

An Open Letter to Catholic Hospitals

By Rev. William McCarthy, MSA

A real danger to the Catholic medical and psychiatric profession in general, and to Catholic hospitals and Catholic Charities in particular, is the tendency to "go along" with the safe, humanistic and secularistic liberal mindset so present in America today, a nation founded upon Judaic Christian principles. The result is that all things explicitly Catholic are downplayed, ignored and not tolerated less they be offensive to non-believers.

A Real Problem

This type of humanism poses a real problem to Catholics in these professions in general, and in the healing profession, in particular. Not only does such secularism thwart any Catholic evangelization - so important in the Church today, since Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. But also, it stymies mental and physical health.

Medical Evidence

Numerous medical and psychological research studies through the National Institute of Health (NIH) prove without a doubt that faith, prayer, Christian hope, love and forgiveness are powerfully important in the healing of sick minds and bodies. Some reliable sources estimate that more than 80 percent of gastric intestinal problems are caused by worry, fear, guilt, bitterness, lust and anger.

Faith, Hope and Love

The medical/psychological profession has no answer to these emotions. Christ and His Church do. Christian faith alone heals worry and fear. Trust and hope in Christ heals depression and failure. Experiencing God's love heals loneliness and a poor self-image. The Sacrament of reconciliation alone heals guilt, sin, unforgiveness and self-recrimination, simply because only Jesus, as Savior, can forgive sin and take away guilt. The average person represses, denies, projects, and rationalizes guilt and bitterness which caused Carl Jung to estimate that over 95% of all Americans walk around with the dire psychological results that such repression causes.

Forgiveness and Healing

Without Christ, the medical professional risks leaving the patient with worry, fear, guilt, loneliness, bitterness, lust and hatred - all with severely negative effects. No pill can substitute. Dr. Robert Enright, a psychologist, began the International Forgiveness Institute as a way to apply years of research on the healing power of forgiveness. He is co-author of the book "Helping Clients Forgive" with Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons. (Enright, Dr. Robert & Fitzgibbons, Dr. Richard, 2000. Helping Clients' Forgive: An Empirical Guide for Resolving Anger and Restoring Hope, American Psychological Association Books.) Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons furthermore has treated over 5,000 practicing homosexuals to whom he presents a highly spiritual and sacramental daily program of living. One hundred percent of those who go along with this ten-step program have been completely healed of homosexuality themselves. This, of course, flies in the face of the modern psychological bias that homosexuality is hereditary and cannot be healed at all. Both Enright and Fitzgibbons state that secular psychology traditionally went down a path that made no room for Grace, with the result that several studies show secular psychology today has become counterproductive to mental and physical health. This is primarily because it tends to heal truncated people with truncated psychological practice, truncated specifically because it leaves out the whole realm of the supernatural, which is the most essential part of the human person. For men and women are made by God to be a combination of spirit, soul and body. To leave out the spirit

is to leave out the whole healing power of Jesus Christ who is the Divine Physician of each and every soul. Without his Graces, we simply cannot walk in wholeness.

Women's Health

In the area of women's reproduction, the case is more dire. The side effects of the pill, for example, are such that studies show that the pill not only poses a severe hazard to health, but should be discontinued for medical reasons alone. The Federal Drug Administration reported 227 pill-caused deaths for the year 1967 alone. Other disorders such as thrombotic and hemorrhagic strokes, pulmonary embolism, severe depression, vaginitis, chemical diabetes, sterility, vaginal and breast cancer in large percentages in relationship to the pill. This caused three doctors from Harvard, Washington, Columbia Universities to state that contraceptive steroids should be abandoned (Salhanick, MD, 1969. *Metabolic Effects of Contraceptive Steroids*. Plenum Press: New York). Barbara Seaman in her landmark report "The Doctors' case against the pill" stated there is something fundamentally wrong with the medical model that deems pregnancy-menopause- and not being pregnant as all being diseases. Healthy women who do not want to get pregnant invite doctors to exploit them.

A Bitter Pill

Dr. Ellen Grant a gynecologist, argues vehemently in her book, "The Bitter Pill; How Safe is the Perfect Contraceptive," that progestin and estrogen, the two pill hormones, "would always cause too much illness" (Grant, Dr. Ellen, 1969. *The Bitter Pill; How Safe is the Perfect Contraceptive*. Hamish Hamilton Press: London England). Dr. Grant urges woman to reject the tyranny of the pill and other contraceptives. Today there are over a thousand case studies confirming that the pill as a contraceptive should be strongly dissuaded. What is helping to bring this about is the literally thousands of cases of suits, for example Dalkon shield had to pay 2.5 billion dollars to over 200,000 women. (AP wire service, 1990. "Dalkon IUD unfortunate".)

Not Fit For Human Consumption

All forms of contraception pose significant health hazards in one way or another. Contraception strikes at the heart of the individual and family. Married Catholic/Christian men and women need counseling and reinforcement in natural family planning, certainly a medical model for all Catholic healthcare facilities.

A Rich Tradition of Healing

We, as Catholics, have a rich tradition in healing. As ministers of Christ's Mystical Body, we have access to His wisdom, love and healing power. We are sent by Him to heal broken minds, hearts and bodies. We have Him who is the pearl of great price. Let us not reject such a gem.

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