

The Linacre Quarterly

Volume 50 | Number 2

Article 2

May 1983

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Recommended Citation

Lorenzetti, Dino J. (1983) "Message from the Spiritual Advisor," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 50 : No. 2 , Article 2.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol50/iss2/2>

Message from the Spiritual Advisor



Perhaps one of the greatest temptations which the modern physician faces in his practice is discouragement. If he "gives in" to it, he finds himself in a state of depression, losing his enthusiasm, zeal and dedication to continue in his work.

One of the factors causing this discouragement is the changing attitude in our social way of living that allows each person to "control" his or her own destiny. It appears as though each patient has the "right" to choose options of healing and thus direct personal treatment even though he or she may be ill-informed.

With the increasing threat of being sued for malpractice, the physician is obliged to practice his profession defensively so as to avoid any possibility of legal contestation. Often in his counseling he is challenged by articles published in popular periodicals which compel him to defend his mode of treatment. In reality, he feels that he no longer enjoys that special place in the community of being the significant person in the process of healing. In a form of surrender, he caters to the wishes of his patient who, he feels, is not sufficiently intelligent to carry out simple instructions.

It is in this setting that a doctor is tempted to say, "I've had it," or "Who needs it?" or "Let someone else carry on. I've done my job." While all of this may be pragmatically logical, still it is not the way Christ works through us.

The physician, like Christ the Savior, accepts not only the centurion (who has total faith),¹ but also the man born blind (who is demanding),² the thief on the cross (who is in pain),³ the woman hemorrhaging (who is anxious),⁴ Mary Magdalene (who is a public

sinner),⁵ the woman at the well (an inquirer),⁶ St. Thomas (a challenger,⁷ St. Peter (who denies Christ),⁸ and Nicodemus (the teacher, who is "ignorant").⁹

Through their encounters with Christ — like your patients' contact with you — the weak become strong, and the impossible become possible. As "savior," you uplift the depressed, and paradoxically you are likewise "saved." Your vocation has meaning, you are uplifted from your depression, you become enthusiastic, and your life has activity. United with Jesus Who performs the healing, you are His selected loved one through whom His Spirit flows.

All types of patients come to you, those who are anxious, uninformed, fearful, demanding and above all, challenging. It is through you, the Catholic doctor of faith, who, like Christ, lovingly cares, that your patients are able to have a change of heart, sinners are able to become saints, and the unholy are able to become holistic.

— Msgr. Dino J. Lorenzetti

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