

VIRTUAL MAGAZINE



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SCIENCE &

Science: divine blessing

Faith

Science: divine blessing

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Health and Spirituality Commission of the Federal Council of Medicine – CFM

Fabio Ikedo

Today is on-call day! Hallelujah!

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Editorial

Hello, brothers and sisters,

It is with great joy that we launch the tenth edition of the Médicos de Cristo Virtual Magazine. God has used various authors to bring reflections that have been a blessing to our readers.

In this edition, the main topic is science as a blessing from the Lord to humanity, addressed by Dr. Silvana Oliveira, leader of the "Health and Faith" discussion group of the Brazilian Association of Christians in Science (ABC²). Our interviewee is Dr. Harold Koenig, a renowned researcher in the field of health and religiosity/spirituality, who has been leading this topic in the light of science for decades.

But must spirituality be evidence-based? Philosophy professor Gian Mafalda, Coordinator of ABC² Study Groups, shared great reflections on this topic, and the MDC online magazine re-edits this excellent text. We also bring an article by Dr. Fábio Ikedo, a member of the Health and Spirituality Commission of the Federal Council of Medicine, speaking a bit about the work carried out by this commission. And there is more: we talk about fake news (who is the father of this stuff?), present an overview of our newly created 60+ Working Group, and share what has been happening at MDC in recent months.

Praised be God for His many blessings in our lives, remembering that science used for Him, such as through digital means—in this case, MDC MAGAZINE—is also a reason for our gratitude.

Happy reading!

Glauco Franco Santana

President of
Médicos de Cristo
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MDC Magazine

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science² divine² blessing

Jesus, when questioned about the greatest commandment, evokes Deuteronomy 6:5: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” The daily Israeli prayer emphasizes the necessity of a faithful’s complete reference in God. A love that encompasses emotions, spirituality, and mind, or understanding. Refers to intelligence, logical reasoning, the ability to observe, discern, and interpret reality.

This capacity to reason is intrinsic. We were not created as automatons, but capable of creating from perception and process; a shadow of the Divine (Genesis 1:26*). Yet, paradoxically fallen, we stain with sin every point we touch. The noise between ideal and real steals its reliability. It demands constant checking, as Proverbs 3:5* advises: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding.”

What are the alternatives? Emotionalism, improvisation, intuitive choices. In the distant past, shamanism and priesthood guided decision making, as did great artisans capable of useful and lasting deeds, endowed with methodology. Tradition, dependent on morality and circumstances, presents us with impressive feats: buildings, tactics, weaponry, clothing, and logistics, without electrical energy or rapid communication. Such ancient Science was stagnant, with low linguistic interchangeability, hardly reproducible, and discontinuous. Yet, marvelous.

More recently, the scientific revolution catapulted us into new questions. What if humanity’s geniuses could speak the same language, collaborate with each other, work together, even in different times and places? The knowledge produced by one could be used by another to build accessible scholarship. Thus, the scientific method emerges. Observe, Ask, and generate hypotheses. Develop an experiment in response to the questions, refute the null hypothesis, and create new questions from the results. As simple as testing a culinary recipe.

Just as a good cook aims to minimize the number of inedible and costly meals, the scientific method seeks to minimize error in examining reality. It is a tool for observation and intervention that aims to understand and modify our environment as efficiently as possible. Science and its method do not increase human certainties, but rather reduce errors through learning, training, and the development of culture.

The deviations, or biases, are permanent threats to understanding. Confirmation of personal beliefs and self-serving conclusions explain part of the scientific misconceptions, sometimes causing irreparable damage and even costing lives. Primary and systemic failures in our educational system, which sometimes does not teach methodology and logic, coupled with a society that at times elevates and personifies Science, while at other times neglects it in favor of unproductive affections, leads many of us, Christians, to seek distance. An artificial tension develops between understanding and affection for the Creator. We forget that well-applied understanding is pure worship, "For all things come from Him, exist through Him, and are for Him" (Romans 11:36a*).

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things."

Romans 11:36a*

The systematization of Science through the Scientific Method accelerated and perfected human progress, improving urban management, bringing more accessible and replicable technologies, and controlling adverse conditions. Some examples are basic sanitation and the control of infectious diseases, dangers we face with greater preparedness and success. The imago dei at our fingertips. We Christians instill in scientific knowledge human dignity as an unparalleled value. We have Science in our hands as a tool to salt and illuminate.



“We need all the Christian scientists we can train.”

The challenge faced by Christian scientists throughout history remains. Crises of faith and tensions between affection and will, while mastering the book of Creation. Therefore, the true Christian who invests in science does not boast about their discoveries, nor loses focus amid crises and tensions such as ethical failures, ignored biases, and anomalous scientific practices. They do not retreat to a monastic laboratory but produce ethically, providing answers with good methodology. Science does not exist to prove certainties, as it is a shield gifted by God to defend humanity from its own mistakes. And between cycles of experimentation, it somehow grants us a faint glimpse of the Truth.

We need all the Christian scientists we can form. To make both monasteries and cities places for the production of good scientific practices, communicating with each other, with ethics and foundation. To offer the seasoning that makes the earth less rotten until the end of time. Only then will we fulfill the main purpose of Science. To keep the human species away from the worst of its errors.

