She instanced several practical recent cases in her own observation where the patients designated for sterilization were not normal because of deafness.

The whole floor discussion, the many questions asked Dr. Keenan, and the splendid paper by Dr. Burns with its statistics and current medical views on sterilization in present-day medical practice, showed a woeful lack of knowledge concerning the rights of individuals, and almost a complete lack of knowledge regarding the exact attitude of the Catholic Church on sterilization and segregation, though the Guild endeavored to spread much enlightenment on this subject two years ago, when the same subject was treated before its members and invited medical guests.

The paper by lawyer Gest evoked much comment by its cogent analysis of all cases of sterilization tried before courts of the states, and the decision of the Supreme Court and the declarations of Justice Holmes in sustaining its constitutionality. Some illuminating parts of his paper showed interesting sidelights on punishment and fines in different states for illegal sterilization, quoting its effect in "Indiana, Connecticut, Iowa, New York, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, and Utah and in the others it involves a fine from \$100, usually \$1,000 fine, and a half to five years imprisonment." He instanced "the legal and criminal liability of a surgeon for performing a sterilization operation in the absence of a statute permitting it as discussed . . . in the *American Bar Association Journal* for 1930." Elucidating this opinion, and concluding with a résumé of Pennsylvania State Law covering the subject from every angle, lawyer Gest won appreciative thanks. Closing, he said, "My belief is that in the present temper of society there will be more laws passed and that they will usually be sustained in so far as they conform to the general plan of the Virginia statute,—until such time as an enlightened society may be reflected in the Supreme Court and some future Judge will find that *three generations of sterilization are enough.*"

Valentine R. Manning, M.D., President of the Guild, presided.

THE BOSTON GUILD.—At the May meeting of the Guild of St. Luke, held at the University Club in Boston on May 28, 1934, several matters of importance to the Guild were taken up and disposed of. Also at this meeting was discussed and acted upon, a matter of concern not alone to the Guild but to the Archdiocese and the Catholic people of the United States in general. This was the part we were to take in the observance of the Golden Jubilee of our beloved Cardinal Archbishop. We have been especially fortunate in Boston to have as our spiritual guide and friendly adviser His Eminence, William Cardinal

O'Connell. It was at his invitation and through his enthusiasm that our Guild was started some twenty years ago. He has since that time always given us his co-operation and help in the activities of the Guild and we feel that now we will be able to return our thanks in making this occasion one for him to always remember. Delegates were appointed to assist at the three masses which were celebrated for the faithful by His Eminence. A substantial spiritual bouquet was added to the number of other diocesan societies, and resolutions of congratulations and prayers for the continuance of his guidance and help were passed unanimously by the meeting.

The guest speaker of the meeting was the Rev. Russell Sullivan, S.J., of Boston College, who addressed us on the moving picture industry and censorship. This address was probably the most interesting the Guild has been privileged to hear. The interest of the members can be judged by the fact that, after the address, the question period was prolonged well into the morning and then was not completed. The wealth of information, given in a very informal manner, and the seriousness of the situation impressed the membership very much. The contemplated method of correction of the condition was approved by the Guild and full co-operation promised in the campaign to follow. We all hope to have Father Sullivan as our guest again, for his enthusiasm, knowledge and instructive and logical manner of delivery made a tremendous impression.

The meeting closed with the usual collation but the social hour which is so pleasant to all who attend our meetings was not held, due to the insistence of the members in asking Father Sullivan questions.

The annual meeting of the Guild of St. Luke was held in the University Club on June 25, 1934. The reports of the officers for the year 1933-1934 were accepted with thanks by the Guild. Election of officers for the year 1934-1935 resulted as follows: President, Richard W. Sheehy of Winchester; Vice-President, Edward J. O'Brien of Boston; Secretary-Treasurer, Edward L. Kickham of Boston; Council, William T. Haley of Boston, Fred J. Murphy of Lowell, John E. Burns of Natick, John J. Sullivan of Dorchester, and William J. Coughlin of Boston.

Matters concerning the future of the Guild and the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds were discussed. It was voted to pay the subscription for the Federation quarterly publication, namely, *THE LINACRE*, out of the Guild treasury. It was the sense of the meeting that *THE LINACRE QUARTERLY* should be continued under the direct control of the Federation. Ways and means of increasing the membership of the Guild were discussed and, through the co-operation of our chaplain, Monsignor Splaine, it is planned to contact each parish

priest in the diocese for the names of all Catholic doctors in their parishes. This is to be followed with a letter to each one in an attempt to interest them in joining this Guild. Finally, we plan to ask the Cardinal to issue a diocesan letter to be read in all the churches of the diocese emphasizing the necessity for being a member of this Guild and the advantages in being connected in this most important form of Catholic action.

Our guest speaker of this meeting was Mr. Maurice Lacy, President of the Irish Charitable Society of Boston, and Headmaster of Jamaica Plain High School, who is an eloquent speaker and an authority on Ireland and her history. His address was, "The Story of Ireland." In true schoolmaster style he brought an outline of the subjects he intended to touch upon, for he said he would be unable in the time allotted to him to do more than to go over a few of the points which, in his opinion, were of particular significance in the history of this country. The address was most interesting and instructive and everyone present enjoyed the evening. We have been fortunate in the speakers who have consented to address us and Mr. Lacy was certainly in the front rank of these distinguished gentlemen. The usual collation was served and a social hour followed.

PRISONER NO. 28702 AND THE FEDERATION

Prisoner No. 28702, George W. Winkler, at McAlester, Oklahoma, is about to make a test case of the Oklahoma Sterilization Law. One of the officers of the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds sent him several issues of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, the official organ of the Guilds, containing arguments for the case against sterilization. Prisoner Winkler replied to this officer in the following letter which is a document of much human import and not without pathos.

"I HAVE your letter of August 4th, expressing your opinion of sterilization, and of the action you have taken in my behalf.

"First, I want to thank you sincerely for myself, and extend the full-hearted gratitude of some four hundred inmates of this institution who are subject to the state's sterilization law, and I also, even though I belong to no church, take this opportunity to thank the Catholic Church, and the other organizations made up of its members, for the editorials and articles, appearing in THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, against this program which I believe to be so unjust to the extent that it is cruel and unusual punishment, attempted to be inflicted on myself and