

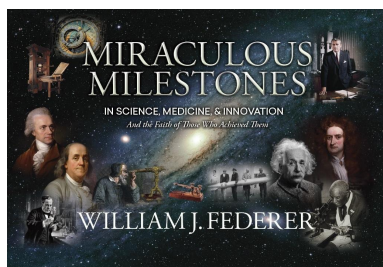
American Minute with Bill Federer Hospitals & Healthcare began with Christian Charity!

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The Byzantine Empire's **School of Nisibis**, founded in the 4th century, sometimes referred to as **the world's first university**, was a **Christian center of scientific and medical learning**, located in present-day Turkey ... [*continue reading ...*](#)



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MIRACULOUS MILESTONES in
Science, Medicine & Innovation - And
the Faith of Those Who Achieved Them

The Byzantine Empire's **School of Nisibis**, founded in the 4th century, sometimes referred to as **the world's first university**, was a **Christian center of scientific and medical learning**, located in present-day Turkey.

The Assyrian Christian **Bukhtishu family** had nine generations of physicians who helped found **the**

great medical academy at Gundeshapur, (5th to 9th centuries), in present-day Iran.

The **Assyrian Christian physician, Hunayn ibn-Ishaq**, wrote a textbook on ophthalmology in 950 AD which remained the authoritative source until 1800 AD.

Just as the **Syrian Church** pioneered medical care in the **East**, the **Catholic Church** did in the **West**.

The **Catholic Church** is the **oldest institution in the Western World** and the originator of "**hospitals.**"

Though **some ancient cultures had medical practices**, often mixed with superstition, it was primarily for the **king's family, his military, and the wealthy ruling elites.**

Healthcare for the poor traces its roots to **Christianity.**

In both the **East** and the **West, Christians** sought to put into practice the **words of Jesus:**

"I was sick and you visited me";

"Whatever you have done to the least of my brethren, you have done unto me."

Christians followed the example of the good Samaritan, spoken of in Jesus' parable, Luke 10:25-37:

"But a **Samaritan**, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, **he took pity on**

him.

He went to him and **bandaged his wounds**, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, **brought him to an inn and took care of him.**

The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. **'Look after him,'** he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

In the 4th century, under the ministry of **St. Jerome**, a wealthy Christian widow named **St. Fabiola** gave money to build a hospital for the poor in Rome and cared for the sick herself.

Around the same time, **St. Basil** distributed food to the **poor of Caesarea**, then built a **poorhouse, hospice, and a hospital.**

In 325 AD, the **Council of Nicea** directed that every city having a **cathedral** should also have an **infirmary** or **hospital**, as people traveling on pilgrimages would often arrive ill.

The word "**hosp**" is Latin for "**traveler**," the root word of:

- **hospital,**
- **hospitality,**
- **host,**
- **hostel, and**
- **hotel.**

Hospitals were staffed by religious orders.

In the 6th century, the **Benedictine Order** had

every monastery establish an infirmary.

Also in the 6th century, a physician, **St. Sampson the Hospitable**, turned **his home in Constantinople** into a **free medical clinic for the poor**.

When **Byzantine Emperor Justinian the Great** became ill, he sent for **St. Sampson**.

After recovering, the emperor offered to reward **Sampson**, who requested help establishing a new **hospital for the poor**, which continued in **Constantinople** for 600 years.

When sharia Muslim warriors invaded **Christian Syria** in 634 AD and then conquered **Byzantine Christian Jerusalem** in 638 AD, the **hospitals** needed to be **defended**, giving rise to the order of **Knights Hospitaller**.

The **Benedictine Monastery** in Salerno, Italy, founded **the oldest and most famous medical university in Western Europe**.

Most **universities** were started in **monasteries and cathedrals, notably:**

- Bologna
- Paris
- Naples
- Toulouse
- Oxford

Charlemagne decreed that the **hospitals** which had fallen into disrepair should be restored.

