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The President's Page

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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President's Page . .



James H. Masterson, M.D.

It seems hard to realize that this will be my final report to the membership, but as is frequently the case, the days keep going by and we always wonder where they have gone.

In reviewing the past year, it would seem that we have not accomplished anything world shattering with the early part of the year being taken up with trying to recover from our sponsoring of the FIAMC Convention and the latter part of the year trying to deal with the Ethical Directives for Catholic hospitals, this last of which promises to be a continuing problem and it is our plan to devote more time to it at our November meeting in New Orleans.

Dr. John Cavanagh, the Chairman of our Ad-Hoc Committee, has done yeoman work in bringing facts to bear to the Bishops' Committee for this, which met on September 8, 1971, and the whole day was spent discussing the Ethical Directives. The new Directives are perhaps not as objectionable as the original draft, but it is the feeling of the Ad-Hoc Committee, as well as my own, that this document does not represent Catholic medical thinking and should not be passed until further work is done on it. Perhaps the most objectionable portion is the option given to local Bishops to interpret the Directives as they see fit and this can only lead to further confusion with varying moralities being promulgated, depending upon the individual interpretation of what should be a general, over-all plan.

We have also been working closely with the Serra Club in attempting to set up periodic examinations for priests, somewhat similar in nature to what Dr. James Nix and Dr. Con Fechter have set up for the sisters. This has been explored with most of the Bishops on the East Coast and they are in favor of the general plan, but the details still have to be implemented.

There is also forming a National Catholic Counsel of the Laity which will also attempt to bring further communication between the hierarchy and the laity and we have requested that Dr. Ed Kilroy attend this formation meeting and report to us in New Orleans.

The Federation is losing several of its Regional Directors, and these will be sorely missed. I want to especially thank the Regional Director of Region II, Dr. Vitali Paganelli, for his help during the past year and hope he might continue to work closely with us in the future, although I realize that his commitments to his practice and family do come first.

I also wish to thank the many, many friends in the organization for their help during the past year and I know they will give the same heart-warming cooperation to my successor, Dr. Charles Pfister.

Respectfully submitted,

James H. Masterson, M.D.
President

***From The
Spiritual Advisor ...***



Fr. Charles Scherer

“By the mysterious mingling of this wine and water may we come to share in the Divinity of Christ – Who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.”

Years ago, in our study of math, we learned the easily demonstrable principle: “The whole is equal to the sum of its parts.”

Not much later, we discovered the limitations of this axiom in application to other fields. The beauty of Beethoven’s Fifth certainly far exceeded the total musical worth of the notes involved. In our experience, a truly winning team seemed to possess a certain intangible – whether spirit or ability – that eclipsed the mathematical sum of the individuals’ talents. Chemically, compounds took on a 3rd or 4th dimension and a power non-existent in the isolated elements before combination.

Arithmetically, perhaps the whole is only equal to the sum total of the