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The Moderator's Message: The Federation-A Religious Perspective

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The Moderator's Message . . .

The Federation—A Religious Perspective

It is a pleasure to assume the office of Moderator of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds. No small part of that pleasure is derived from a personal knowledge and appreciation of the competence, the apostolic urge of those who guide the affairs of this organization. In the formation of this spirit many Guilds have played an active part; by this spirit many Guilds have been moved to a fuller Christian apostolate.

For the Federation this is a period of maturing as well as of continued growth, of implementing policies long established as well as of acquiring the broader Christian vision demanded by a changing national and world society. The Federation is more than an instrument of union for its constituent Guilds; it must be the instrument for the fuller sharing of the Christian life, an instrument for the expression, discussion, and implementation of the thoughts, the plans, the discoveries of Catholic doctors throughout the United States.

One still hears the occasional comment of a Catholic doctor that the Guild concept is *devisive*. It is not *devisive* in the sense that the Guild would seek to separate a Catholic doctor from the other members of his profession in particular, or from the community in general. But it is a *decisive* concept which seeks to bring the man of medicine to a fuller activation of his role as a man of God. How else account for the "devisiveness" of being baptized, of being identified as "the people of God," of being called by God to the primary vocation of worship. Properly motivated, then, the Guild can be one more means for the fulfillment of a responsibility that weighs heavy upon us all—to be witnesses for Christ.

The unique individuality of the spiritual person was conferred by God through the special communication of His life of grace. And just as God's individuality is not destroyed by His all-embracing concern for mankind, neither will a similar concern and identity with the community destroy, but rather enhance, the distinctive personality of the Christian. To the adequate implementation of this God-given role, already so well exemplified in the diversified plans and works of so many Guilds, the Federation dedicates and pledges its best efforts. Surely we are typified by the words of the Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

REVEREND KENNETH P. MACKINNON