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Message from the Spiritual Advisor: The Physician's Skills

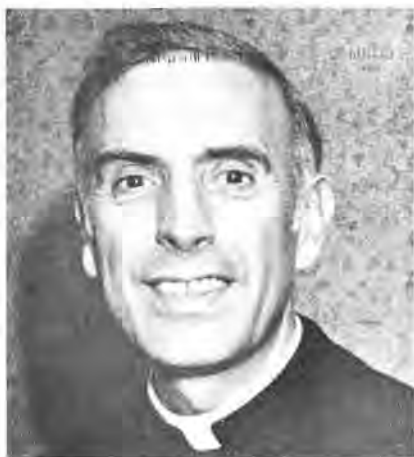
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Message from the Spiritual Advisor



The Physician's Skills

Recently, I was challenged with a provocative question, "Why would anyone want to consult a priest if he was in crisis?" Not knowing what the precise answer would be, I asked some married couples at a seminar if they could help me with an appropriate answer. Much to my chagrin, one woman told me that "the priest is the only person I know who could verbalize a response to any problem I might have," and she saw him as God speaking directly to her. This surprising response shocked me into the realization that I'd better be mighty careful what I say and do, for this power within me is seen as God-like.

I was then reminded of a true story of a priest who was visiting in Ireland. After he ignored a woman begging for alms, she sternly looked at him and said, "Well, then, Father, may I have your blessing, for you see, you have the power, but I have the faith."

The physician is regarded as the person gifted with super powers, and in faith, the patient comes to him with hope and expectation that through him, the crisis of illness will be changed to the restoration of health.

The physician often feels inadequate to exercise his skills, especially if he interprets the illness to be beyond the wisdom of science. The limit of one's expertise, the restricted knowledge of certain diseases, the mystery of the process of healing, all seem to restrain the physician's ability to practice his art with confidence. In fact, as he, too, is afflicted with some aggravating physical setback, he recalls the words of Jesus as written by St. Luke: "Physician, heal thyself."

The grace of the Lord "flows" through you, as instruments of God's peace, as you are invited to the impossible. In God, all things are possible, and as people of faith there is great rejoicing in seeing the glory of God manifested in our weak nature.

You are called to believe — to witness love in action, to be a people of hope for a new tomorrow. God gives you His strength as you put your faith in Him. As a physician, you are given extraordinary opportunities to perform miracles of healing through His power of grace.

Your speech, your touch, your advice, your knowledge, your skills — but above all your Faith — can make it all possible. Your privileged position in society enables you to be seen as a Christ among the sick and needy. Each person who is ill anxiously waits for your power of interaction in his or her life. People of faith see you as a sacred person possessing the power of the Divine. Therefore, your profession should never be taken for granted, nor be cheapened by pride, arrogance or money. Yours is a supernatural gift, a blessed sacrament, a profession which has power like a missile containing nuclear energy, which can be used to soar to the outer planets or used for destruction and annihilation.

You are another Christ, walking, talking and healing those who believe in you. To be effective, you, like Christ, must pray to the Father with faith. Your vocation is awesome . . . scary . . . beautiful. You are indeed among God's chosen.

— Msgr. Dino J. Lorenzetti