

November 1986

President's Page: Love is Charity

William Peters

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

Recommended Citation

Peters, William (1986) "President's Page: Love is Charity," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 53 : No. 4 , Article 3.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol53/iss4/3>

President's Page



Love is Charity

As physicians, we are often asked to counsel our patients and their families, whether they are teenagers, premarital couples or marriages in distress. Through the years, I have found that the prevailing problem in faulty interpersonal relationships is the failure to communicate. When people speak to one another, they are unable to express their emotions. It is not that they have stopped loving each other, but that their emotions become confused by anger and frustration. It seems appropriate, then, that we examine the bond between love and communication.¹

As Catholic physicians, it is difficult for us to be purely objective, and many times our counseling is influenced by our own views and philosophies. When patients come to me for counseling, I try to give them a goal or a motto that will guide them in their efforts to improve their relationships. Since today's society, and especially its young people, seem strongly motivated by love, the key to their communication with each other must exist in the understanding of love. This understanding, which is explained to us in the scriptures, is simply that love is charity.

While this may sound like an over-simplification, an analysis of this theme and its application to our own lives as physicians and followers of Christ, will prove otherwise. Christ's life was one of charity, which concluded with His gift of life to us on the cross. God gave us Himself through Christ. Mary gave us her beloved Son at Calvary.

The greatest gift that we can give in the sacrament of marriage is ourselves. We express our love to our families through the virtue of charity. Yet charity's attribute is not in giving until it hurts, but in giving

because it feels good, because there is a joy in doing so. We give to our families and children because of the happiness we derive from their well-being. We serve our patients, our friends and our church in the same manner.

Charity's motives are not selfish, however. We do not give for the gains we receive, but for the pleasure we give others. Do not confuse love with narcissism. Love's charity is to please others and it is their pleasure that is satisfying to us. In conjugal love, for example, our goal should be to please, not to be pleased. Truly, the measure of one's commitment is how willing he is to surrender in love and service to others. In giving, we too receive.

How does this apply to us as Catholic physicians? When we are in our homes, our offices or on hospital rounds, we must remind ourselves that everything we do should be for the glory of God, and that doing this in the name of charity makes others feel loved and wanted.

Let us show others that communication can be established by exercising charity in love. And "... let us love one another because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God." (1 John 7).

— William Peters, M.D.

Are You Moving?

If the next issue of this journal should be delivered to a different address, please advise AT ONCE. The return postage and cost of remailing this publication is becoming more and more costly. Your cooperation in keeping us up-to-date with your address will be most helpful.