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Catholic Physicians' Guild

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## 1967 Linacre Award Winner: Jean Read, A. B., LL. B.

The Executive Board of the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds at the Winter Meeting in 1956 voted to sponsor the Thomas Linacre Award. This would be given annually to the physician contributing to *Linacre Quarterly* an article judged by the Editorial Board to be most valuable in content to promote the interests of the journal in its efforts to express opinions in the light of Catholic teaching as applied to Medical practice.

The first award was made at the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Federation in New York City on June 5, 1957. The recipients of that first award were Dr. Roy Heffernan and Dr. William Lynch for their classic essay "Is Therapeutic Abortion Scientifically Justified". Since then, the papers and the recipients have all been distinguished.

This year, the Executive Board, in June, voted a suspension of the physician requirement. This allowed for the nomination of the award to Miss Jean Read: a gracious lady in Catholic Action. The vote for her as recipient of the 1967 Thomas Linacre Award was unanimous.

Jean came to the Federation in 1949 from *Ave Maria Magazine*. At that time the Federation consisted of 11 guilds. *Linacre Quarterly* had been a sporadic publication whose appearance at times ran 9 months behind publication date. The content of the magazine was nebulous. Using all her skills as journalist, author, editor and member of the bar of the State of Missouri she persistently uncovered physicians all over the country with endowments in Catholic Action. Many of these are now on the board of past presidents. Through her cooperation and subtle needling, the Federation grew from the 11 to 104 guilds.

Through the lean years of material for publication she developed a *Linacre* of stature and reference. She was the author of the series *Catholic Men of Science* which included the biographies of Niels Stensen – of Stensen's duct and later

Bishop, Ignacio Semmelweiss and Thomas Linacre. In the jubilee issue of 1957, she was the historian of the 25 years of the Federation. In November of 1959 her article was entitled "And Jesus had Compassion on the Multitudes". This was a gospel study in which she writes:

"and the number of times the Gospels make mention of His concern for the sick is cause for wonderment. Signs were constantly demanded as proof of His divinity. Everywhere he went was the clamor "Give us a sign". He must have been deeply hurt at this continual demand but the sick and the infirm knew His great compassion and through them He manifested to those insistent doubters the power that was His alone.

Those whose lives are dedicated to caring for the sick can take great comfort in Our Lord's great concern for the unfortunate and can be called "other Christs for His sake!"

Meanwhile, Jean edited the works of Father Gerald Kelly. These were published first in *Linacre*, then in the form of six paper backs known as *Medical Moral Notes* and finally the bound volume. The first authoritative compendium of moral intergration of medical values. Through *Linacre* and Father Kelly she developed contacts with the main stream of moral-theologians and had each make substantial contributions to *Linacre* e.g. Father John Lynch, S.J., Father John Ford, S.J., Father Connell, C.S.S.R.

As an indication of Jean's value to *Linacre* we would cite the obituary she wrote of Dr. Thomas Dooley in February, 1961:

"But pride in another's accomplishments, unless it provokes a salutary emulation, is a sterile sort of thing. Unless the precious legend of an heroic Dr. Dooley serves also as the personal credo of his professional confreres, the physician-apostle of Christ will have realized only his personal santification – plus the eternal gratitude of those on whom he lavished his Christ-like love. As those nearest to him know, Dr. Dooley hoped and prayed and strove (and perhaps died) for more. Either the accomplishment of that "More" is the holy ambition of our Catholic physicians or else we, as Catholics, have no right even to comment on the demise of a Dr. Dooley . . . an alter Christus".

Since we have changed our base of operations to Milwaukee, we have lost the services of Miss Read. She has joined the staff of *Theology Digest* published at St. Louis University. However, the trail of dedicated lay apostolic activity that she was blazing even before Vatican II will be continued by the Federation and *Linacre*. As we bestow, in behalf of both, the 1967 Thomas Linacre Award we give thanks to God that he allowed us to come under the influence of His devoted and lovely ancilla Domini – hand maiden of the Lord.

W.J.E.