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Excerpts from the Dimensions of Medicine ...

Catholic Physicians' Guilds

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EXCERPTS FROM THE DIMENSIONS OF MEDICINE . . .

You do not treat isolated bodies, nor cases, nor numbers. You treat great human beings who have human dignity. You treat human beings whose minds and hearts need understanding and love. You are neither mechanics nor veterinarians. You are physicians. . . .

What good is an antibiotic if it creates a neurotic? Why use a wonder drug if you must wonder how it affects personality? . . . But do you ever wonder what effect you have on your patients? Are you well-adjusted, or are you too plagued with run-away emotions and crippling complexes? Are you also handicapped by personal and family problems that leave you not only a divided mind but also a divided heart? . . . Stripped of professional dignity you are as human as all the rest of men. This can be good if an awareness of your weakness serves to increase your compassion for others. But if it hinders your serving others in truth and in accordance with your calling, you deserve to hear the shaming words: "Physician, heal thyself!"

Therefore, reconsecrate yourselves to the love of God as you find Him in your neighbor. Listen as He says to you: "I have given you a fine mind, a great heart, and exceptional skill. Give them back to me. Give me your mind that I may know my sick; your heart that I may offer them my love and compassion. Give me your eyes and your ears that I may seek and help them. Give me your hands that, through you, I may make them whole again." (From an Address before the Catholic Physicians' Guild of Houston at the White Mass honoring St. Luke, at the Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral, Oct. 18, 1964.)

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