*All biblical references were made from the New Living Translation.

Silvana Oliveira e Silva Moreira is a Specialist in Geriatrics by SBGG, holds a Master's degree in Medical Sciences from UFRJ, Certified in Lifestyle Medicine by ACLM/IBLM, leader of the discussion group “Health and Faith” of the Brazilian Association of Christians in Science, a native of Rio de Janeiro residing in Santa Catarina, serves at the First Baptist Church of Florianópolis, is married to Rogério and is the mother of Lúgia Regina.

Evidence-based spirituality?*

Original text published in Unus Mundus Magazine
(<https://unusmundus.academia-abc2.org.br/>)

Carvalho, Gian Mafalda. Evidence-based spirituality? Unus Mundus, Belo Horizonte, no. 5, Jan-Jun, 2025.

The title may cause some strangeness, and that is its intention. Nevertheless, it is not exactly what it seems. The aphorism popularized by Carl Sagan, which states that "extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence," and the popular story of the atheist Bertrand Russell, who, when asked what he would do if, upon dying, he met God, replied: "Sir, why didn't you give me more evidence?" bring to light the tendency and even, I dare say, the evidentialist dogma of our times. By evidentialist, I refer to the epistemological proposal that claims truth needs to be proven by some evidence, especially empirical, to be considered factually true. This trend has origins that date back to Epicurus but reached its peak during the Scientific Revolution between the 16th and 18th centuries, resonating in trends like empiricism, materialism, and contemporary neopositivism, where any proposal based purely on conceptual or metaphysical assumptions should lose its truth value for supposedly not corresponding to reality.

We perceive this as so firmly established as a dogma, for example, when we notice that the scientific community (particularly traditional Western biomedicine) adopts the term "evidence-based" as a quality seal for methodologies, practices, and treatments. And indeed it is. Undeniably, empirical proof is a significant sign of epistemic solidity. However, what is presupposed here is the reductionist assertion that there is only one way to obtain reliable knowledge about reality: through evidence. The problem with this theoretical presupposition is that it discards, by its very definition, clearly important elements present in reality that do not go through the sensory evidence filter, such as mind and emotions, for example. It is observed that even the concept of "evidence" is not self-evident, meaning it is not logically approved by the terms it grants.

Given this scenario, the present text aims to address the nature of Christian spirituality through its stance that is not necessarily evidentialist. However, I must make a note: it is clear that evidentialism does not refer to aspects of practical and everyday evidence as I propose here—its proposal is epistemological. However, as I point out at times, the warning and combat is against the modern stance that upholds evidence as dogma, making this principle resonate in all spheres of life and dominating the collective imagination. Therefore, I seek to be philosophically grounded, yet not philosophically presumptuous and obscure. The proposal here is primarily pastoral, devotional in nature, with a view to the spiritual growth of the reader.

When I propose the idea of a Christian spirituality not based on evidence, I am assuming that spirituality does not need to undergo such scrutiny, nor does it need to assume such dogma. This seems obvious at first, especially when we assume its intrinsic supernatural characteristic (even more so for me, as a Reformed Christian who believes in justification by faith alone, which is "the assurance of what we hope for and the proof of what we do not see," Heb. 11, NIV). However, this is not what reality shows us. Many believers today anchor their faith experience in events that prove it (evidence!). This is the case with the Prosperity Theology, which legitimizes faith based on its potential benefits and financial fruits; or Liberation Theology, which legitimizes faith through the political-social revolution it can provide. My hypothesis is that evidentialism has invaded the religious space as a justifying presupposition of faith/spirituality, weakening evidence as a desired and aspired consequence.

It is observed that even the concept of “evidence” is not in itself evident, that is, it is not logically approved by the terms it grants.

Let us observe the following examples, which illustrate the themes discussed here. The Brazilian news site UOL published an article with the following headline: “Religious spaces aid in the recovery from addictions and other disorders, but should not replace treatment.” The article highlights the social role of the Church, institutions, and their practices in the recovery from addictions and other disorders, even reporting how faith can assist mental health in conjunction with science and psychology. The Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) also published a study in which researchers from the university itself and the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) pointed out that the higher the levels of spirituality, the lower the risks of depression and anxiety (with the research targeting residents of the Brazilian Pantanal region).

And perhaps some of the most important and recognized research on this same topic are those by Tyler J. VanderWeele, Ph.D., a professor of epidemiology in the departments of epidemiology and biostatistics at Harvard University, director of the Human Flourishing Program and co-director of the Initiative on Health, Religion, and Spirituality, both also at Harvard. VanderWeele and his colleagues, based on research, found the importance of faith and spirituality (here, specifically Christian) in dealing with the contemporary issue of mental health.

In his research on public health (which includes the topic of mental health) involving approximately 70,000 individuals, the researcher observed for more than a decade and a half that attending Christian services resulted in a 29% lower likelihood of participants becoming depressed, about 50% less likely to get divorced, and nearly five times less likely to commit suicide, compared to those who never attended a religious service. He also found that raising children with a religious foundation yields benefits for their well-being throughout life, as they grow up with notable socio-moral virtues, such as ease in forgiving, a sense of mission and purpose, and willingness to volunteer. Religion also helps protect them from three major adolescent issues: depression, drugs, and premature sexual activity.

