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Moderator's Message: God Needs You

Kenneth P. MacKinnon
ADVICE TO AUTHORS

Articles on topics of potential interest to the Catholic physician and to Catholic and as a physician are earnestly solicited. A goodly portion of those are engaged in allied health fields, teach moral theology, or serve in hospitals and other settings. Those for their benefit would be welcome. The subject matter should be predominantly philosophical, religious, or medical, and should conform to the standards of the Index Medicus. Manuscripts (original and one copy) should be submitted to the Editorial Office of The Linacre Quarterly, 1428 South Grand Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri, 63104. One additional copy should be retained by the author. Full editorial privileges are reserved. References cited should appear at the end of the article and should conform to the style of the Index Medicus. A brief but pertinent curriculum vitae of the author(s) should accompany the manuscript. The Thomas Linacre Award is made annually to the author(s) of the original article adjudged to be the best to appear in The Linacre Quarterly during each calendar year.

FRED M. TAYLOR, M.D.

Moderator's Message

GOD NEEDS YOU

Prior to World War II a pamphlet appeared bearing the above title and was addressed to doctors. The layman's role in the Church was not so clearly defined in those days and the pamphlet was an exhortation for doctors to become involved. "God needs you" was the statement of an older surgeon to a younger one, as together they worked over a patient whose life hung in the balance. For any who might be hesitant to fill a needed post it is a challenging phrase, surely as compelling as St. Paul's: "I exhort you, therefore, brothers . . . do not conform to this world's way of life, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you might investigate the will of God — ALL that is good, ALL that is acceptable to Him, ALL that is perfect."

Leadership for all church-oriented organizations is a growing need, one which cannot be side-stepped without serious hurt to the Church. The Physician's Guilds are no exception. A necessary work, poorly done, or left undone by a well-intentioned layman, and eventually completed by a priest, is the wrong method of problem solving, as far as the extension of the Kingdom of God is concerned. The development of leadership techniques in a formal teaching environment seems to be a better solution to the need. Because of his intimate working with God's greatest creation, the human person, he should be possible for every doctor to develop the self-confidence necessary for effective leadership. In his dealings with his patients he daily exercises self-trust in those independent judgments by which he seeks to lead them back to good health.

The physician, to be effective, must be sensitive to what needs correcting, improving, and encouraging in the individual patient. How easy to transfer this sensitivity to the larger life of an organization or the Church herself.

The doctor, to understand and help his patient, must be an attentive listener, and be able to speak with such conviction and clarity that the patient will be stimulated and moved to act upon his medical advice. So, too, must the lay leader in the Church develop this skill to communicate so clearly and enthusiastically, that those listening will respond with promptness to his stated objectives.

And, finally, where would medicine be today without the creativity of outstanding doctors, past and present? Just as the health of the world has improved because of the leadership of these men, so will the Church grow and be strengthened by a lay leadership that is open-minded, flexible, original, constructive in its ideas, and willing to take the initiative, not just be prodded into it.

The constructive and truly apostolic leadership of many of our doctors in the areas of faith, morality, catechetics, missionary effort, and social welfare gives promise that, to an increasing degree, our medical men are aware of the truth that, for His works to be fulfilled on earth, God "needs" them. It will be the herald of a "Holy Year" for all our doctors if, in 1966, they heed the call of the Church to active leadership — a leadership that will seek out "ALL that is good, ALL that is acceptable to Him, ALL that is perfect."

Best wishes for a happy and fruitful Holy Year!

REVEREND KENNETH P. MACKINNON

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