In the 1300's, the **Bubonic Plague**, or **Black**

Death, ravaged Europe killing 75 million people.

Crops were left standing in fields as there was no one to harvest them.

With often no one to bury the dead, an order of Catholic men called "**Alexian Brothers**" collected the bodies and gave them a **Christian burial**.

They also provided **hospice care** to the dying who were banished from the cities.

One of the oldest hospitals in Europe was the **Hôtel-Dieu** in **Paris**, founded in 660 AD.

Beginning in 1217, the **Hôtel-Dieu** (hostel of God) was staffed by **Catholic Sisters** following the **Rule of St. Augustine**.

In 1633, the **Sisters of Charity** began helping at the **Hotel-Dieu of Paris**.

They then established numerous **hospitals** and schools for the poor throughout France.

Other **Catholic religious orders**, such as the **Trinitarians**, collected **alms** and sailed to **North Africa** to **ransom Europeans** who had been **kidnapped** and sold into **Muslim slavery**.

In 1605, **St. Vincent de Paul** was sailing from Marseille, France, when he was captured by **Muslim Barbary pirates** and sold into **slavery** in **Tunis, North Africa**.

After two years, he was able to convert one of his master's wives to Christianity, and then his master.

In 1607, he escaped back to Europe, and started **religious orders to care for the poor in hospitals.**

In this era, the **wealthy** had **doctors** visit them at their **homes**, but the **poor** were primarily cared for at **Catholic hospitals.**

By 1789, there were **6,000 Sisters of Charity** running **426 hospitals** in France.

They also ran **hospitals** in countries across Europe, such as Poland, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Silesia.

A New Testament verse inspiring the nuns was I Timothy 5:9-10:

"... a **widow** be taken into the number ... **well reported of for good works** ... if she have **lodged strangers**, if **she have washed the saints' feet**, if **she have relieved the afflicted**, if she have diligently followed **every good work.**"

During the **secular French Revolution's Reign of Terror**, mobs broke into the mother house of the **Sisters of Charity.**

The **authorities demanded the nuns deny their faith** and **submit to the new atheistic government.**

When they chose to keep their faith, the government rounded them up and executed them.

One group of nuns, known as **the Martyrs of Compiègne**, sang a hymn as one by one they were

led up the scaffold and beheaded with the guillotine on July 17, 1794.

In 1793, **France's new anti-Christian government** tried to disband religious orders, such as the **Sisters of Charity**, which cared for the poor.

The **Sisters of Charity** survived, and in the 19th century **the nuns spread healthcare for the poor across the world**, including:

Portugal, Hungary, England, Scotland, Ireland, North and South America, Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Persia, Abyssinia, China and Jerusalem.

Geoffrey Blainey wrote in ***A Short History of Christianity*** (Penguin Viking; 2011, p. 214-215):

"(The Catholic Church) conducted **hospitals** for the **old** and **orphanages** for the young; **hospices** for the **sick of all ages**; places for the **lepers**; and **hostels** or inns where pilgrims could buy a cheap bed and meal. It supplied food to the population during **famine** and distributed **food to the poor.**"

More Catholic religious orders were formed to care for the sick, nurse the ill, change bed pans, and start leper colonies, such as:

- Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, founded 1633;
- Sisters of St. Joseph, founded 1650;
- Sisters of Mercy, founded 1827;
- Little Sisters of the Poor, founded 1839;
- Sisters of Providence, founded 1843;
- Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, founded

- 1851;
- Father Damien's colony for lepers at Moloka'i, Hawaii, founded 1864. Statues of him are at Hawaii's Capitol and in the U.S. Capitol;
 - Sisters of St. Mary, founded 1872;
 - Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, founded 1877;
 - Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, founded 1883.

In an era when **most women had family obligations** and could only **volunteer temporarily as battlefield nurses**, the **sisters** were systematically **trained in nursing skills** and **serve sacrificially** their entire lives.

