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President's Page: When Much Is Given, Much Is Asked

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radiate God's image, and that is to love Him with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves. To show us the way, Jesus prayed, gave and at all times was most generous to all He encountered. His example taught us that it is in faith that we praise the unseen God, as we perform acts of love to those whom we do see.

The most undesirable individuals in the respectable society of Jesus' time were the beggars, lepers, prostitutes, thieves and aliens. It was specifically among these that He performed His apostolic mission, showing them love and concern, uplifting them, accepting them, and inspiring them to perfection, and sainthood.

It was at Cana that Jesus first showed the power of God manifested in Him by changing water into wine at a wedding feast. In His public life, He satisfied the multitude with but a few loaves and fishes, He restored the dead to life, and He divinized bread and wine at the Last Supper, so that all humanity could share in this gift of His Historical life. Finally, He offered Himself on the cross to the Father Who raised Him in glory and His radiant presence was witnessed until His ascension to the heavenly kingdom.

As Christ remains in us through the gift of Baptism, His presence and power continue through our ministry of love. Thus, in keeping the commandments, we become closer and more perfect in relation to the Father and mysteriously radiate the brightness of His image.

St. John tells us that "The Father is in me and I in the Father" (10:38). God's image was made visible to the world through the birth of His Son, our Lord Jesus, and the world was given hope, love and salvation.

As the physician of faith witnesses Christ, the image and likeness of God radiates through him. When this occurs, the world sees love, hope, peace and salvation being renewed as the invisible Jesus is seen in the visible physician.

— Msgr. Dino Lorenzetti

President's Page

When Much Is Given, Much Is Asked

"When much is given a man, much will be required of him. More will be asked of a man to whom more has been entrusted."


Catholic physicians live their faith by the way they practice medicine. Abortion and infanticide are anathema. We favor dying in dignity, but not "death with dignity," defined as "the painless inducement of death" in House Bill No. 342 in 1975 in the Hawaii State Legislature (which "died" in committee).

We should not be intimidated by the "imposing your morality" mentality when the opportunity presents itself. It is not our morality, but God's moral code which we uphold to maintain the good name of medicine. It may be necessary to speak out with "meekness and great tact so as not to upset the other person, thus avoiding quarrels which cause nothing but bitterness and are more the result of attachment to one's own opinions than of a love for the truth" (St. Francis de Sales, Spiritual Diary, p. 14).

We exert our influence by serving on hospital and also medical society committees. The opinion of a practicing Catholic physician is respected. Let us not labor to be recognized, nor be afraid to be ridiculed, but act out of love for our patients and ultimately for the
love of God. "Love has no room for fear; rather, perfect love casts out all fear. And since fear has to do with punishment, love is not yet perfect in one who is afraid" (1 John 4:18).

Hospital ethics committees are formed to help resolve the complex problems brought about by modern medical technologies. Some feel that these committees may reduce the number of litigation against physicians and the hospital (American Society of Law and Medicine, meeting held in Houston, Texas, February, 1984). Catholic physicians should not hesitate to serve on these committees. They could be a constant reminder to the committee members that the principal reason for its existence is for the patient and to focus on the medical facts before considering the social and economic factors. Catholic physicians know that our patients are created by God and therefore have our respect. We are His instruments and whatever we possess in medicine is God's gift to us; how we use it is our gift to God.

To be influential in our environment, we must be knowledgeable and educate ourselves by reading, dialoguing with our colleagues or attending worthwhile meetings. To assist the physicians, nurses, hospital personnel, priests, religious, the laity, the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds have sponsored meetings of a medical-moral nature in various cities. This year, the 54th annual meeting will be held at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel in Honolulu, Hawaii on Oct. 31, Nov. 1 and 2. The sessions will include: 1) In Vitro Fertilization 2) Death and Dying 3) Organ Transplantation and 4) Physician, Heal Thyself. On Nov. 3, 1985, an optional tour to Molokai is being planned. This is where Father Damien and Mother Marianne labored among the lepers.

God gave the Catholic physician the gift of helping the sick and helpless. Most of us were given the fringe benefits of a good and above average comfortable life style. We can go about our daily life like the servant who buried his master's coin in the ground and gave back the one coin on his return, or we can reach out to spread our Master's teaching, thereby influencing our medical environment with the "respect for life" ethic. Let all of our strivings be "directed towards enriching ourselves with merits so that we do not reach our final destination with nothing or with very little in our hands. Earn all we can. Let's not waste either time or energy or the qualities and gifts God has given us" (Rev. James Alberione, S.S.R., S.T.D.).

Hope to see you in Hawaii.
Aloha and God bless you.

Sincerely yours, in Christ,
Herbert M. Nakata, M.D.

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'Every Child Should Be Born Wanted' – A Dubious Goal

Eugene F. Diamond, M.D.

Doctor Diamond, a pediatrician at the Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine, and a past president of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds, is a frequent contributor to Linacre and a dedicated member of its editorial advisory board.

One of the stated goals of the American Academy of Pediatrics is that "every child should be born wanted." To say the least, this is an unclear pronouncement. Doesn't a child have a right to be wanted independent of whether he is wanted or not? Should not the objective value of the child be the controlling factor, rather than the subjective wants of those who are responsible for him? Implicit in the context of the official statement is the notion that, if we reduce the numbers of children born, we will increase the percentage of those who will be "wanted."

Since the Academy is an organization devoted to the care of children, it would seem more appropriate for it to establish a goal of increasing the societal capacity for caring for children so that those who have them will want them. The Academy recommends that the options available to the pregnant woman carrying an "unwanted" child should include adoption, abortion, and carrying the baby to term. Since abortion is listed as a co-equal option with others, it may be surmised that the Academy accepts the notion that the goal of "every child wanted" is served, at least in part, by aborting some unborn children in order that the survivors should be more wanted.

It is a totally unproven premise which alleges that some children will lead storybook lives because others were not born. A critique of this statement by the Academy should include the following considerations:

1) The availability of abortion has not decreased the numbers of unwanted births. A comparison between the 1983 National Survey of Family Growth and the 1976 Survey of Family Growth discloses no significant change in the numbers of unwanted births during the three years following the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion on request.

2) The expectation that the termination of an unwanted pregnancy will prevent the birth of an unwanted child is derivative of a fundamental fallacy. This is the failure to distinguish between an unwanted child and an unwanted pregnancy – a very critical distinction. A sig-