August 1994

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Molly (1994) "Chastity: An Address to the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 61: No. 3, Article 10.

Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol61/iss3/10>

Chastity

An Address to the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds

by
Molly Kelly

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Good Morning . . .

and what a treat it is for me to have been asked to address such an esteemed audience as this, at this 61st Annual National Catholic Physicians' Guild conference. I know that I am speaking to a very learned gathering of men and women who have spent many years studying to become physicians, and many years putting into practice what you studied, therefore, who am I to speak to you!

Let me begin by telling you a little about myself because you could, and should be sitting there saying, "Who is this woman, what are her degrees and credentials, and why was she asked to speak to us"? As far as why, you may be asking yourself that one for years! I have a prayer I say before every talk and it goes like this, "God, You know I'm no one, and I know I'm no one, but don't tell them until I'm out of town!" . . . and it works everytime!

My degrees and credentials are not overwhelming, especially in front of this audience, but if I may boast in the Lord because that's who makes things happen in my life, I received the Papal Cross from Pope John Paul II for my work with young people; I received an honorary doctorate in 1992 from St. Charles Seminary, a seminary that I consider to be one of the finest in the world because of its faithfulness and obedience to our Holy Father and to the magisterium of the church . . . which means that they teach dogma and doctrine and make no excuses for doing so . . . and my final boast . . . in the Lord . . . I was asked to speak to 6000 priests in Rome at the Worldwide retreat for priests and I received a standing ovation from them after speaking to them about chastity!!! Some people said to me, "Molly, they were from all over the world and probably couldn't understand what you were saying"! . . . but I know they could, and I was asking them to talk about chastity, from the pulpit, on retreats, in the mission fields, and everywhere their priesthood took them!

As to the Who, I am the mother of 8 children, and they are my most precious possessions, my greatest gifts, and why I do the things I do! I am a widow. My

husband was a physician, and trained in Philadelphia at Jefferson Medical College, and Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital, and he was killed in a sledding accident when our oldest child was 12, and our youngest 14 months. Jim was a prophet. I know that some people think prophets went out with Elijah and Jeremiah, but I believe that many of us are called to be prophets, but not enough of us audition for the role. Jim began to speak out against abortion, before the 1973 Supreme Court decision, and on the day of that fateful, tragic decision, I remember Jim's reaction to the news as he heard it on the radio. His hand shot to his head, and he turned pale and said, "My God, not only have they legalized the killing of unborn children, they're asking us, the physicians, to be the executioners." Jim didn't go along with that decision and spent the rest of his life speaking out in defense of life, but the rest of his life was only two more years. I remember that the year before Jim was killed, we made a marriage encounter, and he wrote in his booklet to me, "It's easy to love you, and our children, and to love being a physician. When I die, I have to be able to give something to God that was difficult. I have to convince my fellow physicians that abortion is wrong."

How brokenhearted Jim would have been at his beloved Georgetown's decision one year to fund a pro-abortion club on campus. Oh, the good news is that Georgetown rescinded that decision, but not for the right reasons. They never admitted that they were wrong. No, they rescinded the funding because the pro-choice club did not abide by the rules set forth by the University. I firmly believe that Georgetown rescinded the funding because they were hit in the pocketbook by alumni and alumnae who said, "I will not contribute any more money to Georgetown until it becomes, once again, a Catholic University that teaches good, Christian, Catholic morality!" How sad that far too many of our Catholic Universities and Catholic Medical schools, have caved in on their Catholicism, which is why an organization like the National Catholic Physicians' Guild is so very important!!

Before proceeding on to what I am supposed to be talking about . . . the "C" Word . . . let me give the Holy Spirit His due! Uh-oh, I can hear some of you thinking, this woman is probably one of those thigh slappin', hand clappin' charismatic Catholics who's going to start jumping up and down and speak in tongues! Oh, I do believe in the gift of tongues, and in fact have it! But not the gift of tongues where the words sound foreign to those who don't have it. No, my gift of tongues is that I can take the beautiful message of chastity to over 100,000 young people each year, throughout the world, (I was in Australia in September, and Wales and England in October) and deliver it in a way that turns them on to chastity and challenges them to live it; and in a society that tells our young people that taking pills and using condoms and devices is the sexually responsible way to act, it has to be the Holy Spirit that is opening doors for me and allowing me to "chastityize" the world!!!