Nursing pioneer **Florence Nightingale**, who cared for the British troops during the **Crimean War**, 1853-1856, once said:

"What training is there to compare with that of a **Catholic nun.**"

The **nuns' habit** developed into the **nurses' outfit** with its distinctive cap.

Beginning in the early 1800s, with the **Second Great Awakening** and the **Industrial Revolution**, **hospitals** were also founded by **Protestant Christian denominations**, most notably:

- **Seventh Day Adventists,**
- **Baptists,**
- **Episcopalians,**
- **Lutherans,**
- **Methodists, and**
- **Presbyterians.**

Whereas **Catholic healthcare** began with the focus

of **preparing a person's soul for death** when they would **meet God** in "the hereafter," **Protestant healthcare** focused more on "the here and now," being motivated to **clean up the slums in crowded cities** and send **medical missionaries to undeveloped countries.**

America's first hospital was **Pennsylvania Hospital** founded in 1751 by **Dr. Thomas Bond** and **Benjamin Franklin** "to care for the sick-poor and insane who were wandering the streets of Philadelphia."

The **Hospital** cornerstone recorded text composed by **Franklin**:

"**In the year of Christ, 1755** ... This building, by the bounty of the Government and of many private persons, was piously founded, for the **relief of the sick and miserable.** May the **God of mercies** bless the undertaking!"

In "Some Account of the **Pennsylvania Hospital** from its first rise (in 1751), to the beginning of the fifth month, called May 1754," **Benjamin Franklin** stated:

"It would be a neglect of that justice which is due to the **physicians and surgeons** of this **hospital**, not to acknowledge that their care and skill, and their punctual and regular attendance, under the **Divine Blessing**, has been a principal means of advancing this charity to the flourishing state in which we have now the pleasure to view it.

Relying on the continuance of the **Favour of Heaven**, upon the future endeavors of all who may

be concerned in the management of the institution, for its further advancement, we close this account with the abstract of a sermon, preached before the Governors."

The **second oldest hospital** in America was **New York-Presbyterian Hospital** founded in 1771, founded by **Samuel Bard**, who was a personal physician to George Washington.

The **third oldest hospital** in America, **Massachusetts General Hospital**, was founded in 1811, being significantly financed by **Jewish residents Moses Michael Hays**, a neighbor of Paul Revere, and **Abraham and Judah Touro**.

In 1809, **Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton** brought the **Sisters of Charity** to the United States.

Beginning in 1829, **Sisters** who immigrated largely from France and Ireland founded 299 hospitals in America in the 19th century, including:

- **Mayo Clinic,**
- **St. Vincent's,**
- **Baltimore Infirmary, and**
- **hospitals for the working classes in Buffalo, Philadelphia and Boston.**

In 1830, **Sisters of Charity** established the **first hospital west of the Mississippi River** in St. Louis, Missouri.

When **St. Louis** suffered devastating **cholera epidemics** in 1832 and 1849, which killed thousands, the **sisters risked death caring for diseased patients**, as described by **Bishop Rosati**:

"Patients were visited by us day and night with the greatest alacrity and without any fear of death."

Four Daughters of Charity died.

At the request of President Lincoln, over 200 **Sisters of Charity** served during the Civil War on battlefields and in military hospitals.

Just as **Clara Barton** volunteered and cared for troops during the Civil War, so did **eight different orders of Catholic nuns**, numbering over 600 and comprising over a fifth of all female nurses.

A **monument** was erected in Washington, D.C., to the **"Nursing Nuns of the Battlefield,"** with the inscription:

"They comforted the dying, nursed the wounded, carried hope to the imprisoned, gave in His Name a drink of water to the thirsty.

To the memory and in honor of the various orders of sisters who gave their services as nurses on battlefields and in hospitals during the Civil War. Erected by the ladies Auxiliary to the Ancient Order of Hibernians of America. A.D. 1924. By Authority of the Congress of the United States."