But what do these pieces of information have to do with the initial proposal? Good evidence for faith will always be welcome. The idea here is not to argue against evidence, but to affirm its consequential or even constitutive nature, but not foundational in terms of spirituality. Having evidence and the fruits of God's works (including through us, through the spirituality we nurture) is something we should be proud of, for the glory of God. However, the core of what I am trying to assert is that spirituality is not limited to this. The essence of living faith cannot fall into an epistemological reductionism, as happens when we rely on evidentialism. Faith has intrinsic value and a nature that encompasses a range of non-evidential issues. What makes faith relevant is that its value is not tied to what it can prove evidentially, but to what it can offer transcendentally: a redeemed life before God and all that this implies. Evidence is an addition to spirituality, but not its reason for being.

What makes faith relevant is that its value is not tied to what it can prove evidentially, but to what it can offer transcendentally: a redeemed life before God and all that this implies. Evidence is an addition to spirituality, but not its reason for being.

It is important to note that I am not criticizing Christian thinkers who use evidentialism to rationally justify belief in God (I reiterate: the purpose here is much less philosophically complex and much more pastorally practical), as is the case with William Lane Craig and Richard Swinburne. Thus, I argue that the evidence of a healthy life of faith should be the cherry on top in a reality that doesn't require constant "proofs," and that our faith should produce fruits evident in, for example, social, cultural, and political transformations by believers who believe independently of the tangible functionality of spirituality. The role of faith in our lives goes far beyond having evident (evidentialist) reasons to believe; such evidence, when present, should not be determinant (or dominant) for our missional or evangelistic action. There is an inherent message in the gospel that, by itself, gives it value.

By this, I mean that Christian spirituality is not lived based on evidence, but on an intrinsic sense of completeness that having Christ and His salvation provides. To fully live our spirituality is to perceive God's invisible hand (thus lacking objective evidence) in the most subtle details, even when our activities do not have direct and evident value for the more explicit causes and values of the Gospel.

To live our spirituality fully is to perceive the invisible hand (therefore, lacking objective evidence) of God in the most subtle details, even when our activities do not have direct and evident value for the most explicit causes and values of the Gospel.

Exemplifying: I know many young people who study in courses or work in areas that do not always have a function so apparently (or evidently, if we want to insist on the term in this essay) "spiritual" or "fruitful" for the Kingdom of God. One of our members in the ABC² study group I lead is a researcher in a very specific area of chemistry; another is a nurse who works in the geriatric ward of an important hospital in our region. Normally, the nurse has no difficulty seeing the value of her work as someone who glorifies God by helping to care for people and save lives; on the other hand, the chemist has probably questioned the spiritual significance of her role for the Kingdom of God. In other words, ultimately, the nurse has clear and objective evidence that her spirituality performs a valuable service. The chemist may have difficulties seeing the same. So, would the nurse be more Christian than the chemist?

The spirituality of the one who chose to research chemistry was weak when she made that decision? The obvious answer, to be ironic, and with which we have no difficulty in agreeing, is no. By this, I mean that there is something more fundamental in spirituality that gives it value, which is not its practical evidence in all instances. The point is that the Christian chemistry researcher does so for the glory of God, because, besides wanting to manifest objective evidence of the action of their faith in their work, they understand that, regardless of that, they do it for the glory of God, based on and motivated by God, just as it should be the foundation of the Christian nurse's spirituality.

In short, evidence, proofs, and answers should not be the crutch of our spirituality, as if it only made sense if, and only if, it had evidential proof of its functionality. Let our faith be evident to all, through extraordinary fruits and works, but let our motivation not be what it can offer us in the eyes of evidence, but the glory of a God, perhaps not so evident.

Gian Mafalda de Carvalho Master's and Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos). Philosophy teacher at the Application School of Feevale University. Coordinator of the ABC2 Study Groups. Husband to Marcella and father to Júlio Augusto.

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Who is the father of **FAKE NEWS?**

According to the Online Dictionary, fake news can be understood as false news, misleading information that is disseminated as if it were real and true, shared in virtual contexts, especially on social media or messaging apps. Various topics are targeted by fake news, such as politics, elections, celebrities, economy, and public safety. Medicine, public health, and science are certainly also common subjects of these publications, often causing serious harm to individuals as well as to society.

There are several situations that lead individuals to believe in fake news, such as confirmation bias (a phenomenon that demonstrates the human ability to reinforce their own beliefs), "blind" trust in the news author, especially if they are a "renowned" scientist or a "Christian beyond suspicion" (for this topic, I suggest reading the book "The Intelligence Trap: Why smart people make dumb mistakes" by David Robson), low emotional intelligence, selective exposure to certain information groups, emotionally evocative content, persuasive discourse, political preferences, cognitive dissonance, among others.

The motivations of those who spread fake news regarding health and science are varied. They can be for financial reasons with direct or indirect gains, political and/or ideological motivations, and even just for fun and malice.

Regardless of the purpose, its principle is abominable and its consequences are potentially serious. Fake news about COVID-19 led to rumors that caused confusion, stigma, and conspiracy theories—lies that brought death and suffering.

