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# The Monsignor Raymond F. Herzing Chair of Pastoral Medicine

REV. MR. THOMAS J. DONOHER

In the Diocese of Buffalo medical leaders and theologians have combined efforts to advance the study of pastoral medicine through an annual series of lectures which is now in its third year at the Buffalo Major Seminary. Officially known as the Monsignor Raymond F. Herzing Chair of Pastoral Medicine, the series presents three full programs during the regular school year at St. John Vianney Seminary in suburban East Aurora, New York.

These Pastoral Medicine Institutes originated with Dr. Edward M. Tracy, a long-time associate of the Catholic Physicians' Guild. In 1964, it was Dr. Tracy's thought that by establishing a Chair of Pastoral Medicine at the new major seminary, an ideal situation could be created for teaching future priests of the diocese, at the same time sharing this educational opportunity with a wide audience of medical, social and religious leaders.

The idea received the full backing of Bishop James A. McNulty who agreed to sponsor the Chair in cooperation with the Seminary, the Catholic Physicians' Guild and the Diocesan Family Life Department. The Chair was named in honor of the late Monsignor Raymond F. Herzing whose priestly career had been outstanding for his pioneering efforts to promote close priest-doctor cooperation in providing Christian

solutions to the complex problems of family life in contemporary society. Appropriately, the Chair was inaugurated in October 1964 with an institute on "Christian Marriage."

Administration of the Chair continues to function under the honorary chairmanship of the Bishop of Buffalo. The active chairmen are Dr. and Mrs. Edward M. Tracy. In addition, there are 16 committee members: 5 married couples and 6 priests. The Catholic Physicians' Guild is represented by Dr. and Mrs. Joseph J. Ricotta, Dr. and Mrs. John G. Zoll and Reverend Michael F. Sekelsky. The Family Life Department is served through Reverend Dino J. Lorenzetti. The Seminary coordinators are the Rector, Very Rev. John Lambert Rowan, OFM; the Professor of Moral Theology, Rev. Thomas G. Dailey, and the Professor of Sacramental Theology, Rev. Samuel J. Faiola. Other representatives of the Diocese are Rev. William G. Stanton; Mr. and Mrs. James T. Clauss; the Diocesan Attorney, Mr. Kevin Kennedy and Mrs. Kennedy, and the Honorable William B. Lawless and Mrs. Lawless.

Funding the Chair is accomplished through the normal income derived from admission fees for the lectures and through benefactors who form a body of sustaining members of the Chair. The Sustaining Membership

contribution is \$50.00 per year for individuals and \$100.00 per year for organizations. The admission fee for each institute is \$5.00, which includes the cost of supper. All seminarians of the area are admitted free of charge.

St. John Vianney Seminary is most adequate for accommodating the conferences. The auditorium has a capacity of 400. The dining facilities accommodate 250. There is ample Chapel space and there are several seminar lecture halls for discussion groups or for closed-circuit television coverage of auditorium proceedings for overflow audiences.

Typically a full institute occupies six hours. The first lecture and question period commences at 4:00 PM. This late hour is chosen in consideration of the time needed earlier in the day for the indispensable work of the medical profession. Buffet supper is followed by a Scripture Service before the second lecture and question period. Proceedings are concluded at 10:00 PM. Throughout the program and at supper seminarians are hosts, providing the opportunity to engage in conversation with the doctors and those of allied fields attending each institute.

The principal attendance consists of priests, doctors and seminarians. Representative groups from seminaries other than St. John Vianney attend the institutes, coming from such places as Lewiston, Olean, Toronto, and Canfield, Ohio. Religious leaders of other denominations are also invited. A large group of women religious come in steady numbers, particularly community superiors, hospital administrative

personnel, social workers and law enforcement administrators likewise support the institutes. The overall attendance figure proximates 400, including the seminarians.

Selecting the Seminary as the site for the conferences is a carefully considered decision. The Seminary is not as centrally located for doctors, priests and others as a downtown hotel location. However, the primary consideration is the desire to make education in pastoral medicine available to tomorrow's priests as well as to today's leaders. This is in line with the policy of the Seminary administration to establish this new institution as a center of learning in the Diocese and to create an environment in which the seminarians can come into close contact with the problems of the world they are preparing to serve. By bringing the institutes to the Seminary a habit is formed of keeping current with the changing scene on the medical front. This habit should be sustained by returning regularly for future conferences after ordination as part of the continuous voyage in education necessary for serving the needs of the people of the twentieth century.

The central thought shared by Bishop McNulty and the directors of the Chair of Pastoral Medicine is that priests, doctors, nurses and others should be part of a total health-team which understands and ministers to the combined physical, spiritual and psychological needs of the patient. To acquire the insight to recognize the full personhood of the patient calls for rapport and true understanding among physicians, nurses, priests and psychologists. The insti-

tutes strive to create a meeting ground where they can be mutually enriched in their understanding of problems relating to science and theology and to discern in these problems the solutions which reflect the mind of Christ.

The 1964-65 inaugural series of three institutes were on "Christian Marriage," "Modern Psychiatry" and "Problems of the Dying." The 1965-66 series covered "The Problem of Homosexuality," "The Psychology of Woman" and "Fidelity and Chastity." The 1966-67 series has thus far offered institutes on "Authority and Obedience" and "The Problem of Narcotics."