During the Civil War, **U.S. Surgeon General Hammond** reported to **President Lincoln** that volunteer nurses "cannot compare in efficiency and faithfulness with the **Sisters of Charity.**"

During the Franco-German War, 1870-1871, **Clara Barton** went to Europe where she worked with

Henri Dunant, founder of the **International Red Cross**.

Henri Dunant was the first recipient of the **Nobel Peace Prize**. He founded the Geneva chapter of the **YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)**.

Dunant supported Jews repopulating Palestine. He was one of the few non-Jews to attend the First Zionist Congress in Basel, 1897.

Theodore Herzl first used the term, "Christian Zionist" in reference to **Henri Dunant**.

Henri Dunant's International **Red Cross** began operating under the symbol of the **Red Crescent** during the **Muslim Ottoman** conflict with **Russia**, 1877-1878, and that symbol has since been **recognized in 33 Islamic States**.

Inspired by **Dunant's International Red Cross**, **Clara Barton** established the **American Red Cross Society**, May 21, 1881, serving as its head until 1904.

President Woodrow Wilson stated, May 18, 1918:

"Being members of the **American Red Cross** ... **this cross** which these ladies bore here today **is an emblem of Christianity itself**."

During the **Spanish-American War of 1898**, over 250 **Sisters of Charity** served.

Their medical assistance was desperately needed, as more soldiers died of severe diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid fever, and malaria than died in combat.

Beth Israel Hospitals were founded for growing **Jewish** immigrant populations in:

- **New York's Lower East Side, 1890;**
- **Newark, 1901; and**
- **Boston, 1916.**

Wealthy individuals donated and provided in their wills to continue these religious ministries of charity.

Catholics, Protestants and Jews pioneered **free healthcare for the poor "uninsurable"** because they were motivated by **Judeo-Christian religious convictions.**

Physicians took an earlier version of the **Hippocratic Oath**, in which **medical skills would not be used to euthanize** a patient or commit an **abortion:**

"I will give no deadly medicine to anyone ... furthermore, I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce an abortion."

Cleverly worded modern revisions of the oath have not only **removed** these values, but **removed healthcare providers' freedom of conscience not participate in acts they consider immoral.**

Government mandates, corporate takeover of hospitals, and financially incentivized treatments have exerted tremendous pressure on doctors and nurses to abandon their moral convictions--the same moral convictions that pioneered healthcare in the first place!

Moral convictions which motivated healthcare for

the poor were cited by *The New York Times*, August 20, 2011, where **Catholic nuns** served as unto the Lord--to "see Jesus in the face of every patient."

Mother Teresa reaffirmed this with the **Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity** being dedicated to: "Wholehearted and Free service to the poorest of the poor."

They began by gathering the sick from the gutters in India, and bathing them, clothing them, and ministering to their needs.

Mother Teresa stated:

"I see Jesus in **every human being**. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I must wash him and tend to him. **I serve because I love Jesus.**"

It is ironic that in the recent **takeover of healthcare by government and for-profit corporations**, the **Judeo-Christian values** which pioneered medical care for the poor and needy are being marginalized.

When concerns were brought up during the debates of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, **Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi** rushed the legislation to a vote, stating March 9, 2010:

"We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what is in it."

"What was in it" were regulations which resulted in

the government pressuring religiously motivated healthcare professionals to abandon their consciences, as well as the very spiritual beliefs which gave birth to healthcare in the first place.

Similar to the time of the French Revolution, the **Christian religious convictions which motivated people of faith to selflessly provide free healthcare for the poor for over a thousand years** are now being relegated to insignificance by **utilitarian central planners.**

President Trump declared January 22, 2018, as **National Sanctity of Human Life Day**, stating:

"Reverence for every human life, one of the values for which our Founding Fathers fought, defines the character of our Nation. Today, it moves us to **promote the health of pregnant mothers and their unborn children ...**

Medical advances give us an even **greater appreciation for the humanity of the unborn.** Today, citizens throughout our great country are working for the cause of life and **fighting for the unborn**, driven by love and supported by both science and philosophy.

