

# GENNESARET FREE CLINIC

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## News

+ Beginning August 2, we will provide a new weekly primary medical clinic at Good News Shelter. Rev. Wayne Scott, director of Good News Shelter at 2716 E. Washington St. 46201 (phone 638-2862), tells us that there are presently accommodations for 49 adult male residents with preparations to go to 98 in the very near future. We intend to provide a Tuesday clinic after chapel from 8:00pm until 9 or 9:30pm. With this step, every shelter in the Indianapolis area will receive a once a week primary medical clinic: Gennesaret Free Clinic will continue at All Saints Church Shelter and Kitchen on Saturday afternoon and Lighthouse Mission Shelter Thursday evening while Peoples Health Clinic will visit Wheeler, Salvation Army, Holy Family, and All Saints Shelters. The overnight shelters have this service in place after only 6 months when we began the first clinic at All Saints Church. Without the many volunteer hours of Gennesaret workers and the responsiveness of the Peoples Health Clinic this milestone could not have been reached.

+ We celebrate the beginning of Mat Vega, M. D. with the Peoples Health Clinic as their full time physician for their homeless clinic initiative. He has just finished residency at Methodist and has a big job ahead. We wish him and all the Peoples Health workers well in their

efforts.

+ We now have several specialists who have volunteered their services. At Lighthouse and Good News I am told that transportation can be provided to the specialist's office for the appointment; please schedule the appointments and referral as usual and be sure to mention it comes from Gennesaret Clinic. Also note we are asking our specialists to volunteer no more frequently than once a month so please refer sparingly. Listed below are the specialists who have agreed to help:

Dr. Clare Bernardin OB-GYN 926-7082

Dr. William Chapman Urology 872-0123

Dr. Frank Countryman Psych 257-9281

Dr. James Williams Urology 923-4542

Obviously, we could use other specialists who would be welcoming to the homeless and indigent. If you know someone who would be interested in helping (especially surgeons and dentists) as a specialist, please tell them about this opportunity and have them call Dr. Jim Trippi 924-5444 for details.

## REFLECTIONS

ed. note: This spiritual and personal reflection was submitted to the St. Thomas Aquinas Renew News and permission has been given by the author, Mary Carson, a volunteer with Gennesaret Clinic for its duplication here.

The old man pulled the crumpled McDonald's bag out of the trash can. He wore a navy blue wool sock cap over his balding head and he had on several layers

of jackets, even though the temperature was well over 65 degrees that sunny afternoon. He said that he never could get warm enough. I asked him how he was doing and as he talked he devoured the half-eaten Big Mac that he had retrieved. We were standing on the Circle between the Columbia Club and Christ Church Cathedral and the lunchtime crowd gave us a wide berth. I couldn't help but notice the contrast between the nicely suited individuals who took such pains to avoid us and this dirty, disheveled, odorous old man. He said he was 83 years old and that he used to be rich - infact he still was, but his money was tied up.

The next time I saw Walt was early one autumn morning as I handed out coffee and sandwiches from the rear of a van parked behind the Lighthouse Mission. This time he pleaded with me to help find him a place to stay. He had plenty of money and he thought that he could buy an apartment building. He could live in one of the units and rent the others out. I asked him if he was sleeping inside at night and he said no - he was sleeping down by the river. Winter was coming and he wanted to get settled somewhere.

Each Wednesday morning after that he would stop by to ask if I had found him a place to stay.

"Did I know of someone who needed a man to do odd jobs? Did I know of anyone who was selling their home?"

Each time I would hand him a peanut butter sandwich and say I was sorry. It began to get colder and then I didn't see Walt anymore.

I wondered if he had found a place to

stay. A couple of weeks ago there was a notice in the paper. A man named Walt, age 83, had died at Wishard Hospital. There was no one to claim his body.

The reality of this tragedy is just beginning to sink in. The problems of the homeless are overwhelming. There are so many who need help. Society deals with the street people by ignoring them, by pretending they don't exist. Go down to University Park on a nice day. People walk all around the perimeter of the park but few venture into the interior. Few want to face the vagrants who line the park benches and lie on the grass. As long as the homeless are also faceless they are easier to deal with. Shut out their pain and despair and it doesn't really exist.

But what about me? I saw the pain, I knew the face. Still I did what was easiest. I handed out a sandwich and said, "Have a good day." It wasn't enough.

Lord, help me to respond to You more fully the next time you call. Help me to see You in the face of my brothers and sisters.

Help me to go beyond my patterns or routines and give something extra for your sake. Help me to overcome my discomfort and my insecurity. Make me listen to my inner voice. Lord, help me respond to You more fully the next time You call.

-Mary Carson-

To help at the shelters, contributions can be sent to the following addresses:

Lori Wyman, IEMC, 1513 N. Central 46202

Mike Fishback, Lighthouse, 520 Market 46204

Wayne Scott, Good News, 2716 E. Washgton, 46201