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Graduate Training in Obstetrics and Gynecology

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President's Page

The minutes of the annual Executive Meeting are worth your reading. They synopsize a vocal and progressive discussion by the largest number of delegates yet assembled for a Federation session.

There were two important chairs noticeably empty at the table, however. Monsignor Donald A. McGowan, our dynamic Moderator, was absent because of surgical convalescence that is now complete. Mr. M. R. Knell, our new Executive Secretary, through the trying years of infancy and adolescence, has been forced to curtail his activities due to illness. In appreciation of his tolerance and help over the years he will beW always for the inspiring occasions when he can be present.

The Roll Call of Officers and Delegates evokes another impressive point. The efforts expended by these men in time, expense (transportation, hotels, meals, cause) of Catholic Action in medicine. Even the journeys involved in the inauguration of new Guilds is an expense assumed usually by the invited officer of the Federation. This exemplary self-sacrifice could be a key to the tremendous growth of the Guild movement in recent years.

Again, the annual meeting is more than just the day of the Executive Board session. The preparation of the booth, for example, is a time consuming project. The booth is set up in Exhibition Hall on Tuesday preceding the A.M.A. convention and requires personal supervision. Then the doctors, with enthusiasm and without thin skins, must staff the booth from Monday through Friday. In the simple words of Dr. Gerard P. J. Griffin, Brooklyn, Chairman of the Exhibit, "Gerry has inspired co-ordinator. The officers and volunteer delegates rotate through the hours of duty. Again, this is all done in the spirit of personal thanks for their gift of Faith.

The most striking example of this came from Dr. James Nix, Jr. of New Orleans. Dr. Nix receives his complimentary service — we asked his help in formulating a plan for the health care of religious. By train he traveled thirty-six hours to join a show preliminary discussion. He then immediately reboarded for the trip home. All this he did to make sure that the many more religious would be assured adequate medical care.

It is little wonder, then, that Father John J. Flanagan, S.J., at the Memorial Mass in St. Nicholas Church, told a capacity congregation that "great men have preceded great men present in every Guild and every diocese, men whose working norm is not time-eroding and material but permanent and supernatural.

WILLIAM J. EGAN, M.D.

Graduate Training in Obstetrics
and Gynecology

HERBERT W. SCHMITZ, M.D.

Dr. Schmitz is Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Director of the Institute of Reproduction at Mercy Hospital, Chicago, Illinois. He is also Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Loyola University and Professor of Gynecology at Stritch School of Medicine and Loyola University. In addition, he is Chief of Staff at Lewis Memorial Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital, Maternity Hospital and Lincoln Hospital. Dr. Schmitz is the author of more than 200 articles in the field of obstetrics and practice. In 1950 he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Science by Loyola University.

This year the Loretto Award, St. Luke of Boston, bestowed for outstanding contributions to Catholic medicine, was presented to Dr. Schmitz. His Eminence, Richard Cardinal Cushing, made the presentation at a gathering of 900 Guild members, their wives, nuns, priests, and laity. The following is the address given by Dr. Schmitz on this occasion:

TO receive the Loretto Medal of the St. Luke's Guild, Boston is an honor few enjoy. A review of the names of those accorded this honor in the past directs our attention to the fact that the recipient of the Award represents an important contribution to Catholic medicine. I, too, have been chosen to receive this citation not because of any personal accomplishments but as a member of a group striving to provide special training to undergraduate and graduate physicians in Catholic obstetrics and gynecology; to provide excellent obstetric care for deserving mothers; and thus by participating in the work of the Lay Apostolate, to bring souls into the Church; and through constant study and investigation, to substantiate the Church's teaching and in this way improve the results of our efforts in behalf of baby and mother.

This work had its inception in the depression years when the late George Cardinal Mundelein, because of his concern over the falling birth rate, propaganda for family planning, and the financial problems of his people, conceived the idea of a maternity hospital that would provide the best obtainable care for our mothers at a cost within reach of all. At the dedication of the hospital, upon its completion, Cardinal Mundelein in discussing childbearing, said, 'But this is more than a precept calling for assent on the part of our people. It is for many a serious economical problem, particularly for the bulk of our people who support our Churches. For those who have only small wages, every cent of which is parcelled out in advance for rent, food, clothes, carfare, insurance, taxes, interest, and part payment of mortgages, if they are paying for a little home,
When the time comes for the birth of the baby, it is more than the time of labor. It is the time of stress and worry for both. It is an additional and heavy expense that they can ill afford."

