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From the Editor's Desk

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From the Editor's Desk



The Catholic Physician and Medical Ethics

In a recent column of the Milwaukee archdiocesan paper, *The Catholic Herald*, Dolores Curran made a plea for Catholics to become more informed about the medical issues which they are facing today. Her emphasis was on medical ethics. The issues facing every family today run the gamut of ethical dilemmas which have been discussed in *Linacre* over the past 50 years. Here at *Linacre* we have provided our readers with a plethora of information, always adhering to solid Catholic teaching.

Ms. Curran suggested that parishes and other organizations invite Catholic doctors to address these groups so as to inform them of their duties and obligations as well as their rights and privileges in regard to health care. The agonizing decisions in regard to fluids and hydration, ordinary and extraordinary means, prolongation of life, the new areas of in vitro fertilization and genetic therapy, abortion, homosexuality, transplantation, surrogate motherhood are all issues which people are thinking about.

We encourage our physicians to address these audiences and inform them. Like every good teacher, the physician would do well to listen to what is on the minds of these searching souls. As a noted physician, philosopher and ethicist once said, "Most physicians do the right thing, but oftentimes are not sure why."

Linacre attempts to provide the background material to physicians to fill this gap. Through the years of practice gained as physicians, a certain degree

of wisdom is acquired and this comes across to an audience in the give and take of question and answer periods. Patients respect us but place special trust in us because we are Catholic and adhere to the teaching of our Church as well as to our Hippocratic oath.

So if you are invited to address these groups, respond joyfully. You have more experience at your command than any of your audience. In medical ethical dilemmas, the Golden Rule still applies: "Treat the patient as you would like to be treated and leave the rest up to God."

— John P. Mullooly, M.D.

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