I wasn't always this enamored with the Holy Spirit, in fact I wasn't too familiar with Him until a few years ago. Growing up, I prayed to God, pictured Jesus, and the Holy Spirit was someone that flew in and out for the occasion of my Confirmation and I hadn't seen hide nor wing of Him since . . . up until my

Rome experience with 6000 priests! It was then that I stopped putting limits on God, took the leash off the Holy Spirit, and it's been a joyride ever since . . . oh there's been some bumps and potholes along the way, but mostly JOY!

When I was preparing this talk, and I did prepare every word, because that's how the Holy Spirit works with me. He makes me write it, rewrite it, and practice it, then He shows up for the delivery . . . but the 4 words that came to me were, **HELP, WHOLE, HARM, and HEAL**. People come to physicians because they need **HELP** to be made **WHOLE** again, because some type of **HARM** has befallen them, and they want to be **HEALED**!

And what a powerful vocation medicine is, because, like Jesus, you have the power to heal . . . Oh, Jesus's power is different . . . He can heal because He is God, and His healing does not depend on medicine, or surgery, or therapy. He made the lame walk, the blind see, and the lepers clean, just by His Godliness, a simple laying on of His holy hands . . . but you can sometimes make the blind see, the lame walk, and cure disease, because you've spent years learning about new techniques and new drugs, to be worked and dispensed by your hands, . . . and your hands should also be holy. Oh, you can't cure everything, but your touch and your tongue should always be used by you in a holy, Christlike manner, speaking and doing as Christ would.

Let's get back to my four words . . . **WHOLE, HARM, HELP, HEAL**. I believe that today, some people come to physicians to get **HELP** in being made **WHOLE** again, but instead are **HARMED** by the very person, physician, who has the gift to **HEAL** them!

1. A pregnant woman, or young girl, who is upset about being pregnant, perhaps because of financial reasons, rape, incest, or simply that it will alter her lifestyle and she's not ready for that, she's still a teen and her parents would be terribly angry at finding out she's pregnant, or, her parents know and don't want her to have the baby, so she comes to the physician to have her child aborted . . . and the physician becomes the killer rather than the healer.

2. A young couple come to a physician because they do not want to have children. Children would cramp their freedom and their budget, or perhaps, they are afraid of having an imperfect child, so they ask the physician to sterilize their bodies, and the physician complies . . . using his or her medical skills to alter God's beautiful blueprint of the male and female body, for immoral purposes.

3. A teenager comes to a physician, and tells him or her, that she is sexually active, and wants a prescription for birth control pills so she won't get pregnant, and the physician gives the girl pills so she can be immoral and maybe not get caught . . . at least physically, and in doing so, the physician rather than writing a prescription for chastity, writes one for sin!

4. A physician is placed on the AIDS commission, but instead of prescribing chastity as the only real safeguard of virtue and against vice, virus and disease, he or she pushes condoms, knowing that they can break, fail, be used improperly slip, or be defective to begin with, . . . and also knowing that God, who gave us the beautiful gift of our sexuality, did not mean for us to have to go to the drug store, or vending machine to control it! In fact, God has given us everything we need to control our sexuality, and it lies between our ears . . . it's called a brain, and it

allows us to use self control instead of birth control!

This talk is called the "C" Word, and it has to do with the gift of our sexuality and how society today in general seems to treat that gift. In today's society, the "C" stands for condom, yet, I believe it should stand for commitment. The "C" word usually refers to contraception, yet I believe it should refer to Chastity. And as far as this annual gathering is concerned, the most important "C" word is Catholic, because it is your Catholicism that should be the guiding principle in every decision you make, including your medical decisions.

