

Book Reviews

Companions in Hope: The Art of Christian Caring

Robert J. Wicks and Thomas E. Rodgeron
Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1998, 228 pp.,
\$16.95 (paperback)

THIS HOPE-FILLED BOOK CALLS ON THE
entire Christian community to provide

intentional caring. In the introduction,
the authors write that "such caring has
the potential to set people free and to
enable them to live more complete lives
as children of God."

The book evolved out of the Christian
community's role as "gatekeepers"—we
are often the first to see evidence of dis-
tress in others and decide if the dis-
tress warrants professional help. Its
premise is that the role of the caring
Christian should be acknowledged as

critical in providing preventive and
strategic care.

The book, addressed to a nonprofes-
sional audience, is divided into 12 chap-
ters, which combine a strong scriptural
basis with sound pastoral theology and
well-grounded psychological tenets. The
chapters evolve from "Caring to Listen:
Overcoming Resistance"; "Caring to
Listen: Standing on Holy Ground";
"Intentional Caring: Conversation with
a Goal"; and "Intentional Caring: The

BOOK BRIEFS

Care That Works: A Relationship Approach to Persons with Dementia

Jitka M. Zgola, Johns Hopkins University
Press, Baltimore, 1999, 256 pp., \$18.95
(paperback)

The author explains that optimal
dementia care involves three elements: a
good relationship between the caregiver
and the person who has dementia, a
safe and nurturing environment, and
meaningful activities. She then de-
scribes how caregivers can better meet
the demanding challenges of their job
by building and improving their per-
sonal relationships with those in their
care. The book gives caregivers infor-
mation with which they can develop
their own approaches, evaluate their
effectiveness, and continue to grow in
skill and insight. The book also dis-
cusses communicating with people who
have language deficits and coping with
behavior problems.

Genetic Testing for Alzheimer Disease: Ethical and Clinical Issues

Stephen G. Post and Peter J. Whitehouse,
eds., Johns Hopkins University Press,
Baltimore, 1998, 284 pp., \$45 (hardcover)

In this book experts from the fields of
ethics, genetics, policy, neurology, phi-
losophy, and anthropology examine the

ethical and social aspects of genetic
testing for Alzheimer's disease. Topics
include current genetic findings and
their clinical applicability, as well as eth-
ical issues in genetic testing and genetic
counseling for Alzheimer's disease.
Also covered are confidentiality, fair-
ness, and discrimination in healthcare,
and ways to educate professionals and
laypeople about these topics.

An Ethics Casebook for Hospitals: Practical Approaches to Everyday Cases

Mark G. Kuczewski and Rosa Lynn B.
Pinkus, Georgetown University Press,
Washington, DC, 1999, 219 pp., \$23.95
(paperback)

This book is a collection of cases with
commentary and bibliographic resources
designed especially for educational
efforts in community hospitals. The
cases deal with fundamental problems,
including where to send a frail elderly
patient who no longer seems to be able
to care for herself but refuses to go to a
nursing home, determining whether a
patient has the mental capacity to make
his own decisions regarding his treat-
ment, what role the family should play in
making a treatment decision when the
choice made would greatly affect them,
what a family should do if they suspect
their mother is not getting proper care,

and what a hospital should do when too
many bills remain unpaid.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Living Simply through the Day:
Spiritual Survival in a Complex
Age, Tilden Edwards, Paulist Press,
Mahwah, NJ, 1998

Wholeness and Holiness: A Chris-
tian Response to Human Suffering,
Cornelius J. van der Poel, Sheed &
Ward Book Publishing, Franklin, WI,
May 1999

Ethical Challenges in Managed
Care: A Casebook, Karen G. Gervals,
Reinhardt Priester, Dorothy E. Vawter,
Kimberly K. Otte, and Mary M. Sol-
berg, eds., Georgetown University
Press, Washington DC, 1999

Public and Private Responsibilities
in Long-Term Care: Finding the
Balance, Leslie C. Walker, Elizabeth
H. Bradley, and Terrie Wetle, eds.,
Johns Hopkins University Press,
Baltimore, 1998

Cancer Pain Relief and Palliative
Care in Children, World Health Or-
ganization Publications, Geneva,
Switzerland, 1998

C H A
BOOKS

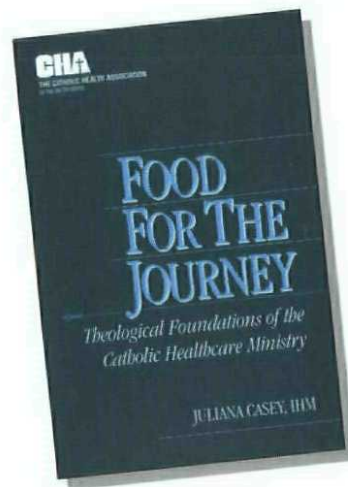
Art of Questioning and Responding” to chapters dealing with specific situations and common problems.

The book presents the rationale for Christian caregiving that God calls us to. As the authors explain: “More recent trends of budget cutting of social programs and the limiting of benefits for mental health by insurance companies increase the importance of the role of family and friends in preventive and strategic care. Others have long called for the community of faith to play a leading role in the mental health of our communities.”

As pastoral counselors, the authors have written a book that gives solid information about our need to be intentional caregivers. As with pastoral counseling, Christian caring is based on the belief that everyone in the community of faith can participate in a form of caring that is transformational. The authors state, “This book [is not] designed to turn the reader into a professional counselor. Instead, it is designed to enhance personal talents in the areas of listening, being supportive, problem solving, dealing with crises and knowing when and how to refer, in order to equip communities of caregivers who might work to facilitate spiritual growth on a broad level.”

As a professional chaplain who has worked for years with volunteer lay ministry development, I highly recommend this book as a text for continuing education for Christian caregivers. I would like to again quote the authors: “We cannot care without listening. If we do not listen, we do not care. The first service we owe to others in fellowship is to listen to them. If we fail to listen, there are spiritual consequences because as [Dietrich] Bonhoeffer says, ‘He who can no longer listen to his brother will soon be no longer listening to God either.’” *Companion in Hope* is, indeed, a message of hope to us all.

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**Second Printing
Now Available!**

**Food for the Journey:
Theological Foundations of the
Catholic Healthcare Ministry**

by Juliana Casey, IHM

140 pages/paper/6" x 9"
Second Printing 1996
Catalog No. 250, \$10

**Food for the Journey: Theological Foundations
Of the Catholic Healthcare Ministry**

This award-winning book is CHA’s widely acclaimed contribution to the ongoing effort to articulate the theological grounding of Catholic healthcare. Special attention is paid to healthcare leaders’ experience in today’s world as they seek to bring the light and the wisdom of their faith tradition to bear on that world.

Food for the Journey theologizes on the experience of Catholic healthcare. It explores basic themes of the Catholic, Judaic-Christian tradition to allow that tradition to illumine our experience. It suggests avenues, memories, and attitudes that would be useful in answering the questions facing Catholic healthcare today. The book’s appendix offers questions for reflection and discussion.

Copies of *Food for the Journey* are available from the CHA Order Processing Department for \$10 each. Call 314-253-3458.

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