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Catholic Physician of the Year

Catholic Physicians' Guilds

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the risk that the pharmaceutical industry may lose the sense of responsibility that has characterized it in the past. New drugs are frequently promoted with little knowledge of long-term toxicity or actual utility. Methods of advertising may range from the merely distasteful to the actually dishonest. Medicine, government, and industry must share the responsibility for maintaining ethical standards in such matters.


The writer, who is Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Chicago School of Medicine, discusses the evolution of the present-day trend of including hospital experience in the training of theology students. He believes that the advantage of such experience both to the student and to the hospital is great.


In this George W. Gay Lecture delivered by the author, the Rev. G. E. Westberg, at the Harvard Medical School on May 13, 1959, Dr. Means reviews existing codes of medical ethics, and follows with pertinent discussions of medical education, research, pharmaceutical advertising, patents, and public relations. Regarding the recurrent problem of whether to tell the entire truth to a patient with an incurable disease, the writer is opposed to intentional deceit but also rejects the practice of complete and abrupt disclosure of such information. Regarding terminal management he states, "Euthanasia . . . is a hotly debated matter. Whether it may or may not be practiced is for society, not for the medical profession, to decide. It is within the doctor's prerogative, however, to determine what treatment he will or will not use, and if under the type of circumstances I have indicated, he elects not to use the life-prolonging methods, can any honest and reasonable person say he has done wrong?"

[It is unfortunate that the distinction between euthanasia and the avoidance of extraordinary means of preserving life was not made by the lecturer.

Cf. Directives nn. 21 and 22, Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Hospitals, above.

(21) Euthanasia ("mercy killing") in all its forms is forbidden.

(22) The failure to supply the ordinary means of preserving life is equivalent to euthanasia.]

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Additional references of interest:


[Raised, but popular, written analysis of the position of the Church in permitting periodic continence while prohibiting artificial contraception.]


Moore, Thomas Verner: Heroic Sanctity and Insanity. (Book) 343 pp. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1959. $5.00

[The most recent publication of the scholarly Carthusian who was formerly head of the Department of Psychology and Psychiatry at the Catholic University of America.]

CONTRIBUTORS:

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CATHOLIC PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR

The National Federation of Catholic Physicians’ Guilds has named Dr. John J. Masterson of Brooklyn, New York, Catholic Physician of the Year. The award was made at the winter meeting of the national organization holding sessions in Dallas, Texas—December 5.

Dr. Masterson is a native of Brooklyn, born in 1881. He is the dean and elder statesman of medicine in Brooklyn. Since 1926 he has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Medical Society of the County of Kings and chairman of the board since 1934, as well as a past president of the Society. During 1949 and 1950 he served as president of the New York State Medical Society. Dr. Masterson is a Fellow of the American College of Radiology, a Diplomat of the American Board of Radiology, and a past-president of the New York and Brooklyn Roentgen Ray Societies. For nearly 25 years he served New York in the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association.

His Excellency, Bishop Thomas K. Gorman, Dallas, Texas, and Rev. Msgr. Donald A. McGowan, Moderator of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians’ Guild, present the Catholic Physician of the Year Award to Dr. John J. Masterson of Brooklyn, New York.

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