



## Vocation of the Physician

*The place God calls us to is the place where our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.*

—Frederick Buechner

### LEADER

We gather today to reflect upon and celebrate the vocation of the physician. The role of the physician in the life of a community is an ancient one indeed. For as long as there has been illness and disease among humans, there have been those moved to compassion at the suffering of their neighbors—those who have desired to ease the pain and cure the sick. Today we give thanks for those women and men who have found their greatest joy in service to one of the world's deepest hungers: the hunger for healing and wellness.

As we open our time of prayer, let us listen to the words of Scripture, celebrating the deep connection that our ancestors in the faith perceived between God and the physician:

### READER 1

(A reading from the book of Sirach)

Honor physicians for their services, for the Lord created them; for their gift of healing comes from the Most High, and they are rewarded by God. The skill of physicians makes them distinguished, and in the presence of the great they are admired. The Lord created medicines out of the earth . . . through which the physician heals and takes away pain; the pharmacist makes a mixture from them. God's works will never be finished; and from them health spreads over all the earth (Sir 38:1-4, 6-9).

### LEADER

The Scriptures remind us that it is God who provides medicines from among the abundance of creation. It is God who is the source of all wisdom, God who is the source of illumination in diagnosis, and ultimately, God who heals. But the Scriptures also remind us that God needs collaborators in the process of healing. The physician has a special "place" in God's plan to restore health and wellness. And so, today, let us remember and

pray for all those who collaborate with God's healing as physicians.

I invite you to call to mind physicians who have gone before us and with whom you work on a daily basis, those who serve within your health system, and those who have most touched your life and the lives of those you love. (pause) Let us now call them by name and commend them to God's loving and providential care . . .

### READER 2

O Lord, throughout history, you have made your healing presence known through the physicians that you have called to be your disciples.

We remember St. Luke, St. Pantaleon, Sts. Cosmas and Damian. We remember Albert Schweitzer, Tom Dooley, and Anna Dengel.

### LEADER

We call upon these holy physicians of the church to join us in praying for those women and men who embrace the vocation of the physician in our day. Through the intercession of these saints, may today's physicians be gifted with the strength and courage needed to accompany persons in their illness. May their compassion for the poor and forgotten ones of the earth be deepened. And may their prophetic voice be emboldened to speak out against all that causes a proliferation of suffering and sickness in our world.

We know that healing and restoration is your will, O Lord. Raise up anew in our midst collaborators who can aid in your sacred work. United in thanksgiving and hope, we pray.

**ALL** Amen



**Michael Garrido**  
Director, Mission Services  
Catholic Health Association  
St. Louis