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Greetings from Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J., Moderator of The Federation, 1945-1948

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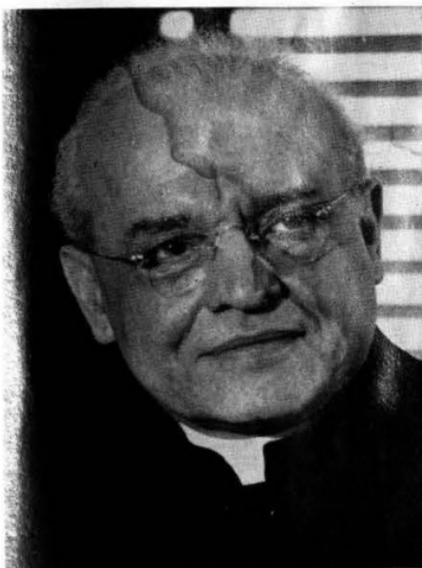
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Greetings from

Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J.

MODERATOR OF THE FEDERATION — 1945-1948

The two and a half decades which constitute the lifetime of the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds are the apex of the science and art of medicine and of all the sciences and arts ancillary to medicine. Biochemistry and physiology, medical diagnostics, and therapeutics, immunology and epidemiology have all achieved peaks in their development and have risen to levels unexpected and unanticipated even though hoped and longed for. As a result, human interests on a large scale have widened and deepened. Death rates, morbidity rates have decreased; birth rates, life expectancies have almost unbelievably increased. Mortality rates for some diseases have all but reached zero; incidence rates for others have note-worthily decreased. And paralleling all this, medicine has relearned how



to emphasize the dignity of the individual

man and his uniqueness.

All this and more of the same kind of triumphs have demanded a deepening of medical responsibility of medical philosophy, ethics, sociology, and medical economics, so that the establishment of such associations as the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds cannot but be regarded as the outgrowth at the very front-rank of medical progress. Father Cox twenty-five years ago, with a deep insight into the real world of medicine, seized upon the physician's responsibility as the most important of the responses of the individual doctor's cooperation with the general advance, just as so many others seized upon other phases — history, education, economics, and allied viewpoints. He did well. The physician is expected to extend himself, to raise his sights higher, to focus his gaze farther than at any other time in history. It is no casual coincidence that just at this time, during the four years, 1952 to 1955, His Holiness Pope Pius XII pronounced no fewer than 18 allocutions to medical groups in audience and no fewer than 19 other allocutions to other than medical groups in which there occurred passages emphasizing phases of responsibility closely related to medicine. In the course of these allocutions, pronouncements were made on many controversial points and authoritative answers were given to many disputed questions. Numerous as these allocutions are, so varied also are they in their themes, ranging from general considerations such as "Moral Values in the Service of the Sick" and "Medical Ethics and Law" to such particularized topics as "Psychotherapy and Religion" and "Moral and Psychological Problems in Poliomyelitis."

Another great development of the past quarter century is the foundation and formation of the World Health Organization and of the World Medical Organization. The international interests in medicine have reached a scope and an extent, at present, comparable, surely, to those achieved in no other period in the history of medicine.

All this and much more that might be mentioned is the area of interest of the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds for it is all embraced in the concepts of "The Philosophy and Ethics of Medicine." The first quarter of a century might well be considered the area of planting; the second of reaping. The Guilds impact on medicine will be intensified and extended. The membership growth during the last five years has been little short of phenomenal. The future holds the promise of greater greatness but also of greater influence.

With congratulations to the officers and members goes the modest prophecy that the second quarter of the century will exceed the first in influence and achievement — for the betterment of mankind, physically and spiritually for the greater professional competence of our members, and all for the greater glory of God.

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