



# To Creativity

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EDITOR

**"O**ur Church ministry sees itself as a sacrament, an unconditional sign of God's compassionate presence; investor-owned, publicly traded chains see themselves as commercial enterprises, like ball-bearing manufacturers." With these words (p. 24) at the Catholic Health Association's (CHA's) 80th Catholic Health Assembly in June, Jack Curley underlined the distinction between the Catholic healthcare ministry and investor-owned, publicly traded chains. Although CHA's president/CEO was speaking about for-profits' threat to Catholic healthcare, he was also declaring why those in the ministry continue to believe in it. As these dedicated people take a close look at the meaning and value of the ministry, they are able to demonstrate that, despite the problems of scarce resources and competition, the Catholic health ministry continues to find creative ways to improve the lives of the people it serves.

I am intrigued by the parallels in apparently dissimilar events. Two days before the assembly, U.S. Air Force pilot Scott O'Grady was downed in hostile Bosnian territory. During the conference days, we heard he might be alive. The day after the assembly we learned he had been rescued and how he had survived: Threatened from all sides, he applied his training and wits, frequently calling on God for help.

Although they are in vastly different situations, creativity is the common thread in the experience of Captain O'Grady and CHA members. As Jack Curley said to assembly participants, Catholic and other not-for-profit hospitals are tapping into their own "rich array of financial and management resources to forge strong partnerships that can serve effectively and compete successfully in local markets." He pointed to innovative consolidations (see p. 30) that are enabling Catholic healthcare systems to remain strong.

Other articles in our report of the 1995 assembly describe creative approaches in sponsorship, in working with the laity and physicians, in managed care, and in analyzing ethical issues.

## SUPPLEMENT: NEW SPONSORSHIP APPROACHES

The special supplement on p. 35 fosters the creative thinking called for today. Br. Peter Campbell, CFX, CHA's vice president for sponsor services,

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clarifies new ways the traditional concepts of sponsorship and governance can be applied in an environment that demands new collaborations—between lay and religious and among Catholic and non-Catholic organizations.

## HEALTH PROGRESS CHANGES, AWARDS

*Health Progress* is about many things, but essentially it is about creativity—the act of using the imagination to produce something. We on the *Health Progress* staff know our creativity increases 100 percent when we brainstorm together. Please join our brainstorming; tell us what you would like to know more about and continue to send your own creative ideas.

Focusing our creative possibilities, *Health Progress's* frequency is changing to six times a year, with the upcoming September-October issue. The journal will explore the most important issues challenging leaders and emerging leaders. In-depth articles will allow key thinkers to examine complex issues in more detail. Our staff will have more time to interview leaders and develop creative ideas.

We will maintain *Health Progress's* high quality. You will continue to enjoy the imaginative covers that you constantly tell us you like—such as those of the January-February and June 1994 issues, which won awards from the Catholic Press Association last month.

*Health Progress* also won two Apex '95 awards in May. The journal was cited for publication excellence, and Emily Friedman received an award for her article "Physicians, Payers, and Power" in the January-February 1995 issue.

Congratulations to artists Joel Nakamura (January-February) and Raul Colon (June) and to Emily. And congratulations to you who work in the Catholic health ministry. Here's to the spirit of creativity in your work and in ours!

