Tuesday 27 October, 2015
Cathedral of Christ The King
Atlanta, Georgia

White Mass

†Wilton D. Gregory
Archbishop of Atlanta

The annual feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist, which is the ordinary setting for celebrating the important works of our medical personnel, was usurped this year by a Sunday. So we have gathered close to that feast day to pray for all of our medical workers. We are asking God’s blessings upon their vital contribution to the wellbeing of this local community.

And guaranteeing that Saint Luke, as the heavenly patron of these workers, does not go unnoticed, we implore his heavenly intercession at the celebration of our annual White Mass here in Christ the King Cathedral.

Those who serve the health needs of people in this local Church certainly do need the celestial protection of Saint Luke and they certainly deserve our constant prayers of gratitude and support for the healing mission that they kindly provide for all of us. Not only do they grapple with the ever-expanding scientific data that floods the medical world, they must balance those responsibilities with a wide range of other concerns that include insurance reporting, securing and protecting the confidentiality of client data, responding to multiple governmental requirements, and most importantly, remaining the compassionate servants of their patients who come to them with myriad needs and heightened anxieties.

The days of the simple life of a doctor or nurse have long since passed, but the need for the tenderness of one who cares for those with an illness has not grown any less important. Our contemporary scientific and technological healthcare advances are stunning and vitally important, but so too are the essential interpersonal skills of comforting and healing the hearts of those who depend upon our medical professionals.

We pray for you and for all of your colleagues at this Eucharist and in gratitude for your service to all of us.

You continue to face mounting challenges as the advancement of the science of healing often may pose conflicts with your Catholic faith – not just with the medical moral issues that may
daily confront you, but with the concerns of social justice as you struggle to make certain that medical care is justly available to the poor and uninsured in our midst.

Luke’s Gospel passage for this evening’s Mass reminds us once again of the transformative power of little things, mustard seeds and bits of yeast. These tiny elements can develop into great things that far surpass their small beginnings. As medical professionals, you know how a kind word, a small gesture, a simple smile can work wonders in the lives of people who are your patients. As people who heal others, you know that a physical illness also imposes a spiritual burden on a person and human tenderness is as important as any drug or antibiotic.

Therefore this evening, we pray that your own compassionate care of others will be a source of healing for the hearts and spirits of those who bring their illnesses and anxieties to you each day. Your professional skills are only enhanced by your spiritual wisdom and strength which we pray will be increased each day of the coming year. We know this will serve you as effectively as the scientific miracles that you routinely work in the healing of the entire person that enters your office or lies quietly on the gurneys in the medical rooms of our health institutions.