

“Healing”

By Francis MacNutt

HEALING TEACHING Francis MacNutt’s book, Healing, was first published in 1974. LifeGuard Ministries heartily endorses the book; quotes and excerpts from its 21st edition (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2003) will appear on our LifeGuard website from time to time in other articles because the book is so valuable in our fight against cancer. It is congruent to the LifeGuard focus on CPR (Care, Prayer, and Research). Dr. MacNutt, Ph.D., and his wife Judith, M.A., are directors of Christian Healing Ministries in Jacksonville, FL. “Understanding that Jesus came to heal his people,” says their Christianhealingmin.net website, “the main goal of this ministry is to bring the healing message of the Gospel, the message of healing prayer, to the world – both by teaching and by actually praying for the sick – so that every person throughout the world may understand this message.” They cite Luke 9:1-2 as a proof text: Jesus gave the disciples *“power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”* (NIV) Francis MacNutt begins his preface of Healing this way: “In the past few years

an extraordinary change has been going on in all the churches ... the healing ministry has been renewed ... the medical and scientific communities have discovered the great benefit that healthy spirituality can bring to physical health. Countless studies show that people who attend church regularly enjoy better health, that meditation helps reduce stress-related diseases, and that loving support groups contribute to people living longer and happier lives. New to the horizon of health research are the benefits of Christian prayer.” (pp.7-8) Later he writes: “In no way do I conceive prayer for healing as denying our need for doctors, nurses, counselors, psychiatrists, or pharmacists. God works in all these ways to heal the sick; the ideal is a team effort to get the sick well through every possible means ... The results of prayer have been extraordinary – so much so that what once would have astonished me, I now take almost for granted. The extraordinary has become ordinary.” (Healing, p.11) “Does healing happen?” asks the author in Chapter One, and he answers YES throughout the book. People – even many Christians – have prejudices against the healing power of prayer. He affirms that Jesus did come to heal and that today’s believers still have the same authority, granted by Christ Himself, that

the original twelve disciples had. Miracles of supernatural healing in this day and age are not only possible but common, Dr. MacNutt avows; the Biblical ideas of faith, hope, and charity have direct impact on healing ministries. Part Three of Healing explains the four basic kinds of healing and how to pray for each. Part Four, entitled “Special Considerations,” discusses what he calls “root sickness” and explores twelve possible reasons why people are not healed. He closes the book with chapters about medicine and the sacraments as those relate to healing, then adds appendices and an epilogue. The epilogue, titled “The Story of the Three Native Americans,” is so amazing that I’d spoil it for you if I said any more. In short, this book called Healing is well worth your serious study, and that’s an understatement.

Francis MacNutt writes: “There are at least four basic prayer methods we must understand in order to exercise a complete healing ministry:

1. prayer for *repentance* (for personal sin).
2. prayer for *inner healing* (for emotional problems).
3. prayer for *physical healing* (for physical sickness).
4. prayer for *deliverance* (exorcism) (for demonic oppression).

Not all of us will have a deep ministry in each of these areas, but we should know our own limitations and be ready to refer a person to someone else who has more experience than we in one or the other area. I look forward to a time when Christians in every locality will be able to join their gifts to work in teams, much as doctors work together in any hospital or clinic. Most of us have neither the time nor the God-given gifts necessary to work in all these areas of healing. But each of us needs to develop the discernment to diagnose what is wrong and choose the appropriate type of prayer to use.” (Healing, 21st printing, by Francis MacNutt. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2003, p.130)

Healing is the process of the restoration of health from an unbalanced, diseased, damaged or unvitalized organism. The result of healing can be to cure to a health challenge, but one can grow without being cured or heal without "a cure". The profession of nursing has been traditionally concerned with matters of healing, whereas historically the profession of medicine has been concerned with curing.