Even today, we can see on social media healthcare professionals offering miracle treatments for cancer or other diseases that have never been seriously tested, conspiracy theories like “what doctors don't want you to know,” news about new discoveries without a publication source, doctors who claim to have developed their own protocols for a range of pathologies, and the refutation of widely tested and approved therapies.

Who else benefits from so many lies? Who is the father of fake news? Jesus, speaking to the Pharisees, said: “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44). Therefore, by creating fake news or spreading lies in our WhatsApp, Facebook, or Instagram groups, we are serving as instruments of Satan to bring death and destruction.

Unfortunately, this has been happening even within the evangelical community. A Brazilian study identified that evangelical WhatsApp groups are a source of fake news, with 77.6% of participants stating they had already received false news in these groups and 24.8% admitting to having sent false messages themselves! ([CAMINHOS da desinformação: evangélicos, fake news e WhatsApp no Brasil: research report. / Alexandre BrasilFonseca; Juliana Dias \(Coord.\) – Rio de Janeiro: Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, NUTES Institute of Education in Science and Health, 2021.](#))



This sad reality should make us blush with shame and cry with sadness. No matter the motivation, whether we do it for our own benefit or just out of innocence, we are sinning, and the father of lies is thankful.

As Christians, saved undeservedly and in pursuit of sanctification, we must look to the light, know the truth, and be zealous about what we share on social media. As health professionals committed to the well-being of our patients, we realize how the devil has managed, through fake news, to deceive the population, bringing pain and despair. And being true Christians, that is, disciples of Jesus, and health professionals, we need to be firm and fight against this often seductive trap of the father of lies, praying for God to grant us wisdom, investigating deeply before passing on information, and equipping ourselves to perform our work wholeheartedly as for the Lord and not for men. After all, whose children are we?

Glauco Franco Santana
Cardiologist
Member of the First Presbyterian Church of Patos de Minas - MG

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Dr. Harold Koenig

Psychiatrist Harold Koenig, a professor at Duke University in North Carolina, is a leading researcher on the interrelationship between faith, religiosity/spirituality, and health. His research and books are read and cited by other scientists worldwide due to the methodological quality he brings to this topic. Dr. Koenig kindly granted this interview to Médicos de Cristo, offering the perspective of someone who has worked in this field for several decades. It's worth checking out.

MDC MAGAZINE - What, in your training and clinical practice, led you to investigate the relationship between religiosity/spirituality (R/S) and health?

HAROLD KOENIG - I saw in my clinical practice of medicine and psychiatry that many of my patients were using their religious beliefs to help them to cope with their health problems, and those patients were often coping better than persons without religious faith

MDC MAGAZINE - What are the most robust findings today on how R/S impacts mental and physical health?

HAROLD KOENIG - I think the overall extent to which religious beliefs and practices impact health, from mental health to social health to behavioral health to physical health. These impacts are particularly evident in terms of preventing suicide and substance use/abuse, enhancing psychological well-being, and also in extending longevity.

MDC MAGAZINE - What mechanisms appear to mediate the effects of R/S on health?

HAROLD KOENIG - The primary mechanisms act through psychological, social, and behavioral mechanisms; in general, individuals with a strong religious faith who are actively involved in their religious community are mentally healthier, have stronger social relationships, and live healthier lives (less cigarette smoking, less drug and alcohol use, better diet, more exercise, better health behaviors overall), all of which impacts their physical health.

MDC MAGAZINE - The term spirituality has been used in various ways by different researchers, with some authors even including atheists within this spectrum. Wouldn't this be inconsistent? What is the best concept of spirituality?

HAROLD KOENIG - I use the traditional definition of spirituality, which involves a subset of religious individuals who are devoutly religious and live out their religious beliefs; this is in contrast to the way some have begun to define spirituality over the past 30 years: today, spirituality can mean virtually anything and completely nothing.

MDC MAGAZINE - What are the main methodological challenges in research on religiosity and spirituality?

HAROLD KOENIG - The biggest methodological challenges are conducting high-quality studies, usually longitudinal studies, using solid measures of religious involvement. Conducting such studies is expensive, however. There are not many funding sources for conducting such research.

MDC MAGAZINE - How can a clinician critically read studies on the intersection of R/S and health?

HAROLD KOENIG - The clinician needs to learn something about research methodology and be able to recognize well done studies; this is only through specific training, like we do in our research workshops

MDC MAGAZINE - Do you believe that a spiritual history should be performed on all patients, even those in routine consultations, or only on those experiencing distress?

HAROLD KOENIG - A spiritual history should be conducted on most patients, especially those with chronic illness and in those experiencing emotional distress of any type

MDC MAGAZINE - How do you recommend that physicians conduct an ethical and efficient spiritual screening in just a few minutes?

HAROLD KOENIG - Physicians need to ask only one question: "Do you have any spiritual needs that are affecting your

health and medical/psychiatric treatment?"

MDC MAGAZINE - What is known about prayer and clinical outcomes? Do you recommend that Christian physicians pray with their patients?

