

August 1988

President's Page

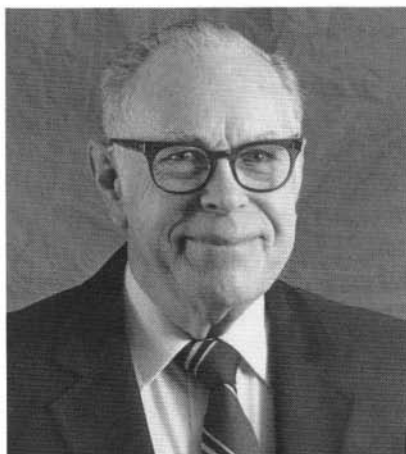
Thomas M. Hughes

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

Recommended Citation

Hughes, Thomas M. (1988) "President's Page," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 55: No. 3, Article 3.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol55/iss3/3>

President's Page



War Against Truth — and More

The major ethical issues of the day — the love and life issues — are in truth *the* seminal issues for the believing Christian, especially the physician and, in reality, for the nonbelieving as well. Whether one realizes it or not, we are from God and for God and strive to return to God (to paraphrase Augustine).

Reflection on the issues must take us back to God's love and creation. In essence, we understand God's love fully only when linked with creation. The creation is the basis for the sanctity of all life, and the creation of man in God's image and likeness is the essence of the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person, and derivatively, the moral order, which defines our relationship with the Father and our brothers and sisters, and calls forth the ethical principles to sustain such order.

However, God is not only Love but also Truth and Reason, and as physicians, we must understand and pursue our mission of healing in the light of truth, reason and love, and be fully aware that we are in a war against truth, reason, love and tradition, with the ubiquitous protagonist in effect being the emotion or sentiment of the day.

The protagonist of today has many masks and forms — contraception, abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, wrongful life, "merciful" deprivation of nutrition and hydration, IVF and ET, surrogate motherhood and, looming at the horizon, the generation conflict with its attendant rationing and/or selectivity of medical care to the old vis à vis the young.¹ To be sure, all of these professed from a moral dimension.

Reflect for a moment: "I came into the world for this; to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice."²

'Truth?' said Pilate, 'What is that?'; and with that he went out again to the people and said, 'I find no case against him.'³

Then Pilate took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; it is your concern.'⁴

In simulation of Pilate, contemporary civilization pulls back from the issues of truth and reason and refers them to commissions and the courts. We still suffer from the devastation of the landmark *Roe vs. Wade*, but look also to the Warnock Commission. In Great Britain in 1984, asked to address the life questions, Dame Mary Warnock stated, "No one is an expert in morality." In matters of life and death, birth and family, "these are areas, which are central to morality, and everyone has a right to judge for himself."⁵

What does this say to us? If we are to "be perfect as my Heavenly Father is perfect," we must pray, ideally, centered prayer — the contemplative prayer, the focus of which is from our very center and union with the Lord. From this equanimity of body and spirit, the operative order is 1) to heal one's self, 2) as one engages the healing ministry to the lame and the halt — our brothers and sisters — to enter in force upon the ethical dialogue and debate by word and example.

Further, share the *Linacre* with the like-minded and the other-minded.

— **Thomas M. Hughes, M.D.**
President, NFCPG

1. Callahan, D., *Setting Limits*, New York, Simon and Schuster
2. John, 18:37
3. John, 18:38
4. Matt., 27:24
5. Neuhaus, Richard John, "War Against Reason," *National Review*, 12/87 reprinted in *Human Life Review* — Winter, 1988