With the financial help of Count Frank J. Lewis, His Eminence purchased the all-steel and brick, ten-story Lakota Hotel at a cost of one million dollars (equal to at least three million dollars today), converted it into a completely equipped maternity hospital. It was named the Lewis Memorial Maternity Hospital in memory of the Count's deceased wife. When the hospital opened its doors to receive patients on January 4, 1931, the Cardinal announced, "Mothers of Catholic families of the white race, living in legitimate wedlock, and whose husbands' income is less than $2,600 a year, are entitled to service." A card furnishing the family's pastor, attesting to the eligibility of the applicant, was necessary for registration. Cost, it was announced, would be fully covered by a charge of $50 for a ten-day stay, pre and post-natal visits, and delivery.

When Samuel Cardinal Stritch was appointed to the Archdiocese of Chicago, some eight years later, he determined that certain changes were necessary if this project deserved the continued financial support of the Church. The yearly registration had fallen due to the economic improvement that began to show itself in the late 1930's. Families earning less than $2,600 could no longer pay fees in many instances, so the general admission procedures and rules had to be altered. To gain full accreditation and academic recognition, he appointed the Department of Maternity and Gynecology in the School of Medicine of Loyola University was appointed head of the hospital, and the departmental members in the medical school became the attending staff. Undergraduate teaching in the form of clerkship began for the senior medical students of Loyola. A residency program was formulated and accepted as fully approved within six months. Affiliation with the School of Social Service of Loyola placed our admitting policies under a program of care for all who are deserving, including referrals through the office of the Catholic Charities, irrespective of color. Nurses registered in the School of Nursing of Loyola University, working for their Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, were accepted for practical instruction, and thus our nursing program was greatly improved. An assigned service of patients having partial insurance coverage for medical care, but insufficient for private referral, afforded us funds for resident salaries, instruments and accessories for medical teaching and education, as well as supporting a complete library and research laboratory for investigations into the problems confronting our specialty at present.

At the time of our Silver Jubilee, the Apostolic Delegate, then Bishop A. G. Cicognani, wrote, "While others have been busy in the important talk of expounding Catholic learning about the Catholic family, this hospital, Memori, Maternity — he offering for a quarter of a century facilities and possibilities — motherhood that have contributed greatly to the spiritual welfare of the families and many children."

The expense to the Archdiocese of Chicago for maintenance of this program is prohibitive in many, and recently in pointing out the necessity of such a service, with several Bishops in different parts of the country, informed by them that the maintenance and maintenance of motherhood and medical schools are so costly they would like to turn over this obligation to someone else. To avoid this criticism, we are establishing the need for Catholic education, and the results desired.

If we were to visit a Catholic medical school, no difference could be found in the buildings, equipment, classrooms, or daily schedule of classes. It would take several days or weeks before the difference in philosophy became apparent. The human body, as a whole, is considered: not a diseased gall bladder, liver, or kidneys; not merely items of pathological interest, but a human body created by God to house a soul, made in His Image and Likeness. The slime of the earth into which Our Creator breathed a soul is so dear to Him that He gave His life to save us. This belief must always dominate the teachings and practice of a Catholic physician. Then color, creed, social status, and monetary return fade from consideration as we recall the words from the Author of Life, "Because you have done it to the least of My brethren, you have done it to Me." The leper, the disease-ridden offensive derelict, the beaten traveler left by the wayside, these are My brethren. If we are to justify this teaching, we are in need of institutions where we can practice such medicine.

The Late Samuel Cardinal Stritch, in instructing us as to the policies to be maintained at Lewis Memorial Maternity Hospital, said, "You must show by end results achieved that Catholic teaching is equal to and superior to methods ignoring the moral law." This we have accomplished by publishing the hospital's experience with cesarean section, toxemia of pregnancy, cancer complicating pregnancy, and so forth. In 1,000 births, while adhering to the natural law, we maintain maternal and fetal salvage equal to all and better than most institutions. How gratifying is today's observation by non-Catholic physicians that present medical findings no longer support the practice of interruption of pregnancy because of heart disease, tuberculosis, or hypertension: or prevention of pregnancy because of repeat cesarean or frequent pregnancies. It took science many centuries to discover what Mother Church had taught us in the natural law. namely, it is never permissible to take an innocent life.

Our late Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, has written extensively for the guidance of the practicing physician and medical teaching. He refers to medicine as a voca-
tion. Is this considered by our Deans and Admissions Committees, or have they lost sight of this fact and followed the precept of many of our centers of learning that consider grades earned in preliminary education as the only means by which to judge fitness of a student for admission to the medical school? We must have standards, to be sure, but calling and dedication should be considered, to exclude commercialism from a God-given art and science.