In the program booklet, under Goals and Objectives, it states . . . "that the goals and objectives of this meeting are to provide physicians with the necessary medical, scientific, and moral resources to help them in making important ethical decisions in their daily practice." Well, it's obvious that I can't help you out with the medical or scientific resources, as that's not my gift, but I can help you with the moral resources, by reminding you of the gift of your Catholicism, and by pointing out the moral resources that are available and just waiting to be used.

You have the Sacraments, which will strengthen you in your very difficult vocation . . . difficult because medicine has become a business for many, patients have become products, and the fear of lawsuits has produced a medical profession that, for some, has become selfish like the rest of society, putting into practice the "me first" rule rather than the Golden rule that comes straight from the word of God. Only in the reception of the Eucharist will you be given the necessary courage and strength to practice medicine in the way that God wants you to practice it . . . which will at times, result in a loss of profits, due to a loss of patients, because you will not perform abortions, or be partners with those physicians who will; you will not do tubal ligations, vasectomies, or dispense pills or insert I.U.D.'s and diaphragms because such things go against God's Divine Plan for His people.

The second moral resource should be to make time every day to pray to God that He will bless you in your Healing profession. A physician's day is busy, and there is little time to set aside, but it's not a matter of how long you pray, but that you pray, and that you offer your entire day to Him as a form of prayer.

Another moral resource would be to stay current with the Word of God. You need to always be on top of the medical advancements in your specialty, and so it is with God's word, and the amazing thing is that there are no new advancements in medicine that have not already been covered in Scripture. We have been told not to kill, not to lie, not to be impure or cause others to be impure . . . abortion kills, pre-marital and extra-marital sex are lies and impure actions, and love requires us to teach and live the truth.

And one last moral resource I'd like to mention is *Humanae Vitae* . . . the Papal Encyclical that was perhaps the most important and prophetic document of all time, because it told us what would happen if it was not heeded, and it wasn't . . . and it happened! *Humanae Vitae* boldly declared that the contraceptive mentality would open the door to the abortion mentality, and with 28,000,000 unborn children already slaughtered in abortion chambers by so-called "physicians" who HARM instead of HEAL, we have reaped what we have sown! Once the child is not perceived as a gift, but rather as a burden, to be put

off, prevented or destroyed, then we will, and have become a Nation that does not like children, and does not have the faith in God's Divine Providence to believe we can have big families. The economy has become more important than children, and our nation will not be blessed by a God who said, "Let the little children come to me". Read *Humanae Vitae* and make it a part of your practice if it's not already. Learn about natural family planning and teach it to your patients, or refer them to couples who can teach them.

Let me end by challenging all of you to put chastity in your practice. Teach it, prescribe it, and live it. Chastity places sexual intercourse in marriage where God intended it to be, therefore chastity is a much stronger prescription than abstinence because abstinence has no time limit.

I just read an article written by Bishop Fulton Sheen, one of the most dynamic Catholic orators of this century. I'll simply summarize what he was saying because I think it applies to this annual physicians' gathering. Bishop Sheen was talking about the plants and how they say to the chemicals in the air "You have no substance. You need to die and become part of us so you can be seen". And the animals say to the plants, "You cannot hear or see like we can. You need to empty yourself and die so you can do what we can do". And man says to the animals, "You can't reason things out like I can, you must be willing to empty yourself, even have your blood shed and die, so you can have an intellect". And Jesus says to man, "I emptied myself and died on the Cross for you, so that you could empty yourself and become part of Me . . . and isn't that what this meeting is all about . . . emptying yourselves so that you can be filled with the knowledge, wisdom, grace, and the blessings necessary to be Catholic physicians who put God in every one of your prescriptions.

Let the Holy Spirit guide your tongue as you speak to your patients and tell them what to do. Let the Holy Spirit guide your hands as you touch and minister to your patients, trying to find out what's wrong with them. And, let the Holy Spirit guide your mind, heart and soul as you offer advice to your patients, that advice may always bring them closer to the Divine Physician who HEALS, HELPS, and makes us WHOLE, but who never, ever, HARMS us!