The institute on "Christian Marriage" explored the roles of the priest and the physician in promoting responsible parenthood. Dr. Claude A. Lanctot, a research fellow at Yale University, spoke on the role of the physician. Fr. James A. O'Donohoe, Professor of Moral Theology at St. John's Seminary in Boston and a member of the Consulting Board in Fertility Research at St. Margaret's Hospital in Boston, outlined the vital theological considerations which priests should note if they are to be properly informed, balanced and sympathetic to the complexities of responsible parenthood.

Dr. Francis J. Braceland and a panel of three Buffalo psychiatrists conducted the second institute on "Modern Psychiatry." The assisting panelists were Dr. Harry E. Faver, Dr. James A. Robinson, and Dr. Symon H.C. de Zeeuw, the chief psychiatrist at Meyer Memorial Hospital in Buffalo. The accent of Dr. Braceland was on the Catholic viewpoint

land was on the Catholic viewpoint toward psychiatry and on the delicate priest-doctor relationship that psychiatric counselling involves. Dr. Braceland is a past-president of the American Psychiatric Association.

A distinguished specialist in cancer treatment, Dr. Joseph E. McManus, and a panel of hospital chaplains addressed the institute on the "Problems of the Dying." After hearing from Dr. McManus the hard considerations which the physician must face, Fr. Stephen C. Doyle, OFM, then presented the major priestly considerations in aiding the dying. Terminal illness often strips the patient of all sense of hope. The institute pondered how informed priests and physicians can motivate such patients to seek peace of mind and heart in Christ and find meaning in their terminal condition. The experiences of qualified chaplains, Rev. Emil C. Bogumil of the Buffalo Veterans Administration Hospital and Rev. Edward L. Ulaszewski of Roswell Park Hospital, were shared during the panel discussion.

The institute on the "Problem of Homosexuality" saw the patient as a person psychologically disturbed and spiritually bankrupt. How to enable such a patient to lead a meaningful life was the subject of two speakers. Dr. E. Mark Stern, M.D. of the faculty of Iona College asked the question "Homosexuality—Sickness or Sin"? Fr. George H. Moreau, OMI, a consultant for guidance services with the National Catholic Educational Association, raised the issue "How Effectively do Priests and Physicians Counsel"?

The "Psychology of Woman" institute was addressed by Miss Margaret A. Dwyer, Dean of Women at Lemoyne College, and by Fr. Joseph Kerns, S.J., Professor of Theology at Wheeling College. Miss Dwyer highlighted the psychology of the college woman and of the unmarried career woman and pin-pointed their special religious needs within a 'married' society. Fr. Kerns amplified the religious expectations of college women in their approach to marriage and he spoke of the particular kinds of apostolic activity needed by college and career women for a balanced spiritual life.

"Fidelity and Chastity" in the face of growing opposition to the present norms of sexuality was the subject of a double panel. The physicians view was presented by Dr. Max Levin, M.D., the Clinical Professor of Neurology at New York Medical Hospital. A "Theology of Chastity" was offered by Fr. Warren Reich, M.S.S.T., the Professor of Moral Theology at Holy Trinity Mission Seminary, Winchester, Virginia. The full integration of sexuality into the life of the mature Christian was presented as a challenge to both doctor and priest.

The largest of the institutes was that conducted by Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh on the subject "Authority and Obedience." Freedom and authority, inherently at opposite poles, establishes a tension widely noticed and experienced in the post-Conciliar period of the Church. Setting this tension against an historical, philosophical and ecclesiastical background, Bishop Wright established a Christian syn-

thesis for leaders in the modern Christian community.

The latest institute dealt with the "Problem of Narcotics." Mr. Patrick P. O'Carroll, assistant to the Commissioner for the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics, sketched the history of narcotics and the law. Fr. William B. O'Brien who serves as president of the Board of Directors of New York State's highly successful halfway house program for narcotics rehabilitation "Daytop Village Inc." presented the entirely new approach his agency has developed concerning and curing the addict.

The institutes conducted thus far are achieving encouraging results. Seminarian response is excellent, particularly among those in the final years of theology. Attendance of women religious has surpassed expectations and is considered especially advantageous in view of the far-reaching effects of their apostolate in schools, hospitals and in social projects among the underprivileged. The Chair of Pastoral Medicine serves to implement in part both the Constitution on the Church and the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests. The former proclaims the special love of the Church for those oppressed by infirmity, sickness and other hardships and encourages dialogue between the laity and pastors in order to share their special training and skills to come to clear and suitable decisions in alleviating these distresses. The latter urges priests to be solicitous above all for the sick and for the dying and to strengthen them in the Lord. Both of these matters are being substantially aided

through this cooperative educational venture in pastoral medicine between priests and physicians of the Church in Buffalo. Continued progress can be expected.

REV. MR. THOMAS J. DONOHER, Class of Third Theology, St. John Vianney Seminary, East Aurora, New York, is a candi-

date for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. He will be ordained in May 1968. Prior to entering the seminary he served as a U.S. Naval Officer for fourteen years. He currently holds the rank of Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve. Rev. Mr. Donoher is a graduate of the Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. and received his Master's Degree in Business Administration from Harvard University.

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