



Terry Van Schaik
EDITOR

Accepting Our Humanity

At a time when a growing number of philosophers and lay people deny that humans possess intrinsic dignity, Fr. Kavanaugh argues that our dignity and value are located not in humankind's ability merely to perform activities but, rather, in our nature as "embodied spiritual beings."

Such is the relevance of the question that Rev. John Kavanaugh, SJ, poses for all humans—and for the Catholic health ministry in particular—that we have made his essay, "Wounded Humanity and Catholic Health Care," the lead article in this issue. At a time when a growing number of philosophers and lay people deny that humans possess intrinsic dignity, Fr. Kavanaugh asks, Wherein lie our dignity and value? He locates these not in humankind's ability merely to perform activities but, rather, in our nature as "embodied spiritual beings."

Agreeing with philosopher Peter Singer that humans are indeed animals, Fr. Kavanaugh differs from him in finding in humankind's acceptance of this animality an acceptance of ourselves—and others—as "wounded" creatures: needy infants, for example, or diseased or dying adults. In refusing to care for the physically, psychologically, and economically afflicted, he argues, we are acting out of fear of our own frailty and woundedness; we are rejecting our humanity. The Catholic health ministry, with its dual role of speaking for the voiceless and marginal and providing healing for all the wounded, remains a contemporary force for true healing and for acceptance of our humanity—its dignity and its value.

VALUE ADDED BY CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE

Sr. Nora Hahn, PHJC, and John L. Sinclair look at unique aspects of Catholic health care. Sr. Hahn describes the Characteristics of Service program that Ancilla Systems, Hobart, IN, developed to measure the "value added" it provides clients and employees. Focusing on employee recruitment and retention, John Sinclair explores the ways in which a Catholic facility's mission-driven human resources practices can contribute to organizational success even in an era when many CEOs fear that they will not be able to reconcile fiscal pressures with the church's ethical responsibilities.

CHA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

CHA is pleased to present its 1999-2000 Strategic Plan and Year Two Operations Plan.

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Regular readers of *Health Progress* will note that a new editor and managing editor join the journal with this issue. We are honored to assume these roles and look forward to serving the Catholic health ministry through the journal. I invite you to join me in maintaining the journal as the voice for ideas for the ministry by sharing your work and experiences with others through articles and by sharing your informational needs with me so that together we are able to meet them.