These compassionate Americans are volunteers who **assist women through difficult pregnancies**, facilitate adoptions, and offer **hope to those considering or recovering from abortions.**

They are **medical providers** who, often at the risk of their livelihood, **conscientiously** refuse to participate in abortions ... Thankfully, **the number**

of abortions, which has been in steady decline since 1980, is now at a historic low."

At the time of the Revolutionary War, the United States had a population of **3 million**, which was:

- **98 percent Protestant,**
- **1 percent Catholic,**
- **1/10th of 1 percent Jewish.**

After the **Great Irish Potato Famine, 1845-1849**, immigration raised the **Catholic population** in America to over **20 percent**.

In modern America, the **Catholic Church has the largest membership** and is the **nation's largest medical care provider** with **over 600 hospitals** and **500 long-term health care facilities**.

In 2018, **10 of the 25 largest health-care networks** in the U.S. were **Catholic affiliated**, including:

- Catholic Health Initiatives-78 hospitals;
- Ascension Health-67 hospitals-Daughters of Charity, Congregation of St. Joseph, Sisters of St. Joseph;
- Trinity Health-44 hospitals, 379 Clinics, Catholic Health Ministries;
- Catholic Healthcare West-41 hospitals, Sisters of Mercy;
- Catholic Health East-34 hospitals, 9 religious congregations & Hope Ministries;
- Catholic Healthcare Partners-33 hospitals, Sisters of Mercy, Daughters of Charity;
- Providence Health & Services-26 hospitals, Sisters of Providence, Sisters of the Little Company of Mary;

- Marian Health System-25 hospitals, Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother

On May 21, 2012, the **Archdiocese of New York** filed a **historic Federal lawsuit against the HHS mandate**:

"In order to **protect our religious liberties** from **unwarranted and unprecedented government intrusion**, the Archdiocese of New York has filed suit in federal court today seeking to **block the recent Health and Human Services mandate** that **unconstitutionally attempts to define the nature of the Church's religious ministry** and would **force religious employers to violate their consciences.**"

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, October 29, 2012, responded to President Obama's **HHS healthcare mandates.**

"It is not just about sterilization, abortifacients, and chemical contraception... It's about **religious freedom**, the sacred right, protected by our constitution."

Cardinal Dolan, as President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 2010-2013, continued:

"President Obama announced ... the **choking mandates** from **HHS** would remain -- a shock to me, since **he had personally assured me that he would do nothing to impede the good work of the Church** ... that he considered the **protection of conscience** a sacred duty ...

There was still no resolution about the handcuffs placed upon ... Catholic charitable agencies ... just because they will not refer victims of human trafficking, immigrants and refugees, and the hungry of the world, for abortions, sterilization, or contraception."

The **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops** stated October 12, 2012, regarding a supposed "exemption" to the HHS mandate:

"Last night, the ... statement was made during the Vice Presidential debate regarding the decision of the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** to **force** virtually all employers to include **sterilization and contraception**, including **drugs that may cause abortion**, in the **health insurance coverage** they provide their employees ...

That exemption ... **does not extend to 'Catholic social services, Georgetown Hospital'** ... or any other **religious charity."**

Georgetown Hospital was founded in 1898 as part of **Georgetown University**.

Georgetown University was founded January 23, 1789, by **John Carroll, America's first Catholic Bishop**.

Bishop Carroll was the cousin of **Charles Carroll**, the **only Catholic to sign the Declaration of Independence**, the **longest living of the signers**, and the **wealthiest man in America**.

In 1776, the Continental Congress had **Bishop**

Carroll and Charles Carroll accompany **Ben Franklin** to **Canada** in an attempt to persuade Catholic inhabitants to **join America** in becoming **independent from Britain**.

