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Joseph M. Gambescia

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President's Page



What Is the NFCPG?

I was asked, "The National Federation of Catholic Physicians — what is it all about?"

The National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds purposes to uphold the principles of the Catholic faith and morality as related to the science and practice of medicine; to communicate Catholic medical ethics to the medical profession and the community at large; to uphold Catholic hospitals in the application of Catholic moral principles; and to enable Catholic physicians to work together with deeper mutual support and understanding.

In assuming the office of the presidency, I have given these purposes much thought and consideration — plumbing and probing for their full meaning and trying to see "what we are all about." I perceive in the core of these purposes a common denominator which has a strong resemblance and relationship to the characteristic of prophecy in the biblical sense. The prophets of the Old Testament were called by God, chosen by Him, received communication from Him, and were charged to transmit His message to the people in His name. The prophets of the Old Testament have been called "the conscience of Israel."

The prophets were not seers gazing into crystal balls, but God's spokesmen proclaiming a message. The office of prophet was not due to special spiritual qualities, neither to inheritance nor to intellectual genius, but to a direct free call from God. They were men of special aptitudes who held themselves ready to serve as heralds of God's will and as instruments in furthering it, albeit at times disinclined to do so.

Each guild and, in unity, the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds should see itself as called by God, chosen by Him, receiving communication from Him to transmit the message to the people in His name. The purposes, then, of the National Federation as enumerated above, are to be seen as consequences of this basic prophetic posture.

The Lord speaks to us in a variety of ways — through sacred scripture, through the Church, through prayer, and through the signs of the times. It behooves us, then, to study scripture, listen to the Church, develop our prayer life, and read and discern the signs of the times. After we do this, it is imperative for us to transmit and proclaim the message. We are obligated to be ever on the alert, recognizing the ultimate importance of our work.

The *Linacre Quarterly* takes on a singular purpose then, since it is an organ of proclamation. The annual convention also takes on unique characteristics since it serves a declarative purpose. The Federation holds an important position in God's plan. It is incumbent upon us in our deliberations to maintain this orientation of prophecy before us. Our reluctance to becoming involved cannot be an impediment. Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah were all reluctant and deterring. We are not free to be spectators. We cannot sit back and wait until a cause comes along which suits us, nor can we wait until it is convenient for us to begin to act, lest like Jonah, we would sit under the broom tree and when the broom tree withers away, we would complain that we are alone under the hot sun. Should we not, rather, be like Jeremiah? "See, I place My words in your mouth." And like Samuel who, in answering God's call, said, "Lord, here I am."

That's what we are all about!!!!

— Joseph M. Gambescia, M.D.

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