

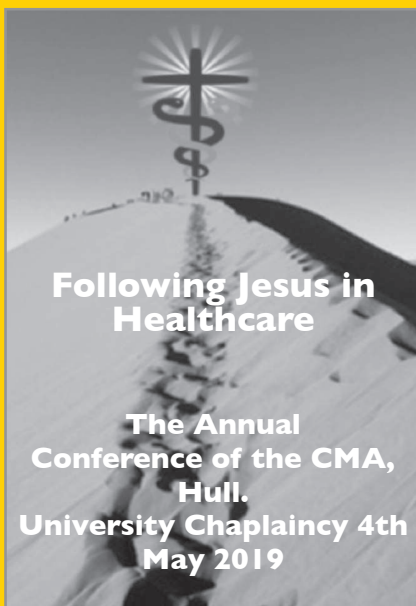
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Following Jesus in Healthcare

The Annual
Conference of the CMA,
Hull.
University Chaplaincy 4th
May 2019

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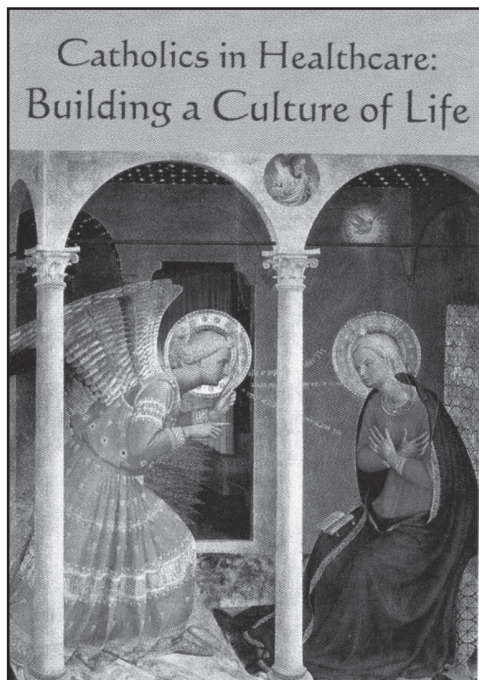
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FAITH IN MEDICINE

THE FAMILY: BUILDING THE CIVILISATION OF LOVE

DR ADRIAN TRELOAR



The February 2019 CMA Youth Retreat focussed upon “The Family: building the civilisation of love.” Along with some other very moving presentations we greatly enjoyed presentations on what it is to be a man and a woman.

The Book of Genesis tells us that God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them”^[1]. That in itself is a revolutionary thought. Mankind made in his image, male and female he created them. In other words both men and women are differing forms of the very humanity of God. In women we see some aspects of God more clearly than we do in men (and vice versa).

One of the great challenges of our current age is to work out what is special to manhood. Women clearly do some things (like childbearing and motherhood) which men cannot do. And they are also recognised as being (often) more emotionally literate, sensitive and aware than men.

But I suspect that most men do not know what they do which makes them especially men. Women can fly fighter jets, run blue chip companies, fight in the front line, they make fantastic doctors, nurses and managers. It is right and proper that women drive buses and ambulances. So much that used to be thought of as a male task is open to women, although currently just six per cent of pilots and seven per cent of train drivers are female.^[2]

There is plenty to worry about. The number of students disclosing mental health issues has risen five times in a

decade^[3]. Suicide rates are three times higher in men than women (although that is almost certainly a feature of being a man more than it is a by product of men not knowing what it is to be a man).

We know that some traits are more common in men than women. Map reading, spatial awareness, some aspects of organisation and task completion and mechanical skills are more often expressed in men than women. Just as Genesis tells us, those abilities complement female strengths such as sensitivity, multitasking and emotional literacy. Intriguingly, one expression of those differences is that Autism and Asperger’s syndrome is diagnosed much more frequently in males than females and yet Anorexia Nervosa is much more common in women than men.

What therefore makes men men? Well the obvious answer is their Y chromosome. But what makes a male identity? What are the behaviours and ways of thinking that are “manly”? Well that is a very difficult question and having asked a few good Catholic men and women I can assure you that it is a question with which many struggle. Having asked quite a few men what they think the answer so often comes back as *“Well women can do all these things and there is nothing unique that makes a man a man.”*

My grandfather expressed a very interesting view of manhood. In a letter to the Daily Telegraph in 1963^[4] (we have republished this in our correspondence section) he clearly described the horrors of the trenches alongside the pointlessness of “going over the top”. He wrote *“I was spared the horrors of the Salient and the Somme., but the heroism and devotion of the men who went to almost certain death in their senseless, repeated and hopeless attacks, is perhaps the finest saga in the story of British manhood.”* Which is the view of a man born in 1897. To our eyes today, his statement is bewildering. How can death in senseless and repeated attacks possibly be the finest saga in the story of British manhood? Upon reflection, what I see is that doing what was right, following principles and being willing to die for them was seen as a central part of that manhood. He saw that men gave their lives for what they thought was right. Remarkably, my Grandfather was back in France on the Normandy beaches one day after D-day in 1944. He followed the advance, setting up local governments post liberation.

