

August 1960

## Activities of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds

Joe E. Holoubek

Follow this and additional works at: <https://epublications.marquette.edu/lmq>

---

### Recommended Citation

Holoubek, Joe E. (1960) "Activities of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 27 : No. 3 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://epublications.marquette.edu/lmq/vol27/iss3/4>

# ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC PHYSICIANS' GUILDS

JOE E. HOLOUBEK, M.D.\*

IN THE NAME of our president, Dr. Eusebius J. Murphy of Bronx, New York, I wish to extend the greetings of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds to all of you attending the IX International Congress of Catholic Doctors. I consider it a privilege to be asked to speak to this group and to bring you a report of the activities of your American colleagues.

The National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds was formulated in 1927 by the late Dr. Richard A. Rendich in Brooklyn, New York, following a retreat for Brooklyn Catholic physicians. The "retreat group" became a "Guild." These physicians practiced in their daily lives the inspiration they had received in the retreat. The movement spread slowly, with the majority of Guilds organizing in eastern United States. It was in 1932 that the various groups were united as one, and the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds was founded.

The objectives of the Federation are:

To uphold the principles of the Catholic faith and morality as related to the science and practice of medicine.

August, 1960

To assist ecclesiastical authorities in the diffusion of the knowledge of Catholic medical ethics.

To uphold Catholic hospitals and their enforcement of Catholic moral principles in medical practice.

To these others may be added:

To increase the spiritual life of a Catholic doctor.

To make all doctors conscious of their dependence upon God in their daily practice of medicine.

In 1944 the Catholic Hospital Association offered its offices in St. Louis as a permanent location for the national headquarters. Growth was slow. In fact, there were only eleven Guilds in 1948. There were 60 in 1957 and in 1960 there are now 91 affiliated Guilds in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, with a total membership of 6,110. (Figure 1 shows the location of the individual Guilds.)

Individual Guilds vary in membership from 600 in Boston to 8 in Sheridan, Wyoming. They may include the Catholic Physicians in

\*Dr. Holoubek of Shreveport, Louisiana is First Vice-President of the National Federation. As an official delegate to the IX International Congress of Catholic Doctors held in Munich, Germany he gave this address on July 28, 1960.

one county or an entire city, or an entire diocese. The entire state of Arkansas is covered by one Guild, located in Little Rock. As you see in Figure 2, the State of Louisiana is the most completely organized. There are 8 separate Guilds in the State. Each is located in a central city and the Catholic doctors in the surrounding territory are invited to join their local Guild. The heavily populated areas such as New Orleans and Baton Rouge have large membership. On the other hand, there are only 11 in the large area around Monroe. We have reached the goal of a Guild within 50 miles of the home of every Catholic physician in the State of Louisiana. Other States are also organizing in this manner. Every diocese in the State of New York has a Guild. The goal of every Catholic doctor in America belonging to a Guild is still far from achieved.



FIGURE 1.

We estimate that there are some 35,000 Catholic physicians in our country. In the future, we hope all will be members of their local groups.

### National Board

The Board of Delegates of our Federation is composed of elected national officers and one representative from each affiliated Guild. The Board meets twice annually, in the summer during the American Medical Association general convention and again in the winter.

### The Linacre Quarterly

The official journal of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds is THE LINACRE QUARTERLY. It is devoted to promoting the philosophy and ethics of medical practice. It is in reality a medium to bring together Catholic theology and medical science. The circulation of the May 1960

issue was 10,360. It is received by all Guild members. Other subscribers are medical schools, hospital libraries and members of the clergy.

### Guilds in Action

*Guilds in Action* is a newsletter sent to members. It contains a list of activities of the groups, announcements of interest to all members, and a section to help Catholic doctors find locations to practice.

### Memorial Mass

A Memorial Mass for all deceased members of the American Medical Association is offered annually during the summer meeting. All officers and delegates of the Association, Catholic physicians

and their families attending the A.M.A. convention are invited to attend. It is usually held at 5:00 p.m. and celebrated by the Moderator of the Federation, presided over by the Bishop of the diocese. Some 550 persons assisted at the Mass in Miami, Florida, June 15 of this year.

### Federation Exhibit

Since 1956 the Federation has exhibited at the American Medical Association annual convention. The booth has a large display entitled "Moral Principles in Medical Practice." It is staffed by members of Guilds. Copies of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY and publications explaining medico-moral principles are distributed. Many hundreds of non-Catholic as well

STATE OF LOUISIANA



FIGURE 2.

as Catholic physicians visit the exhibit and learn about our beliefs and principles.

