CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

CHRIST CENTERED CARE

July 2024 Newsletter

President's Column

"Because of me, you will bear fruit."
Hosea 14

Dear Friends in Christ,

This short phrase from the book of the Prophet Hosea is a timeless reminder of the blessings received by those who remain faithful to God; but it also serves as a warning to those who abandon faith in the One from whom all blessings come.

Preaching to the Hebrew people in the northern kingdom of Israel in the 8th century BC at a time of great prosperity, Hosea warned of impending judgment due to their apostasy and idolatry. "Because they have violated my covenant and rebelled against my law" said the Lord, "my wrath is kindled against them." (Hosea 8)

We too are living at a time of great prosperity in America, and like the ancient Israelites, many people either fail to recognize or refuse to acknowledge from Whom these blessings come. Hosea's prophetic warning of impending judgment is as relevant today for those who abandon faith in God and worship false gods. For "all those who sow the wind, will reap the whirlwind." (Hosea 8) The only difference is we have exchanged the worship of golden calves and totems to the gods of power, pleasure, wealth and honor, and the most dangerous of them all – idolatry of self.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in health care. Over the course of the last century, we have been blessed with advances in medical science and technology leading to vast improvements in survival for once fatal diseases. We also have more effective therapies for many chronic illnesses thus reducing pain, suffering and disability.

Tragically however, we have also sown seeds of destruction undermining basic Christian principles of medical ethics regarding the sanctity of life, the dignity of the human person, human sexuality, and the uncompromising commitment to do no harm. And the result has been a devastating whirlwind: the death of tens of millions of innocent preborn children by abortion and artificial reproductive technologies, the chemical and surgical mutilation of children and adolescents with gender confusion, sexual promiscuity with its consequent epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, and the legalization of medically imposed death for the seriously ill and disabled.

But thankfully the destructive whirlwind was not the end of the story for the ancient Israelites, nor does it have to be for us today. For the Lord promised those who repent and turn back to Him, He would "heal their apostasy, love them freely and His anger would be turned away from them. And those wise enough to understand would blossom on the vine." (Hosea 14) "For God is good and His mercy endures forever." (Psalm 136)

We are called to be those people who turn to the Lord and "because of Him," we will restore a culture of life in the ministry of health care. As the disciples in Ephesus "were chosen to accomplish all things according to the intention of His will," (Eph 1:11) the Lord has "chosen us and appointed us to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last." (John 15)

By remaining faithful to the One through whom all good fruit is born, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to counter the whirlwind by reestablishing models of care based on the truth and love of God, following the example of the Divine Physician and those faithful Samaritans who have served as ministers of Christ centered healing for two millennia.

Over the course of my career, I've had the privilege and good fortune of collaborating with many of those chosen and committed to this work, including medical professionals in the Catholic Medical Association, the Christian Medical and Dental Association, the American College of Pro-Life Ob-Gyns and the American College of Pediatricians, as well as nurses, bioethicists, administrators, women religious, clergy, politicians, attorneys, business men and women and pastoral care workers.

This type of collaboration is essential for the renewal of health care in America. It has enabled the CHCLA since its launch in 2022 to successfully carry on its mission of evangelization and education through annual symposiums, webinars and this newsletter. Our Institute for Public Policy and Advocacy has been able to attract some of the best and brightest people involved in state and federal government affairs to develop legislative and regulatory reforms based on Catholic moral and social teaching. And this Fall we will launch the Center for Support of the Catholic Healing Ministry, creating a multidisciplinary community of health care professionals across the nation to network in a collaborative effort to build the next generation of Christ centered health care in service to the whole person - body, mind and spirit.

There is a great deal more to be done. We are confident that "because of Him, we will bear good fruit," and with your continued prayers and financial support we will continue to lead the renewal of Catholic health care in service to all those who seek the healing mercy and love of God.

God Bless,
Steven White, M.D.
President, CHCLA