HAROLD KOENIG - All behaviors of clinicians must be patient-centered; if a patient asks a clinician to pray with them, and I think that to provide comfort, the healthcare professional should honor this request. However, for a healthcare professional to initiate the request, is probably not appropriate. Nevertheless, the clinician may inform the patient that if the patient wishes, they would be happy to pray with them; however, they should encourage the patient to think about it and let them know at a future time if they would wish this to be done. Doing it in this way avoids coercion, which is absolutely essential.

MDC MAGAZINE - How can Christian physicians integrate their faith into care without proselytizing, welcoming patients of other faiths or no faith? What principles are non-negotiable?

HAROLD KOENIG - All behaviors of physicians, Christian or non-Christian, need to be patient-centered, focusing on the beliefs of the patient (not those of the clinician). Clinicians should support the beliefs of the patient after taking a spiritual history. They should not proselytize or share their own faith with patients, unless the patient asks. Therefore, Christian physicians should provide such good care and be so compassionate and go above and

and beyond expected of them, so that the patient will ask them why they are doing this. Then they can share their faith.

MDC MAGAZINE - According to scientific data, what is the role of hospital chaplaincy in health promotion?

HAROLD KOENIG - Chaplains play a crucial role in the healthcare system. They are the only healthcare professional who are trained to address the spiritual needs of patients. Since addressing the spiritual needs of patients can have a huge impact on the patient's health and medical outcomes, chaplains are critical members of the healthcare team and should be fully integrated into it.

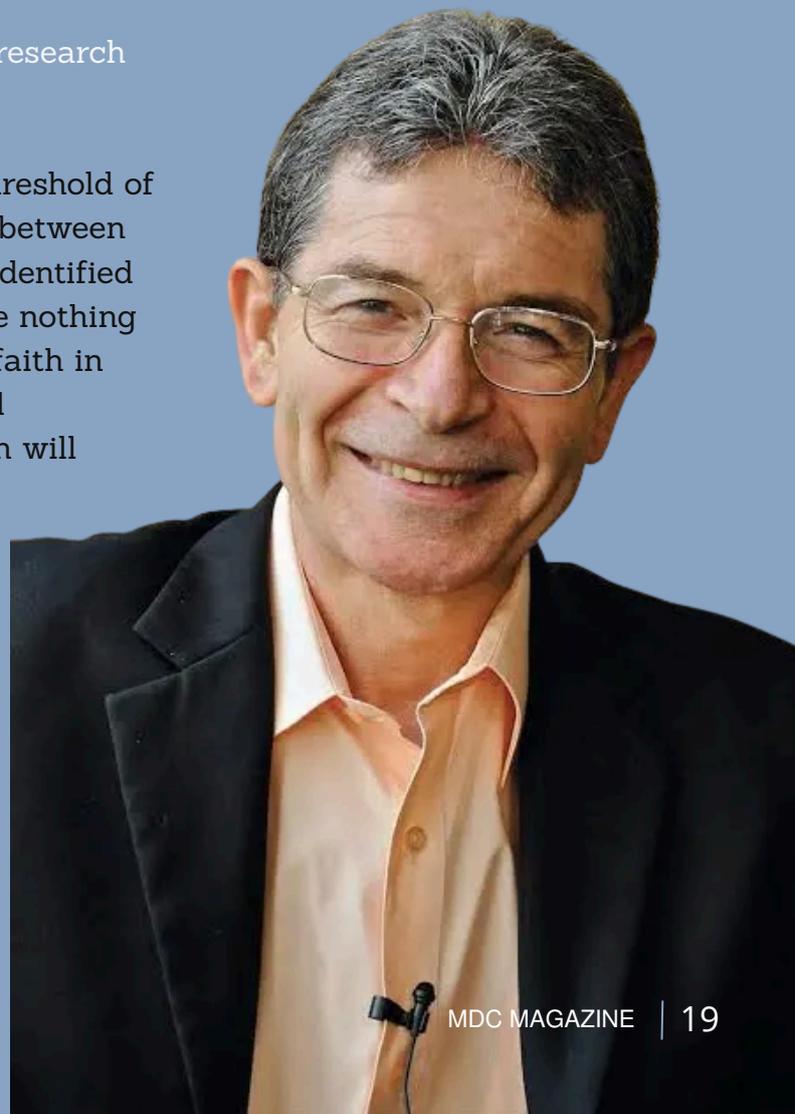
MDC MAGAZINE - How should healthcare professionals address negative religious-spiritual coping?

HAROLD KOENIG - This is when a chaplain referral or pastoral care referral is necessary. The chaplain or pastoral care provider can then sit with the patient and allow the patient to express their negative religious feelings in a safe environment. Most patients will work through their negative feelings towards religion if they have the time to think it through with a chaplain or pastoral care provider, who is kind, compassionate, and listens without judgment or criticism (and only provides advice if asked).

MDC MAGAZINE - What are the biggest research gaps and priorities for the coming years?

HAROLD KOENIG - We are only on the threshold of beginning to understand the relationship between religion and health; I think we have only identified the tip of the iceberg so far. There may be nothing more important than a person's religious faith in terms of affecting their health and overall well-being. However, high-quality research will be needed in order to identify the full impact of religious faith.

MDC MAGAZINE - How can digital technologies and AI help in the context of assessing religiosity and spirituality?



