

**Gloria Doino**

**Newspaper Release**

Members of the Association of Christian Therapists (ACT) believe that prayer plays an important role in the care of their patients. “The spiritual dimension in the client/professional relationship is of the essence,” said Lisa Silva, a graduate student from Stratford, CT and an active ACT member. “Developing one’s own spirituality helps us deal with patients in a compassionate Christian manner” added Dr. Mike White, a gynecologist from San Diego, CA.

ACT is an Ecumenical, non-profit, international organization numbering over 500 members in 13 countries. Specialty groups are divided into Allied Health, Associate Members and Centers and Institutions, Clergy and Religious, Educators, Nurses, Pastoral Care, Physicians and Dentists and Therapists. The majority of members live in the United States. ACT is both Contemplative and Charismatic in Spirit. Founded in 1975, ACT is divided into regions that sponsor conferences, retreats, and regional meetings to assist members in attaining spiritual maturity and professional growth.

The group’s dream is to integrate the healing professions under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Its immediate goals are to support, empower and witness to the healing professions with the heart and mind of Jesus. ACT is unusual in that it encourages members to ask the Lord’s help by praying for their patients by name and, when appropriate, praying with the patients themselves, thus integrating the physical and spiritual avenues of healing.

Recent medical studies have pointed to the fact that patients who are prayed for recover more quickly and require less pain medication or antibiotics. Today, even Medicare suggests that a persons’ spiritual care be addressed at Hospices nationwide. It has been found that people seldom refuse the invitation to pray.

The Associations’ International Conference will be held in Baltimore, MD on Oct 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> 2005. The theme will explore The Journey into Wholeness and Holiness 2005, To Love as Jesus Loves. Non-members are welcome to attend ACT functions. There is a camaraderie among ACT members that prompts observers to say “See these Christians how they love one another.” For more information contact ACT National Office at 6728 Old McLean Village Drive, McLean, VA 22101 [www.actheals.org](http://www.actheals.org) Tel: (703) 556-9222 Fax: (703) 556-8729 E-mail: [actheals@degnon.org](mailto:actheals@degnon.org). Inquiries welcome.