Though the mission failed, high esteem for the patriotic efforts of **John and Charles Carroll** led several States to **extend equality to Catholics**.

Regarding freedom of conscience, **Bishop John Carroll** sent a report to Rome in 1790:

"In 1776, **American Independence was declared**, and a revolution effected, not only in political affairs, but also in those relating to **Religion**.

For while the thirteen provinces of North America rejected the yoke of England, they proclaimed, at the same time, **freedom of conscience**, and the **right of worshiping the Almighty, according to the spirit of the religion to which each one should belong ...**"

He continued:

"**Before** this great event, the **Catholic faith** had penetrated **two provinces only, Maryland and Pennsylvania**. In **all the others** the **laws against Catholics were in force**.

Any priest coming from foreign parts, was **subject to the penalty of death**; all who professed the Catholic faith, were not merely **excluded from offices** of government, but hardly could be **tolerated in a private capacity ...**

By the **Declaration of Independence**, every **difficulty was removed**: the **Catholics were placed on a level with their fellow-Christians**, and every political disqualification was done away."

Regarding religious freedom, **Bishop John Carroll** wrote in the *National Gazette*, 1789:

"The establishment of the American empire was not the work of this or that religion, but arose from a **generous exertion of all her citizens** to redress their wrongs, to assert their rights, and lay its foundations on the soundest principles of **justice and equal liberty ...**

An earnest regard to preserve inviolate forever, in our new empire, the **great principle of religious freedom.**"

Bishop John Carroll's older brother, **Daniel Carroll**, was **one of two Catholics to sign the U.S. Constitution** and later served as a **U.S. Congressman from Maryland.**

Daniel was a commissioner appointed to **acquire land for the new federal capital** in the District of Columbia, of which the land acquired from **his nephew, Daniel Carroll of Duddington**, is where the **U.S. Capitol is located.**

Bishop John Carroll's nephew, **Robert Brent** was the first mayor of Washington, DC, being **reappointed by Jefferson and Madison.**

Bishop Carroll founded the **nation's first Catholic seminary, parochial school system, and**

persuaded **Elizabeth Seton** to **start a girls school in Baltimore.**

Bishop Carroll wrote of **Catholics who fought in the Revolution:**

"Their blood flowed as freely (in proportion to their numbers) to cement the fabric of independence as that of any of their fellow-citizens.

They concurred with perhaps greater unanimity than any other body of men, in recommending and promoting that government, from whose influence America anticipates all the blessings of justice, peace, plenty, good order and civil and **religious liberty."**

Bishop Carroll wrote:

"Freedom and independence, acquired by ... the mingled blood of Protestant and Catholic fellow-citizens, should be equally enjoyed by all."

Assuring protection for **freedom of conscience**, **President George Washington** wrote to **Bishop John Carroll**, March 15, 1790:

"America, under the smiles of a **Divine Providence**, the protection of a good government, and the cultivation of manners, morals, and piety, cannot fail of attaining an uncommon degree of eminence ...

All those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are **equally entitled to the protection of civil government.**

I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations in examples of justice and liberality ..."

Washington continued:

"And I presume that your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their Revolution, and the establishment of their government;

or the important assistance which they received from a nation in which **the Roman Catholic faith** is professed."

Charles Carroll paid for the building of a **large house** for his son, which was later **donated** to be the main campus of **Johns Hopkins University**, with its world-renown **Schools of Nursing and Medicine**.

Dr. Ben Carson, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, was **Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery** at **Johns Hopkins Hospital** from 1984 until his retirement in 2013.

George Washington ended his letter to **Bishop John Carroll**:

"May the members of your society in America, **animated alone by the pure spirit of Christianity**, and still conducting themselves as the faithful subjects of our free government, enjoy every temporal and spiritual felicity."

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