### Thomas Linacre Award

Periodically, the Thomas Linacre Award is given to the Catholic physician contributing an article. THE LINACRE QUARTERLY judge by an editorial board to be most valuable in content to promote the interests of the journal in its effort to express opinions in the light of Catholic teaching as applied to medical practice. In 1957 Dr. Roy J. Heffernan and William Lynch received the Award for their article "Is Therapeutic Abortion Scientifically Justified?" In 1958 it was received by Dr. Eugene G. Laforet for his contribution, "Boxing, Medical and Moral Aspects." An Award will be made to a medical student in the future should worthy contributions be received, to encourage writing in the medico-moral field.

### Catholic Physician of the Year

This Award to the Catholic Physician of the Year is presented at the winter meeting of the Federation to a Catholic doctor who is outstanding in his medical and spiritual life. Recipients have been the late Dr. Edward M. Gans, Harlowton, Montana, in 1957; the late Dr. Joseph J. Toland, Jr., of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1958, and Dr. John J. Masterson of Brooklyn, New York, in 1959.

### The White Mass

Since 1954, the Guilds have been urged to celebrate the "White Mass" to honor St. Luke, Patron

of Physicians, on October 18. The Mass is offered in cathedrals, parish churches, and hospital chapels, the choice being local with the sponsoring Guilds. Many Catholic hospitals in areas where there is no active Guild observe the occasion, inviting their medical staffs and hospital personnel to attend.

### Silver Jubilee Celebration

The largest social function of the National Federation was the Silver Jubilee celebration held in New York City, June 5, 1957. An anniversary Mass was celebrated at St. Patrick's Cathedral at 10:00 a.m. In the evening a banquet and ball were held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel with guests exceeding 1,100. Representatives were present from all of the national medical organizations. General Carlos Romulo of the Philippine Republic addressed the group.

### Local Guild Activities

Each Guild is autonomous in its program and organization. Some have monthly meetings; others plan quarterly sessions. Programs are planned to serve the spiritual needs of member physicians.

*Retreats* are sponsored. All Guild members are encouraged to make one annually.

*Days of Recollection* are often held in local hospital chapels. These usually begin with 9:00 o'clock Mass on Sunday, followed by three or four spiritual conferences and periods of meditation throughout the day.

A *Requiem Mass* for deceased members of a local group is usually celebrated by the Moderator once

a year. *Nocturnal Adoration, First Friday Communion* and other spiritual activities are sponsored. Enrichment of the spiritual life of the doctor is the primary purpose of these activities. Members are urged to spend a certain period of each day in meditation.

In the State of Louisiana a *Memorial Mass* is celebrated for deceased members of the Louisiana State Medical Society at its annual meeting. Officers and members, Catholic and non-Catholic, are invited to attend. Families of deceased members are sent special invitations. Arrangements for the Mass are taken care of by the Guild in the city where the Medical Society has its annual meeting.

### Medical Care Functions

Some Guilds provide medical care to indigent groups, homes for the aged and orphanages. Others supply medical care to large diocesan gatherings where physicians might be needed.

### Health Program for Parochial School Children

The New Orleans, Louisiana Guild supplies physicians to examine needy first grade school children. Necessary inoculations are provided. A "healthmobile" for hearing tests, visual, and dental examinations is also sponsored.

### Health Program for Religious and Clergy

The requests for help to establish a health-care program for religious and clergy has prompted The Catholic Hospital Association and the National Federation of

Catholic Physicians' Guilds to prepare an examination form for entrance as well as annual check-up which is part of the plan to assist this area. A pilot project was conducted in the dioceses of Alexandria and New Orleans, Louisiana. Through this program, each religious and priest receives a complete examination with roentgenogram of the chest and necessary laboratory work each year. (Dr. Alice Baker Holoubek discusses the subject in a separate paper.)

### Drug Program for the Missions

Several Guilds have organized groups that pick up unused drug samples from physicians' offices and ship them to the foreign missions. More than \$750,000 worth of drug samples have been sent to needy Catholic mission hospitals overseas, through the efforts of the New Orleans, Louisiana Guild. The effort is being extended to include the entire State.

### Medical Student Groups

Many Guilds devote special attention to medical students, hospital internes and residents. In some areas they are invited to participate in Guild activities and receive THE LINACRE QUARTERLY. Discussion groups for medical students are organized in some areas and regular meetings are held to consider medico-moral principles. Non-Catholic students are invited to attend.

