

November 1969

A Tribute to William J. Egan, M.D.

Paul V. Harrington

Follow this and additional works at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq>

Recommended Citation

Harrington, Paul V. (1969) "A Tribute to William J. Egan, M.D.," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 36 : No. 4 , Article 4.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol36/iss4/4>

A TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM J. EGAN, M. D.

I was overjoyed when I was invited to prepare a tribute to Doctor "Bill" Egan as he retires from the post of Editor of *Linacre Quarterly*. I owe him so much that equity demands that I make a public proclamation in his honor; I have known him so intimately over twenty years that I feel that I can do justice to the task. This effort is meant to be a panegyric to a vital, dynamic and very active doctor – not an eulogy for one who has passed from our midst.

Doctor Egan was born the younger member of a large family. Although both parents died in his youth, he was reared in a devoutly religious atmosphere, by elder brothers and sisters for whom he has tremendous affection. He had the benefit of a Catholic education in elementary grades, in High School and College.

His religious education inspired in him a deep love of God, a respect for the revealed doctrines of Faith, a real appreciation of the spiritual life – prayer, grace and the sacraments, an ardent admiration for the Universal Church, a sincere devotion to the Sovereign Pontiff, members of the Hierarchy, clergy and religious and a real, meaningful dedication to his fellow man.

Bill Egan could not be a passive Christian. His inspiration told him that he must be committed to living the Catholic Faith to the fullest. He must begin by the external practice of his religion – frequent, and whenever possible, daily attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the reception of Holy Communion. He loved them both. But he could not stop there. He realized that he must grow in virtue and perfection and strive for sanctity. This process of growth, begun many decades ago, still continues. Even this could not suffice. He must be an active vibrant and dynamic Catholic – living his religious commitment all day every day. He must spend his life reaching out to bring Christ, His message and His consolation to mankind.

Medicine offered him the best opportunity to fulfill his dream. He could follow in the footsteps of the Divine Physician, and minister to the ill, to the suffering, to

those in agony and pain. He could bring relief and comfort; he could restore to health. To Bill Egan, medicine was not so much a science or even a profession; it was a calling, a vocation, which would allow him to be of service, to give of himself, to live the Christian life to the fullest and to grow in grace and virtue. Medicine was not to be a livelihood but a means to salvation and sanctity.

Doctor Egan, in taking Mary Sullivan as his bride, considered their marriage — not as a private affair — but as a sharing and a living together of the life of faith and grace. In marriage, they could assist each other and come to know and serve God. Their mutual love was rewarded as their marriage was blessed by the birth of eleven children — all living.

The family circle could provide further opportunities for living the Christian life and for growth in the spiritual life as a religious and prayerful atmosphere was created in the home and the example of the father and mother became an inspiration to each child.

Catholic Action was Bill's slogan. This drive to give of himself and to be of service prompted him to become a very important member of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference of his parish. Every day, he could help the needy, comfort the afflicted, console the bereaved, treat the sick, counsel the wayward, assist the handicapped and befriend the lonely. The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy were his guidelines.

Doctor Bill has, over thirty years, treated large numbers of religious patients at no expense to themselves or their community. He established, staffed and received accreditation for an infirmary that cares for the chronically ill and aged members of a large Diocesan Community of Religious Women and he actively treats their patients — another indication of his love, his charity, his concern.

His abiding interest in serving the people of God through medicine brought him into active membership in his local Guild of St. Luke. His determination to see Catholic doctors live their religious life and their professional life to the fullest in service to their fellow man and for the Greater Glory of God prompted him to become affiliated with the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds. For many years, as a hard-working member and officer he was responsible for the growth of the local guilds from a mere handful of not-too-promising groups to well over a hundred active, dynamic, vital, inspired organizations. He was truly a leader! His enthusiasm and dedication rubbed off on many!

On retiring from the Executive Committee, he assumed the responsibility of Editor of the Linacre Quarterly. Another opportunity to give of himself and to be of service. During his reign, the Journal came of age. The number of pages increased; the circulation grew; the depth and seriousness of the articles became evident; reader interest and enthusiasm was manifest.

Bill Egan took his assignment as Editor very seriously. He saw this position as a marvelous and important opportunity to reach out and to provide to his

colleagues authentic and sound teachings on the practice of Catholic medicine. He earnestly sought out new writers and contributors so that large numbers of the membership could become involved and become Catholic Action oriented. He inaugurated a program whereby members of a local Guild would assume the responsibility of searching out and assigning the articles for a particular issue.

Bill Egan worked hard and conscientiously as Editor. He spent many hours pouring over manuscripts, correcting them, editing them and preparing them for publication. He strove and succeeded in making the Linacre Quarterly a prestigious and recognized "Journal of the Philosophy and Ethics of Medical Practice". He tendered his resignation as Editor in order that he might give of himself in devoted service to his ever-loving wife but God, in His mercy, took her to Himself on June 25, 1969. May she rest in peace and may Almighty God give to Bill and his children consolation, comfort, strength, courage and perseverance!

Bill Egan is a Christian gentleman of tremendously deep faith; simple, uncomplicated, humble, quiet, retiring in manner; dedicated and committed to his profession and to the highest standards of excellence in his profession; interested in and concerned about his fellow man; kind generous, loving and charitable towards all.

Truly, a man of Catholic Action!

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Paul V. Harrington, J.C.L., P.A.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

XII International Congress of Catholic Medical Associations

October 11-14, 1970
Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.

*Sponsored by The National Federation of
Catholic Physicians Guilds.*

**An International Seminar on the
Catholic Physician In Life Conservation.**