The numerous criticisms by advocates of federalized or unionized medical care leveled at physicians today, namely, "Cadillac doctors," indifference, unavailability, restriction of clientele, lack of charity, overcharging, and discrimination, threaten to destroy the American system of medicine. These charges could not be true of the dedicated individual with a vocation, anxious to serve at all times and all mankind. As Pope Pius XII has written:

"His [the doctor's] vocation is noble, sublime; his responsibility to society is grave, but God will not fail to bless him for his charity and for his unstinted, devoted efforts to alleviate suffering of his fellowman on earth."

Again, the Holy Father writes:

"What does the medical doctor worthy of his vocation do? He dominates these same forces, these natural properties, in order to obtain from them healing, health and vigor, and often, what is even more precious, prevention of illness and preservation from infection and epidemics. In his hands the formidable power of radioactivity is harnessed and controlled for the cure of disease resistant to all other treatment. The property of poisons, even the most virulent, serve for the preparation of the most efficacious medicines. Even the germs of infection are employed in all manner of ways in serotherapy and vaccination."

Regarding the great responsibility we have to teach and to be abreast of medical literature, the Holy Father has written:

"The medical doctor would not be responding fully to the ideal of his vocation if, while profiting from recent advances of medical science, he also would not have studied the Bible as well as the works of the ancients; as a scientist when consequent discoveries give a taste of the joy of learning. He is a believer and a Christian who, in the splendor he discovers in the new horizons that open before him, sees the greatness and power of the Creator, the inexhaustible goodness of the Father who, after having given the living organism so many resources for its development, its defense and in most cases for its spontaneous healing, leads him again to rend nature, inert or living, mineral, vegetable or animal, the remedy of holy ills."

If we follow this clear outline of the responsibility of our vocation, what more need would we have for standards, set up by way of accrediting bodies who now demand tissue committees, educational committees, and other committees, to enforce upon the noble, "highly educated physician," who considers himself self-sufficient, and employs interruption of pregnancy for socio-economic reasons: destroys life because he determines that euthanasia is charitable, and through ignorance fails to see the strength the sufferer can obtain through Grace received by following Our Savior to Calvary. In prescribing for our patient, treatment is never justifiable if there is not reasonable assurance that our ministrations will improve his or her situation for a period of time thought to be adequate, and not to leave them in an unacceptable condition as a result of our treatment. Of this, the Holy Father says:

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To pursue constantly facts through research is the objective of our institutes. Of this Pius XII has said: "If we follow this clear outline of the responsibility of our vocation, what more need would we have for standards, set up by way of accrediting bodies who now demand tissue committees, educational committees, and other committees, to enforce upon the noble, "highly educated physician," who considers himself self-sufficient, and employs interruption of pregnancy for socio-economic reasons: destroys life because he determines that euthanasia is charitable, and through ignorance fails to see the strength the sufferer can obtain through Grace received by following Our Savior to Calvary. In prescribing for our patient, treatment is never justifiable if there is not reasonable assurance that our ministrations will improve his or her situation for a period of time thought to be adequate, and not to leave them in an unacceptable condition as a result of our treatment. Of this, the Holy Father says:

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His Excellency, Archbishop Albert Meyer of the Archdiocese of Chicago, has sent, by me, his greetings to the St. Luke's Guild of Boston and to your great leader, His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing. His profound thanks for your recognition of our efforts at the Stritch School of Medicine and the Lewis Memorial Maternity Hospital.

This, I believe, is what you are honoring tonight, when your illustrious Richard Cardinal Cushing presents the Laetare Medal to me in your behalf. This is what the late Cardinal Mundelein planned for the alleviation of all concern from the Catholic mother, and the late Samuel Cardinal Stritch called his greatest charge. Cardinal Motto of Brazil has sent two nephews to bring this help to people who have been once prior for 7,000 Catholics. Our training are located in fifteen different areas of the United States, Puerto Rico, and Canada, as well as on the staff of every Catholic hospital in Chicago, where they are faithfully carrying on the teaching that a Catholic physician has a calling to serve man, and to try to free him of the ills which plague his body, the dwelling place of the soul created to the Image and Likeness of God. In so doing he will always respect the moral law and constantly improve himself in such a manner that he gives to his patient the highest type of medical service with the vision that he is serving the Master, by attending His flock. Such ideals and rewards can never come through any standardizing body, but through those who recognize the teaching of the Great Physician. Whose example on earth included healing the sick, irrespective of their race, social position, or disease.