February 1969

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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The razzle dazzle of political party conventions, the election of new leaders for our countries, the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the brutality of race riots, have all captivated our attention. The crisis of conscience precipitated by the papal encyclical and the attempts to resolve this currently dominate our thoughts.

Statements have been issued of profound acquisitiveness, by groups of clergy and hierarchy, as though none have doubts or reservations. Equally unrealistic have been the context of the Encyclical, but do not themselves propose a theologically in these years since the Council, resolved for many doctors, patients and confessors have, their consciences. These are not now likely themselves a course of action that satisfied authority alone.

In the framework of that ruled as licit by the Church, there can be only a renewed interest in Rhythm, both natural and other controlled series, so that our controlled practices can help us over last years rough spots and clear the way for a constructive new year.

I also believe, but have not yet proven, that the days of abstinence may be able to be shortened to days 11 through 16 inclusively. When, (and if) the time of abstinence can be reduced to five days, it certainly should not be difficult to practice moral birth control.

Dr. O'Loughlin asked for prayers for all deceased Guild members. He reported that the Los Angeles Guild had its only black member with the recent death of Dr. Ray Peyton. He asked for positive Guild action on recruiting more black members and, in a related field, recruiting and assisting more black medical students.

Dr. O'Loughlin said the N.F.C.P.G. officers had spent the year discussing the aims and goals of the Federation, and he said he hoped that a special committee, having a wide geographic and philosophic distribution, would be appointed to restudy the reasons for existence of the Guilds and the Federation.

Dr. O'Loughlin said that the coming year should be one in which we respect Pope Paul's attitude that theologians and scientists must have reasonable freedom for research and development. He said this approach can help us over last years rough spots and clear the way for a constructive new year.

MODERATOR'S REPORT: Father MacKinnon said that there is a good possibility that there will be approval of a votive Mass for physicians and paramedical personnel in the near future.

He said he feels that the Federation does exist, and that the time has come to stop questioning its existence, but to get on with the clarification and amplification of its goals and services. He said the Guilds exist as a potentially strong, competent, directive voice of the Church in this country. He said doctors should no longer be running as a group to stop things, but should be in the forefront of things directing them.

Father MacKinnon suggested that in the administrative wing of the Church there should be a lay man directing lay
activity, and who would be a liaison with the Bishops.

He also suggested that the name of 'moderator' of the N.F.C.P.G. be changed to 'spiritual advisor'.

REPORT OF THE EDITOR: Dr. William Egan reported that 1968 was a year of transition for the Linacre Quarterly with the move of the publication from St. Louis to Milwaukee. He reported that the change has been smooth and efficient, and the cost of production is less expensive.

He said the candidates for the 1968 Linacre Quarterly have been listed and the Guilds will vote on them. The award will be presented in July in New York.

He said the February issue will include Archbishop O'Boyle's reflection on humanae vitae. The May issue will be edited by Dr. James Masterson and will be produced by the Virginia and Washington, D.C. Guilds. Dr. Egan asked for other Guilds to volunteer to edit future issues. He also reported that letters to the editor have diminished and wondered if we are not sufficiently provocative.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: The financial statement for the 1968 fiscal year was presented. It was pointed out that several Guilds under the old billing system were delinquent. It was not the intent of the Federation to provide direct billing for every Guild whether they wanted it or not, but only to provide it as a voluntary service. Dr. Masterson reported that the increase in dues for 1968 would make available expenses for delegates to attend the annual meeting, and the large attendance at this meeting was a reflection on the success of the change in dues structure. He reported that a special endowment committee has recommended that no assets or stocks be sold at this time unless there is an urgent need for cash.

FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT: Dr. John Brennan said that the National Commission on Human Life Reproduction and Rhythm, in which his committee is actively involved, presented a program on Abortion in Chicago August, which was attended by representatives from throughout the midwest. The purpose of this meeting, and often they hope to sponsor, is to provide information for Catholics and other denominations, in their fight in the various states against the easing of abortion laws.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE OF RELIGIOUS: Dr. J. T. Nix reported that his is a joint committee on health care of the religious of the Catholic Hospital Association and the N.F.C.P.G. He said it is vital that there be further communication between the Catholic organizations interested in providing care for the religious. He said a new manual for health care of male religious has been compiled by Doctors Feder, Holowbek and Nix. He said the American Cancer Society has renewed for another year a grant for research on the causes of death of religious women and a summary of the research will appear in the magazine "Cancer".

GERALD KELLY LECTURE COMMITTEE: Dr. John Malone reported that the summer meeting of the N.F.C.P.G., which includes a memorial Mass, a Board of Directors meeting, and the Gerald Kelly lecture-dinner, will be held at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City on July 13, during the annual meeting of the AMA. The speaker at the Gerald Kelly lecture, and the recipient of the Linacre Award, will be announced at a later date.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING COMMITTEE REPORT: Dr. Rosalie Reardon Albers reported that the N.F.C.P.G. will host the meeting of the International Association of Catholic Medical Associations in Washington, D. C. on October 11 to the 14, 1970. A committee has been formed to plan the meeting which will be attended by delegates from all the countries of the world. The most important function of the committee is to solicit funds to finance this undertaking.

