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[Book Review of] *Pastoral Care of the Sick*, Edited by the National Association of Catholic Chaplains

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death unless he has a good reason. If the reason is not good, the danger should be removed.

Maybe many women in families which have a history of ovarian cancer will say that they have

good reasons for postponing surgery until menopause. I might even go so far as to say that if the desire for children is not there, the woman has an obligation to remove the danger to her life as soon as she is aware of it.

Book Review

Pastoral Care of the Sick

Edited by the National Association of Catholic Chaplains
Washington, D. C.: U. S. Catholic Conference, 1974

This publication is meant to be a handbook for Catholic chaplains in health facilities. It consists of seventeen articles written about various aspects of pastoral care of the sick and handicapped. The authors of these articles will undoubtedly be known by Catholic hospital chaplains, and all are obviously writing from a very rich experience in the pastoral care of the sick.

After an excellent introductory article regarding the theology of pastoral care of the sick by Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., and a brief history of health care delivery in the United States, an article on the pastoral visitation of the sick offers some very practical guidelines. The next article provides a job description of the Catholic chaplain and sets down the necessary qualifications for the office. This is followed by a chapter presenting guidelines for organizing a pastoral department in a health facility.

The above articles, which deal with the general health facility, are followed by discussions of specialized chaplaincies. There are individual chapters dealing with the chaplain in the mental hospital, pastoral ministry to the mentally retarded, to the aging, to children, and to the drug dependent. Even such a specialized chaplaincy as that to patients who are legally confined is treated in the book. The final chapter deals with ministry to the handicapped, particularly the deaf-mute and the blind, written by a man with many years of experience in the field, Thomas F. Cribbin.

The handbook also includes an article treating the function of the chaplain as teacher, that is, communicator of the Gospel message. Methods are suggested in which the chaplain can best fulfill this function in his relationships with patients, hospital staff and the local community. In addition, the

role of chaplain as supervisor in training programs for seminarians and ordained clergy learning ministry to the sick is considered. Individual articles also deal with the physical and mental health of the chaplain himself, an important but often neglected subject of concern. One of the final articles deals with present-day trends in the field of medical ethics, always a very pertinent subject for a Catholic chaplain in a health facility.

In a brief review of this kind a reviewer must be satisfied with acquainting the reader with the contents of the book and a very general estimate of its value. The present reviewer would not hesitate to recommend this book highly to the specialized reader for whom it is destined. It will be particularly, but not exclusively,

helpful to beginners, but veteran chaplains will also find it useful, at least as an examination of conscience regarding their own practice. In a more detailed review a few questions would have to be raised. As a moral theologian, the present reviewer's questions would center around the article on medical ethics. Experienced chaplains may have questions about articles ranging within their experience, but this should not detract from the value of the book. The book that is worthwhile and does not raise questions probably does not, and should not, exist.

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Book Review

Proceedings of a Research Conference on Natural Family Planning

Edited by William Uricchio, Ph.D. and Mary Kay Williams
The Human Life Foundation. Washington, D. C. 1973

The Airlie House Conference held at Warrenton, Virginia, must have been an enriching experience for all participants. Halberg's, Brown's, Nalbandov's and Bogumil's discussions of biorhythms provide a highly theoretical base. Treloar follows with his vast experience of collections of menstrual cycles sometimes over two generations. It is interesting to

this reviewer to find that the practical experience that "anovulation is a normal variant of the menstrual cycle" is shown experimentally by Treloar and mathematically recovered by Bogumil when he departs from the previous deterministic computer model to the stochastic process. The effects of aging of sperm and ova are discussed mostly theoretically