HAROLD KOENIG - I'm not sure how to answer that question. I don't know much about AI, nor have I thought about it that much. My personal opinion, though, is that you need a human being, a real live person, to delve into these issues.

MDC MAGAZINE - What final advice would you give to Christian healthcare professionals just starting out in this field?

HAROLD KOENIG - Go to our website (<https://spiritualityandhealth.duke.edu/>) and sign up for one of our Zoom workshops on

- (1) integrating spirituality into patient care,
- (2) faith and human flourishing,
- (3) moral injury,
- (4) and our spirituality and health workshops (both by Zoom and in-person).

I think a Christian healthcare professional needs training, before trying to do this all on their own.



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Pra ver você feliz.

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médicos de Cristo 60+

The Association Médicos de Cristo completed 30 years since its formalization in February 1995. On February 15, 2025, founders, directors, and members of the association gathered in Curitiba to celebrate three decades of history. It was noticed there that the pioneers of this movement were no longer so young, although still very willing to continue on the journey. Thus, the proposal for the creation of the MDC 60+ group emerged.

Médicos de Cristo, through its members, always receives all who wish to participate in a very loving and inspiring way. The formation of new leaderships, especially since 2012 with the formation of the Student WG, is always very natural. The Lord has given growth so that young and old can walk together for the glory of God. “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.” (Joel 2:28 NIV)

According to the UN, by 2050 the number of people over 60 years old is expected to reach 2.1 billion. The age group over 80 will be the one that grows the most. With the aging global population, it is urgent to ensure that all people

age with dignity, health, and inclusion. In just half a century, we have gained 20 additional years of life expectancy to continue our mission in service of the Kingdom. “The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.’” (Psalms 92:12-15 NIV)

In celebration of "Golden October" and the National and International Day of Older Persons—celebrated globally on October 1st—the MDC 60+ Group was launched, virtually bringing together those first interested in this movement.

Inaugurating MDC 60+, we had the participation of Dr. Haniel Eller (geriatrician), who shared important aspects regarding “Health and quality of life in the elderly,” focusing on integral care, the promotion of successful aging, and active aging.

Today, Médicos de Cristo brings together many students and professionals with up to 5 years of experience. In this intergenerational environment, the richness of meeting different experiences is very powerful. The relationship between young people and seniors in the association has been very loving and constructive. Inspired by the vision that even in the third age we can serve God with vigor and enthusiasm—placing our previously acquired experiences and skills at the service of the Kingdom—we started this working group believing that everyone will be blessed and transformed through relationship and the exchange of experiences.

Living longer is a collective victory and also a challenge for all of us. The 60+ Group, together with the MDC board, is developing a mentoring plan for new MDC leaders, seeking to support participants by holding meetings for sharing and prayer, as well as group trips and projects.

May the “Decade of Healthy Aging” (2021-2030)—a global movement by the WHO and the UN to improve the lives of older people, their families, and communities—inspire us to care for ourselves, care for one another, and promote intergenerational actions.

Prayer: “Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.” (Psalms 71:18)

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Health and Spirituality Commission

Federal Council of Medicine



Decades of research have proven the positive relationship between religiosity/spirituality and physical health, mental health, morbidity, and mortality.

In February 2025, the Federal Council of Medicine (CFM) created the Health and Spirituality Commission and invited 12 doctors, including professors and/or researchers in the field, to be part of the commission, in addition to some members of the CFM. The focus is to offer technical-scientific support, based on evidence, so that doctors can recognize and embrace spirituality as a dimension of life that directly influences the health and well-being of patients. This creation by the CFM is considered unique in the world for an organization of such size and as representative as the CFM.

The CFM emphasized that the initiative is not linked to any specific religion but recognizes spirituality as an essential component of the human experience and healthcare.

On June 27, 2025, the CFM held the first Webinar of the Health and Spirituality Commission, with the central theme "Health and Spirituality: the panorama of scientific evidence and clinical practice," where topics such as the concept of spirituality, evidence, and the impact of spirituality on health were presented and discussed, including situations like palliative care. There was also a moment for addressing guidelines and testimonials from some medical societies that have an internal spirituality commission. By the end of 2025, eight Brazilian medical associations or societies have such a commission: the Brazilian Association of Medical Education, the Brazilian Association of Psychiatry, the Brazilian Society of Cardiology, the Brazilian Society of Surgical Oncology, the Brazilian Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology, the Brazilian Society of Family and Community Medicine, the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, and the Brazilian Society of Rheumatology.

At the CFM headquarters in Brasília, on September 26, 2025, the first Forum of the CFM Health and Spirituality Commission took place, with the central theme "Building the clinical guideline."

The event began with an international speaker, the American psychiatrist and Duke University professor, Harold Koenig, considered the world's leading researcher in the field of spirituality and health. He delivered the conference "Why Spirituality Should Be Integrated into Clinical Practice?" presenting much scientific evidence. Following this, there was a roundtable discussion "Spirituality in Clinical Practice," which covered the following topics: "Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual Approach in Clinical Practice," "Spirituality and Cardiovascular Health: Evidence-Based Medicine and Clinical Practice," and "Opportunities in Spirituality and Health at CFM: Medical Education, Research, Guidelines, and Clinical Practice."

