

GENNESARET FREE CLINIC

Vol. 1 No. 1 June 1988

Introductions

So much has happened since this February, it is hard to know where to start.

From a concern about indigent care this Spring, to an organized clinic of almost seventy volunteers in four months has been a thrill. Primary health care is now provided to around twenty-five persons per week through weekly visits to All Saints Church and Lighthouse Mission.

Positive reports continue to come in from the health care workers and patients. It seems almost everyday a new volunteer is enlisted - some are even coming on unsolicited. Most gratifying is the feeling that a need has been correctly perceived and we are headed in the right direction. There are tremendous health needs in Indianapolis that are not resolved due to neglect, financial constraints, or ignorance. Through our efforts, a small step towards better care is taking place; by increasing awareness towards good hygiene, providing basic medical care, and triaging advanced problems to appropriate channels we are making a difference. And this is a team approach! Through primary care physicians, nurses, medical assistants, administrative workers, a growing list of specialist physicians, and contributors a volunteer free clinic has begun and can be sustained.

All is not perfect though, indeed there is more yet to do than has even been dreamed of. In many respects, delivery of health care first means delivering the patient to the door of the available provider. There is a big question whether providing transportation to a specialist can be arranged. How can continuity of care, long term problems, and complex disorders be best dealt with. Social problems, dependency problems, and psychological concerns deserve caring as well. Financial limits are already apparent.

In spite of the challenge ahead, we can be all encouraged by the good start we have. Hopefully, more volunteers will also help and keep the momentum of these last four months going.

A NAME . . .

Jesus walked through Gennesaret (Gennes' aret), a fertile plain along the lake of the same name or often "the sea of Galilee." Many of the region were brought to him for healing. Their faith was so great that they hoped to merely touch the fringe of his garments and thus be healed.

Perhaps the use of this ancient name will remind us that as we touch some of the members of our society "on the fringe" that we too are hoping to become

healed by them. This is the mystery of healing in God's name; sometimes it is hard to tell the healer from the healed. It is not unusual for the health care person to feel as though they received more in the interaction than the patient. Certainly, those unfortunate patients we treat have much to pass on to us in terms of their resourcefulness, perseverance, and lack of dependence on material wealth to us. Perhaps the vision to keep in mind is one of the medical person and patient together reaching for the fringe of His robe in order to be mutually healed.

Taking on this name has the benefit of allowing a collective sense of ownership and responsibility rather than one persons "thing." This name has the danger of implying that we medical types think that our gifts are so great that the indigent only need scrape up against us to get fixed. I do not suppose many of us would admit to such gradiose thoughts; let it be enough to say we know where our healing gifts came from ultimately and give credit where credit is due.

FINANCES

Some have asked if there is a way to contribute money to our clinic for the purchase of medicine, supplies, and equipment. In fact, there is a way to contribute and help out! We have a fund established by the Indianapolis Episcopal Metro Council (a registered charity with the I.R.S.). Any contributions will be gladly received at the following address:

Ms. Lori Wyman, Executive Director
Indianapolis Episcopal Metro Council/
Medical Fund
1537 North Central Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Presently, funds are running low. Please consider a gift.

The Newsletter

Are you groaning over yet another newsletter? As we have grown so fast there is a danger of losing somebody in the shuffle. It seems this may be the best way to keep everyone tuned into what is happening with the clinic. Also, there are many exciting things we should be passing amongst ourselves. If you have ideas, suggestions, hints, complaints, proposals, prose, poetry, or whatever that you want to share please contact Dr. Jim Trippi or Pamela Powers at 924-5444.

Possible topics to follow in this newsletter may include:

- + The histories of All Saints Shelter and Kitchen and Lighthouse Mission
- + Peoples Health Center Homeless Program
- + Medical Society Auxillary/ St. Alban's Church sample drug program under Dr. Grover Boling.
- + Possible avenues for expansion of services
- + A personal interview with someone now left homeless
- + Discussion of other services available for the indigent and homeless.