

October 28, 2016

Dear Joe,

At a recent Wednesday chapel service, we celebrated the Feast of St. Luke (October 18th). Luke is celebrated not only as a writer of the Gospel and the Book of Acts, but also as a physician. The Old Testament reading for that feast comes from the Book of Sirach.

Sirach is a deuterocanonical book of the Old Testament that we do not hear in the cycle of readings on Sunday, so this may be unfamiliar. I wanted to share it with you because it celebrates your vocation, and is a reminder of how your service glorifies God and blesses God's people.

Sirach 38:1-4, 6-10, 12-14

Honor physicians for their services,
for the Lord created them;
for their gift of healing comes from the Most High,
and they are rewarded by the king.
The skill of physicians makes them distinguished,
and in the presence of the great they are admired.
The Lord created medicines out of the earth,
and the sensible will not despise them.
And he gave skill to human beings
that he might be glorified in his marvelous works.
By them the physician heals and takes away pain;
the pharmacist makes a mixture from them.
God's works will never be finished;
and from him health spreads over all the earth.

My child, when you are ill, do not delay,
but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you.
Give up your faults and direct your hands rightly,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.
Then give the physician his place, for the Lord created him;
do not let him leave you, for you need him.
There may come a time when recovery lies in the hands of
physicians,
for they too pray to the Lord
that he will grant them success in diagnosis
and in healing, for the sake of preserving life.

God bless you,