Dr. James Ferrugia of Malta, the Secretary of the International Federation, then spoke to the group on the background and aims of the International Association.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers: Dr. Lino Papola, President-Elect; Dr. Rosalie Reardon Albers, Vice President; Dr. James Masterson, Secretary; Dr. Charles Pfister, Treasurer. There being no nominations from the floor, there was a unanimous vote for the slate of officers as presented. Dr. John Malone was installed as President by the moderator, Father MacKinnon.

NEW BUSINESS: The delegates approved a motion authorizing the President to appoint a committee at large to study the needs, answers and purposes of the Catholic Physicians' Guild individually and collectively.

The results of this committee's study are to be reported and acted upon at the 1969 annual meeting.

The delegates then approved unanimously Resolution No. 1 opposing the legalizing of abortion. The complete text of the Resolution is as follows:

WHEREAS, life is a gift bestowed by the Creator and is always subject to His Dominion and Will; and

WHEREAS, the profession of medicine has always revered life and has always been dedicated to its preservation and protection; and

WHEREAS, medical science clearly establishes that the human life, which is born, is the same human life which was conceived and which develops and matures genetically independently during the period of gestation; and

WHEREAS, no distinction can be made between born life and unborn life as to preference and rights; and

WHEREAS, the civil law recognizes that the human fetus, endowed as it is with human life, has inalienable rights among which is the basic right to be allowed to live, to develop and to be born; and

WHEREAS, the rights of a living person can never be achieved by directly depriving the innocent unborn of its right to life; and

WHEREAS, induced abortion is the direct and intended extinguishing of the life of the innocent unborn in violation of the equal protection of the law and without due process; and

WHEREAS, the physician, by favoring the relaxation of the current laws prohibiting abortion, would be unfaithful to his sacred trust to protect and reverence life.
BE IT RESOLVED that the National Federation of Catholic Physicians Guilds, at its annual meeting at Miami Beach on December 1, 1968, goes on record as being unalterably opposed to the legalizing of abortion for personal, medical, eugenic, social, psychiatric or humanitarian reasons.

The delegates then discussed at length a resolution concerning the Pope's encyclicals. Resolution No. 2 was passed with only one dissenting vote:

WHEREAS, individual members of this federation, as Christian physicians, are aware of the pressing issues which are affecting the thought and action of individuals and of humanity; and

WHEREAS, some of these issues involve human sexuality which should be considered in its totality, and the complete fruition of which is a desired goal for the benefit of all mankind; and

WHEREAS, Christ gave us the example of love and charity we should endeavor to understand those who propose a variety of solutions, seemingly in conflict with traditional concepts; and

WHEREAS, physicians in order to better fulfill their role, to improve the physician-patient relationship, and to form a right conscience of their own, should keep informed on matters which involve human life; and

WHEREAS, physicians are not necessarily authorities in moral matters and so should turn to authentic teachers for guidance; and

WHEREAS, Pope Paul VI, by virtue of his position as a direct successor of Peter, is the preeminent teacher among Christ's shepherds and has presented principles relating to faith and morals; and now therefore

Dr. John Malone announced that the annual 1969 meeting of the N.F.C.P.G. would be held on November 29-30, at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, Colorado. The meeting will immediately precede the annual clinical meeting of the A.M.A. which also will be held in Denver.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie Reardon Albers, M.D.
Secretary

National Commission on Human Life Reproduction and Rhythm

The National Commission on Human Life Reproduction and Rhythm continues to meet periodically at O'Hare Inn, Chicago. Meetings are open to all interested parties. Members of the commission and guests customarily pay their own expenses. Sustaining membership is available for those not able to attend meetings on a regular basis, but who are interested in supporting the educational activities of the commission. Annual dues for sustaining membership is $100.00.

CHILD AND FAMILY

In the fall of 1967, the Commission became the publishers of CHILD AND FAMILY. It is a quarterly for professional people which reprints from the scientific literature those articles which illuminate traditional concepts of family, life and sex. Issues under its new editorship have contained articles against abortion by clergymen of different denominations; Rollo Mays on "Antidotes for Modern Contraceptives." Articles pertaining to the medical literature pertaining to the medical hazards of oral contraceptives. Articles on the subject will appear on a continuing basis in future issues. Long editorial comments following major articles appear in each issue. Herbert Ratner, M.D., is Editor; Associate editors include Drs. John F. Hillabrand, Robert L. Jackson, William A. Lynch, Robert S. Mendelsohn, Grover C. Nobors and Gregory J. White. The Editorial Advisory Board consists of distinguished representatives from medicine, education, sociology and nursing. Issues, including the above articles, (Vol. 7, 1968) are still available to new subscribers. (See subscription blank below).

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ABORTION, RHYTHM AND LIFE

The 4th International Symposium on Abortion, Rhythm and Life will be held April 10, 11 and 12, 1969, at Ramada Inn, for which courtesy limousine service is available from Chicago O'Hare airport.

Although the meeting format will resemble previous Washington (1964), Kansas City (1965) and New York (1967) symposia, the present symposium's emphasis will be pro-life.

Thursday, April 10, will consist of a pre-symposium progress report roundup of nation-wide anti-abortion and pro-rhythm activities. The keynote address on "Reverence for Life" will be delivered the same evening. The speaker will be Reverend Charles Carroll, Protestant Episcopal Chaplain at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center. Father Carroll will be remembered from previous meetings as inspiring, forceful and knowledgeable.

He is an accredited observer at the Nürnberg trials who has been actively combating relaxation of the abortion laws in many states under the sponsorship of the Commission.

Friday and Saturday will be devoted to basic papers on human repro-