“I was spared the horrors of the Salient and Somme, but the heroism and devotion of the men who went to almost certain death in their senseless, repeated and hapless attacks, is perhaps the finest saga in the story of British manhood”.

Guy Curtis 1963

My wife reminded me of another image of manhood that comes from the sight of the Belgian Miner's Pilgrimage to Lourdes. The short, strong miners turn up in their full regalia with polished brass mining lamps and the works. And as the Blessed Sacrament processes past, they kneel humbly before Our Lord. In humble submission and



adoration of Him. Perhaps that love and respect is a very central part of manhood.

Finally, St Joseph must also be the great example of manhood. Quietly sticking by his wife Mary despite the scandal of her virgin birth, he was a solid rock, protecting, defending and keeping the Holy Family safe. Imagine St Joseph during the Flight into Egypt. He must have been exhausted. And, as a man, slept peacefully beside his wife Mary and Our Blessed Lord. Protecting, vigilant but fast asleep. Orazio Gentileschi worked that out. In his painting "The Rest on the Flight into Egypt" we see St Joseph exhausted and flat out beside Our Lady and Our Lord. He has fed the donkey, protected his family and sleeps, beside his wife. He is fleeing from Herod to another country resting close to the heart of his Saviour.

Exhausted and a true refugee. As a man giving everything to protect and provide for his wife and family.

We cannot publish this picture by Orazio Gentileschi as we cannot afford for the fees for permission to do so.

Manhood is a concept that has become obscured by our present civilisation. The loss of that concept cannot be good. Without it, our mental and physical health are placed at risk. As St John Paul said "The Future of Humanity Passes by Way of the Family". Manhood is central to the family. Womanhood is also, of course, utterly crucial. But we should neglect neither. Medicine and society need to be helped to celebrate and to understand the unique and special charisms which come with being men and women. If and when diversity theories obscure those differences, those theories may be deeply harmful.

We would welcome insights, images and vignettes from others which might give us further clues as to what manhood and womanhood are.

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- [1] Genesis 1: 26-27
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- [3] Dalton A (2019). Men must 'speak out and speak up' for gender balance in Scottish transport. The Scotsman, 8th March 2019. www.scotsman.com/news/transport/men-must-speak-out-and-speak-up-for-gender-balance-in-scottish-transport-1-4885577
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NEWS

WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION TO DEBATE ENDING ITS OPPOSITION TO EUTHANASIA

The World Medical Association is to debate a change sought by doctors from Canada and the Netherlands calling on the WMA to adopt a neutral position on euthanasia and / or assisted suicide as opposed to the current position of outright opposition. The revised official position deletes the statement that the act of deliberately ending the life of a patient, is unethical.

Here is the CMA (UK)'s response.



The World Medical Association (WMA) was founded in 1947, in the aftermath of World War II and the subsequent Nuremberg Trials. At that time, the role of doctors in the participation of crimes against humanity had come under the spotlight. The crimes committed and condemned included experimentation on human subjects without consent, the torture, inhumane treatment and murder of civilians and prisoners and participation in the infamous Nazi Euthanasia Programme.

After the initial WMA formation, the Declaration of Geneva was formulated by the Association and approved by its General Assembly in Geneva in September 1948. It was considered a modern version of the traditional Hippocratic Oath and indeed was written in the format of a solemn Oath, ending with the declaration "I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honor".

The Oath begins with the words "At the time of being admitted as a member of the medical profession: I solemnly pledge myself to consecrate my life to the service of humanity." Of particular note and relevance, the eighth pledge in the original Declaration read "I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the time of conception; even under threat, I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity". In October 1949, at the third General Assembly held in London, the Declaration of Geneva was reiterated in the International Code of Medical Ethics by the declaration that "a doctor must observe the principles of the Declaration of Geneva approved by the World Medical Association".

Even after a minor amendment relating to maintaining patient confidentiality after a patient's death, the revised Oath in August 1968 still contained the pledge that the doctor would maintain the utmost respect for human life from the moment of conception. This promise was made