

# Calling all Catholic health pros

Are you a Catholic physician or health care professional? If the answer is yes, then consider joining the Baltimore Guild-Catholic Medical Association, a chartered member of the national Catholic Medical Association (CMA).

The CMA traces its origins back to 1912, when Cardinal William Henry O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, founded the first Catholic Physicians Guild. In 1927, R.A. Rendrick, M.D., began a guild in Brooklyn, N.Y., with a retreat using the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. By 1932 the dream of a national organization came to fruition under the leadership of Dr. Rendrick.

The National Federation of Catholic Physicians Guilds ( the CMA as of 1997) was formed, with local guilds providing spiritual counsel and moral guidance to Catholic physician members to enable them to become more aware of their dependence on God, truly Catholic in their practice of medicine and more Christ-like in their works of mercy.

The national federation initially met at the American Medical Association's (AMA) annual meeting., but began meeting separately in 1956, with the annual meeting to be held in the city of the national president.

The CMA has developed a closer working relationship with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. In 2009-10 it was heavily engaged in the struggle to protect conscience rights and achieve authentic health care reform.

Our local chapter was established in the 1990s by Dr. Louis Breschi, who served as national president of the CMA in 2008. With the blessing of Cardinal William H. Keeler, the Baltimore Guild was established in 2006.

The CMA remains committed to its apostolate of forming and supporting physicians to practice medicine in conformity to Christ the Divine Physician. Membership locally and nationally is also open to medical students, nurses, allied health professionals, members of the clergy and religious life. The national Catholic Medical Association Student Section (CMA-SS) is also open to medical students and Baltimore is the proud home to two such sections, at the University of Maryland and

Johns Hopkins schools of Medicine.

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien has been a stalwart supporter of our mission during his tenure in Baltimore. This is most notable in his hosting our annual medical symposium for health care professionals. This year Baltimore has been recognized as the Outstanding Guild of the year by the CMA; his support is largely responsible for this recognition.

The White Mass is the liturgy for physicians and other health care professionals honoring St. Luke, patron of physicians. This Mass, hosted annually by our guild, was the first public Mass celebrated in Baltimore by Archbishop O'Brien shortly after he was appointed our shepherd. Before assuming his new position in Rome, he will celebrate this Mass for the final time Oct. 16, at 10:45 a.m., at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

A luncheon reception follows at the nearby Engineer's Club, where Dr. Cathy DeAngelis, former editor in chief of the Journal of the American Medical Association, will deliver a presentation titled: "Medical Professionalism in Patient Care." The Mass is open to all and fulfills the Sunday obligation. Registration and payment is required by Oct. 12 to attend the luncheon. To register and for more information on the guild, visit [bg-cma.org](http://bg-cma.org) or call 410-368-8475.

*Dr. Marie-Alberte Boursiquot is president of the Baltimore Guild-Catholic Medical Association and a longstanding member of the Basilica parish.*