Next came the conference "The Power of Forgiveness: From Ethical Awareness to Physical and Mental Health," in addition to the roundtables "Scientific Parameters for Guideline Development" and "Guidelines in Specialties." Before the final session (Cross Fire - Spirituality as a Model of Evidence-Based and Humanized Clinical Practice), there was a conference on soul diseases. The forum (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YE9m2TNVFRk>) and the webinar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOvBcTmlHQg>) were the most viewed live medical-scientific events ever on CFM's YouTube channel.

In an article published last year by researchers from Harvard, George Washington, Wake Forest, Emory, and California (Berkeley) Universities in the United States, the authors stated that rethinking the future of public health should address the integration of spiritual determinants of health, which shape the search for life's meaning, purpose, transcendence, and connection with oneself, family, others, nature, and what is meaningful or sacred, to achieve individual well-being and population health. In this clinical and public health system, spiritual factors would routinely be considered in the creation of person-centered and community-centered policies and practices.

With the support of entities like CFM, guidelines on spirituality and health could become a reality in the near future and influence the creation of health policies that address the human being in a holistic way, with spirituality playing a very relevant role.

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Member of the Evangelical Church of Maracanã - Atibaia - SP

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TODAY IS ON-CALL DAY!

H A L L E L U J A H !

Duty shifts are times when healthcare professionals have to deal with pain, suffering, fear, anguish, and even death. They require theoretical and practical scientific knowledge, attention, clinical insight, proactive attitude, patience in many situations, discernment, and wisdom.

Prayer is an important tool for all Christians, and especially during such a significant journey as a duty shift, it is essential for the necessary skills to come from above. We should pray before, during, and after the shift, for ourselves and also for the team and with the multidisciplinary team as well as for the patients and with the patients.

In 2024, Médicos de Cristo published the book “On-Call Psalms,” compiled from devotionals written by professionals and students in the healthcare field from Brazil and Portugal. It covers various themes that touch the reader's heart and bring important reflections for believers.

“Duty shifts are all about uncertainties, challenges that are often greater than our knowledge or resources, leading us to despair. But then comes the good news: there is nothing to fear in the face of what we will face, because the same one who inspired the author of the Psalms neither ‘slumbers nor sleeps’ (Psalm 121). At the same time, it warns us that we will have turbulence in our lives, it encourages us to ‘take heart, because He has overcome the world’ (John 16:33)!” (Edgar Schiefelbein)

Do not forget to bring our Lord Jesus Christ to your shift! In this shift, you will be carried out with love and gratitude, and you will be able to go far beyond physical care.

Would you like to get “Salmos de Plantão”?

Access:

<https://publicacoespaodiario.com.br/produto/salmos-de-plantao>
and enjoy your reading!



Next events

IV MDC STUDENT CAMP

II LATIN AMERICAN MEETING OF ICMDA STUDENTS

a calling to Christian excellence in healthcare

From January 29th to February 1st, 2026, the city of Curitiba will host the IV Student Camp of the Doctors of Christ Association, an event that will profoundly impact the lives of healthcare students and professionals from all over Latin America.

This year's theme—"Blameless and Pure: A Call to Christian Excellence in Healthcare"—invites us to reflect on the role of the Christian in the world of healthcare: to be representatives of Christ in a field of ethical and spiritual challenges.

Inspired by Paul's exhortation to the Philippians (Phil 2:14-16), the camp seeks to awaken in each participant the urgency of being blameless, according to the scriptures, in all areas of life, including their professional lives, so that all may see that Jesus is Lord over all things.

The event will feature targeted lectures led by national and international guests, as well as practical workshops to consolidate knowledge, team-building games, and times of fellowship.

This camp is more than an event—it is a calling. A call for us, as children of God, to shine the light of Christ, reflect His character, and keep the Word of God alive in every action, word, and decision, in both our professional and personal contexts. Come be built up, challenged, and transformed!

 When: January 29th to February 1st, 2026

 Where: Curitiba, PR - Brazil

Register through our website or the QR code on the side.



Next Events

NEW COURSE

New information coming soon on our social media!

MDC Courses

April 11 to July 18, 2026

“
Mental Disorders and the Bible: An Important Relationship for Welcoming People in Suffering.
”

More informations soon!



CONGRESSO MISSIONÁRIO

AMANHAR - MISSÃO 2026

Promoted by our partner, the Brazilian University Biblical Alliance.

From student to student, Mission 2026: Amanhar is being conceived and planned by a council composed of advisors, directors, and students of the movement. We are expecting between 600 and 800 people, but there is plenty of room for growth, and we see that interest is increasing!

We expect young people between 18 and 30 years old who have faith in Christ Jesus and want to discover more about how this faith can impact their profession and future. The prerequisites

are: people passionate about Jesus willing to respond to His call (whether "there" or "here"). So, even if you're from outside ABUB, you're more than welcome!

Register at the link: <https://eventodaigreja.com.br/S60XDX>

October - December



MDC taking SALINE training and Confident Christianity to Colombia October 11/25

Volunteers from MDC SJC serving at the support tent of Igreja da Cidade during the pilgrimage to Aparecida from October 9 to 11, 2025.



