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Message From the Spiritual Advisor

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The mystery of pain is the milieu in which the physician works. Associated with pain is a peculiar suffering which signals that the body is undergoing some physical illness. In an attempt to decipher the ailment, the doctor proceeds to use his skills to help the patient obtain relief and strive toward recovery.

The doctor is so close to the mystic union of the sufferer that it's difficult for him to discern why he is practicing the vocation of medicine, just as it is impossible for a child to explain why he is playing with a ball. There is a certain magnetism that assures the physician as well as the child that this is what has to be done at this time in their lives.

Philippe Petit, a tightrope walker, after being arrested for walking a rope between the New York World Trade Center Towers, stated to the psychiatrists that, "If I see three oranges, I have to juggle, and if I see two towers, I have to walk."

The medical profession is involved in a mystery, and the patients sent to the physicians are indeed a challenge to their faith. Yet somehow these are the very people that will help to bring the doctor to salvation. In the pilgrim journey on the road to holiness, these individuals are those whom you — and often you alone — can help. You are their "actual grace." There may be times when your honest complaint is, "Why me?" — perhaps, the same human cry of Jesus at Mt. Olivet: "Take this chalice from Me" yet "Not My will, but Thine be done."

There is just a brief distinction between love and violence — between the kiss and the bite, between the touch and the slap, between the delivery and the abortion. There is a difference between the secular and the Catholic, for the Catholic physician is to render services of love — love that heals instead of inflicting pain.

Christmas for many is a time when once-a-year gifts are exchanged. The physician is constantly exchanging gifts. As he gives the gift of
healing, he is blessed by the Lord in exchange. So he daily experiences
the joy of gift-giving as a person of prayer, trusting in the Spirit to
guide his every action.

While the physician in his vocation is seldom entertaining (often he
is dull — neither interesting or exciting), his presence is a sign of hope
to those in pain. The patient looks upon him, as did crippled men
looking at Peter and John in the temple, hoping for the miracle of
grace so as to be restored to the fullness of good health.

We thank God for dedicated physicians. You are special people.
You touch life, death and eternity. You are Christ-like persons who go
about healing and doing good. We salute you — we respect you — we
pray for you. May God always bless you.

— Rev. Msgr. Dino J. Lorenzetti

Guest Editorial

The Decline of Reproductive Freedom

We have entered an age perilous to the freedom of expression of our
species’ most powerful and consistent drive — the sexual drive and its
complementary desire to rear a family.

Not only are there subtle yet powerful social pressures now exerted
against anyone who dares to have more than four children, but also
evident are governmental and corporate pressures to reduce family
size. Reproduction is becoming recognized as a privilege, and not a
right. Published cost-benefit analyses stress the per capita expenses
incurred in rearing a family, and the social burden and cost of institu­
tionalizing and educating the retardate or the deformed.

With the advent of amniocentesis as a clinical tool for the prenatal
detection of some 85 disorders from an examination of amniotic fluid;