

Take-Home for Session 10: Honor the Physician

If You Come Forward to Serve: An Inductive Study of Sirach

What We Found

- The chain of gift: God created the physician, healing comes from the Most High, medicines come from the earth, and a sensible man will not despise them (38:1-8): faith and medicine are not rivals but one providence.
- The protocol: when sick, pray first, examine your heart, offer worship, and give the physician his place, for the Lord created him (38:9-12): the pious error and the secular error both refuted in four verses.
- Grief: weep bitterly and mourn truly, then be consoled, for the dead is at rest (38:16-23); our place is with the living, completed by Paul: we grieve, but not as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Jesus wept: hope changes what the tears believe.
- The craftsmen maintain the fabric of the world, and their prayer is in the practice of their trade (38:31-34): and Christ, whom the Church confesses as eternal Wisdom (Session 8), lived his long hidden years known in Nazareth simply as the carpenter (Mark 6:3) and took the physician's image for his mission (Matthew 9:12-13). Ordinary work, offered, ascends.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: St. Basil the Great

Asked whether using medicine is consistent with piety, Basil answered that the medical art was given by God as a model of the healing of the soul, and that to reject its benefits out of pretended trust is obstinacy, while to place all hope in it and forget God is to dishonor the Giver of every remedy. Each herb was made for our aid, he taught, and gratitude refers every healing back to the Giver.

The Long Rules, Question 55 (paraphrased)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: St. John Paul II

In his letter on the meaning of suffering, John Paul taught that Christ did not explain suffering away but transformed it from within by his Passion, so that every sufferer can complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions (Colossians 1:24): not because the Cross lacks power, but because Christ leaves room for our share in his redeeming love. Suffering, joined to him, becomes fruitful.

Salvifici Doloris, 19-26 (paraphrased)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: St. Josemaría Escrivá

The founder of Opus Dei preached that ordinary work, done with human competence and supernatural love, is the hinge of holiness for the laity: God waits for us every day in the laboratory, the operating theater, the workshop, the field. Sanctify your work, he urged: sanctify yourself in it, and sanctify others through it.

Conversations, with the homily Passionately Loving the World (paraphrased and synthesized from his preaching)

Live It This Week

- Offer one full workday this week explicitly: Morning Offering at the start, competence as worship during, and a one-line prayer of presentation at the end: Lord, this shift is yours.
- If you have been postponing a medical, dental, or counseling appointment, book it this week: Sirach 38:12 is now your verse.
- Pray by name for one person who is sick and one person who is grieving, each day this week, and send one of them a message that proves someone remembers.

Scripture Memory Verse

"My son, when you are sick do not be negligent, but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you." (**Sirach 38:9**)

Before Next Session

Read Sirach 44:1-15. Then skim the famous names in chapters 44-49 and pick one ancestor whose story you half-remember.

Catechism References

CCC 1500-1505; CCC 1509-1510; CCC 2427-2428