Espiritualidade

Falaremos sobre o autocuidado do capelão com o tema "Cuidando dos cuidadores, consolando os consoladores".

Spirituality Colloquium October 18/25

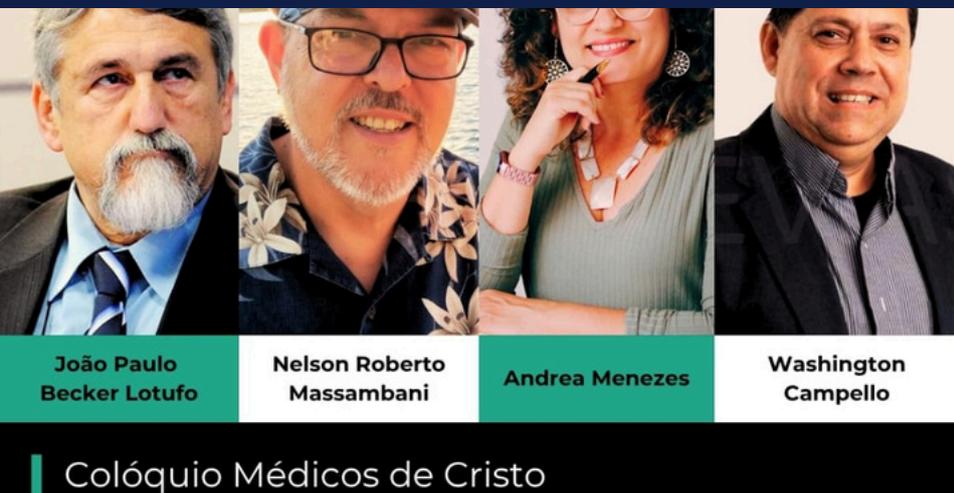


What happened at MDC



**Local Meeting
MDC SP
October 18, 2025**

**Inauguration of the new
working group:
MDC 60+
October 22, 2025**



**Colloquium: We Need to
Talk About Addictions -
the New and the Old
October 23/25**

What happened at MDC

**Local meeting MDC
Florianópolis/SC
October 25, 2025**



**MDC SP serving in Novo
Airão-AM, through MEAP
and Brazil for Lives
October 26, 2025**

**Pre-camp Webinar
Between Pressure and
Loyalty: How to Remain
Integral in Health Practice
October 30, 2025**



What happened at MDC

**Confident Christianity
MDC BH
November 9, 2025**



**Gathering MDC
Florianópolis + MDC
SP
November 9, 2025**

**MDC Campo Mourão/PR
present on Evangelical
Day, promoted by the
Assembleia de Deus
Church Guarujá.
November 9, 2025**



What happened at MDC

BURNOUT EM PROFISSIONAIS DE SAÚDE

MDC TERESINA/PIAUI

**12 DE NOVEMBRO -
QUARTA-FEIRA ÀS
20HS**

**Local MDC Meeting
Teresina/PI November
12, 2025**

**Local meeting
MDC Aracaju/SE
November 19, 2025**

MDC ARACAJU/SERGIPE

**DIGNIDADE DO PACIENTE -
Reflexões para o profissional de
saúde**

**19 DE NOVEMBRO
QUARTA-FEIRA
20HS**



**Local meeting
MDC BH
Managing Finances with
Wisdom from Above
Rodrigo Hofman
November 29, 2025**

What happened at MDC



**Local Meeting
MDC Fortaleza/CE
November 29, 2025**

**Second meeting of the
MDC 60+
December 3, 2025**



**Confraternização
MDC SP
December 6, 2025**

What happened at MDC

**Local Meeting
MDC Campo Grande/MS
Depression and
Spirituality
Edson Miyazato
December 8, 2025**



**Spiritual Health Morning
for the Elderly at CIAPI
MDC RR
December 12, 2025**



**Confraternização
MDC Curitiba
December 18, 2025**



What happened at MDC

**Gathering
MDC BH
December 19, 2025**



This is Mdc happening!
JOIN US!



Corporate

Médicos de Cristo (MDC) is an association of evangelical Christian healthcare professionals and students whose main objective is to promote holistic health, considering the human being in their physical, mental, spiritual, and social dimensions.

To fulfill these objectives, Médicos de Cristo is based on four pillars:

Calling



Awaken the understanding that medicine is a divine calling to serve God with love and integrity in health care.

Fellowship



Promote friendship, mutual support, and prayer among Christians in the health field.

Training



Equip Christian students and professionals to witness Christ with technical and spiritual excellence.

Service



Serve society and support missions, using medicine as a tool of love and justice, especially for the vulnerable.

Médicos de Cristo is a member of ICMDA (International Christian Medical & Dental Association), HCFI (Healthcare Christian Fellowship International) e RENAS (Rede Evangélica Nacional de Ação Social).

WWW.MEDICOSDECRISTO.COM.BR

JOIN THE MDC



BY JOINING, YOU:

1

I contribute to the association's projects and challenges.

2

Get discounts on MDC's online and in-person events.

3

Answer the call to be salt and light through your profession!



WWW.MEDICOSDECRISTO.COM.BR