### Medico-Moral Problems Institutes

Periodically, meetings with hospital sisters, chaplains, nurses, and physicians are held in various

localities the discussion of medico-moral problems. Prominent theologians conduct the sessions. Guilds in the area often sponsor special evening for discussion of specific problems. Courses are given to graduate and student nurses on medical ethics. Other conferences on such topics as hygiene, moral considerations in radiology, the Catholic physician as pre-marital counsellor and family counsellor have been among those discussed. Books concerning medico-moral principles are distributed to local hospitals, medical schools and nursing libraries in some of the groups.

#### Research Grants

Research grants have been supported by some Guilds, to stimulate this activity in Catholic hospitals.

#### High School Students and Medicine

In some areas, Guilds provide speakers for local Catholic high schools to encourage young men and women to choose medicine as a career.

#### State-wide Activities

In Louisiana, the officers and Moderators of the eight Guilds in the State have a meeting once a year and discuss their programs and related activities. A newsletter is published monthly and distributed to 400 members throughout the State.

#### Social Activities

A number of Guilds have dinner meetings to which members' wives

are invited. Speakers discuss topics of mutual interest. Needless to say, cooperation of the spouses is essential for the success of any Guild activity.

#### Medical Mission Activities

Foreign mission activities are becoming a concern to the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds as well as to American Catholics. Some Guilds are encouraging programs to familiarize themselves with the medical mission activities of the Church. A few members have gone to mission hospitals to teach and work. Internes and residents are being urged to devote one to three years of their lives in the service of God in the medical missions of His Church. Outstanding among these are the Los Angeles, California Guild that is sponsoring three physicians in the African missions and the Detroit, Michigan Guild that is sending a physician to operate a mission hospital in Guatemala. At the recent summer meeting of the Federation in Miami, Florida a committee was appointed to study methods of correlating medical mission activities of the various Guilds and to develop a program that would promote service in the Catholic mission field.

Needless to say, the activities of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds and its various affiliates are varied. However, the basic aim is to bring spiritual counsel and moral guidance to the physician so that he may be a more deeply religious

man and a better Catholic in his daily practice of medicine.

I will close with the *Physician's Prayer* which has been adopted by the Federation:

Divine Healer of the sick, Christ Jesus Our Lord, without whose aid I can do nothing, look down with favor upon me.

Give skill to my hand, clear vision to my mind, kindness and sympathetic understanding to my heart. Give me singleness of purpose, strength to lighten at least a part of the burden of my suffering fellow-men and a true realization of the privilege that is mine. Direct my work that it may be praiseworthy in Thy sight and successful unto those entrusted to my care. Give me the strong and simple faith of a child that I may rely on Thee, and in things do Thy will. Amen.

## PLAN NOW . . . . . for THE WHITE MASS

OCTOBER 18, FEAST OF ST. LUKE  
PATRON OF PHYSICIANS

ANNUAL MASS OFFERED BY MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND ALL OTHERS DEVOTED TO THE CARE OF THE SICK. HONOR ST. LUKE, PATRON OF PHYSICIANS.



DR. FRANKLYN E. VERDON of Coral Gables, Florida receives congratulations of Father John J. Flanagan, S.J., editor of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY and executive director of The Catholic Hospital Association, following his appointment as Federation secretary. Dr. Verdon is a member of the Miami Guild.



MEMORIAL MASS for all deceased physicians in St. Patrick Church, Miami Beach, by Msgr. McGowan. A.M. officers, Federal medical society members, Catholic and non-Catholic physicians heard Bishop Coleman's sermon.



MASS SERVERS during Memorial Mass were members of the Miami Guild. Dr. Lauth is shown as he serves Msgr. McGowan, who distributed Holy Communion to physicians and their families.

# HIGHLIGHTS

## NATIONAL FEDERATION ACTIVITIES FLORIDA JUNE 13-17, 1960

- A. Nelson
- Executive Board Meeting
- Memorial Mass



DR. EUSEBIUS J. MURPHY, Bronx, N. Y., national federation president, is shown with Msgr. Donald A. McGowan, the federation's national moderator; Bishop Coleman, F. Carroll of the Miami diocese, and Dr. Edward J. Lauth, Jr., president of the Miami Catholic Physicians' Guild. Photographed at the booth sponsored at the A.M.A. annual convention where the Catholic viewpoint on medical-moral problems was explained to visitors.



DR. J. L. CIRINCIONE, Albany, New York Guild president, is shown with Dr. Edward J. Lauth, Jr., president of the Miami Catholic Physicians' Guild, on a point of discussion during a reception.



GUILD REPRESENTATIVES attending the annual meeting of the national federation executive board meeting, June 15. Dr. Clement P. Cunningham, Rock Island, Ill., and second vice-president of the national organization, is explaining plan for Guild membership drive.