

Midwest Bits and Pieces

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WORST PILLS BEST PILLS

THE OLDER ADULTS GUIDE TO AVOIDING DRUG - INDUCED DEATH OR ILLNESS

PILLS OLDER ADULTS SHOULD NOT USE - SAFER ALTERNATIVES

SIDNEY M. WOLFE, M.D.

PREFACE

Paul D. Stolley, M.D.

For older Americans, nothing less than the closest attention to their health problems is adequate. Although many older adults can benefit from drugs which lower blood pressure, reduce the pain and discomfort of angina or arthritis, or treat other common ailments, they are extraordinarily sensitive to adverse effects of medicine, such as drug - induced parkinsonism, confusion coordination, falls and hip fractures, and mental deterioration. Thus, the best medicine may be no medicine.

But if a drug is needed, the choice should be made by the active and informed participation of the patient with a sympathetic and unhurried physical. Furthermore, the continual monitoring of the patient is necessary after drug treatment is initiated: is the desired therapeutic effect occurring? are there adverse effects? when should the drug be stopped? is there the possibility of an undesirable drug interaction because of other drugs the patient is taking?

The well - informed consumer should ask these and other questions before and after drugs are prescribed. **WORST PILLS BEST PILLS** spells out the questions you should ask and explains the risks and benefits of the most commonly used

drugs for older adults in an easily understandable and interesting manner. The book is printed in a large format and with larger than usual type so that it can be readily used by older persons.

Most doctors want their patients to know about the drugs they prescribe and will, if asked, explain and put on the patient's **DRUG WORKSHEET** the reasons why they have prescribed the drug and what they hope it will accomplish. This book, and the **DRUG WORKSHEET** that comes with it, will help guide discussions between patients and doctors, promote safer drug prescribing, and also provide invaluable material for patients to learn on their own. The Public Citizen Health Research Group and its outside medical experts have once again provided essential information, information which is not available anywhere else, about the most commonly used medications over the counter and prescribed. As a result, both practicing doctors and patients will benefit from owning and using this volume.

Our medical drugs can provide us with symptomatic relief, comfort, and sometimes cure, but only if they are used with caution and prudence. **WORST PILLS BEST PILLS** will help older patients, their families, and their doctors reduce the amount of drug-in-duced disease and increase the likelihood of benefiting from appropriate drug therapy.

To order your copy; send twelve dollars—that is the total cost— to:

PILLS
2000 P Street, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20036

If you do not wish to order in this manner please send your name to the Provincial with a request for further information or a copy of the book. Older Adults are defined in this book as anyone over sixty.

THE CONSECRATED LIFE AND ITS ROLE IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE WORLD

Brothers



The consecrated life of brothers is today the most visible form of consecration in the variety of its charisms, as exemplified in its rich diversity of apostolic and social services on behalf of humanity. The Second Vatican Council has stated: "the lay religious life constitutes a state which of itself is one of total dedication to the profession of the evangelical counsels." Often times the character of the lay consecrated life for men is not clearly perceived, given that many of the faithful think that it should be joined to the priesthood, while in fact it represents consecration in its utter simplicity.

"Religious life began with a typically lay configuration. It grew out of a desire of some Christian faithful to 'derive more abundant fruits' from baptismal grace and, through profession of the evangelical counsels to free themselves from those obstacles which might have drawn them away from the fervor of charity and the perfection of divine worship (cf. Lumen Gentium, 44) ... Thus the lay religious life in the Church, as an expression of total consecration for the Kingdom, is an expression of the holiness of the Spouse of Christ and contributes in an efficacious and original way to the fulfillment of the Church's mission of evangelization and her many apostolic ministries. We cannot imagine religious life in the Church without the presence of this particular lay vocation, still open to so many Christians who can consecrate themselves in it to the following of Christ and the service of humanity".

The members of lay religious institutes are a sign of the multiplicity of the Church's apostolic services, each according to its proper function in the pastoral mission of the Church. The Decree Perfectae caritatis has emphasized the "high

esteem of such a life, since it serves the pastoral work of the Church so usefully by educating the young, caring for the sick, and discharging other services." Called in virtue of their vocation to evangelical service of persons and to collaborate in the work of salvation, lay religious, prompted by their proper charism, open themselves to everyone in the universal love of Christ through an integral education of children and young people, through alleviating the pains of the weak and sick, through their contact with the poor and marginated, and through contributing to establishing true peace and justice in this world, in a universal brotherhood of communion, a fellowship which is inspired by the title they bear, that is "brother". (Taken from text to be considered by IX Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops)

MISSION ON THE RIM

Leo B. Shea, M.M.



Jesuit Father John Dahlheimer describes the tiny Catholic Church in Nepal, astride the Himalaya Mountains, as being "on the rim of Christianity." There are only about 15,000 Christians, 3,000 of whom are Catholics, in this central country of 19 million people. However, the 115 Catholic missionaries who are working in the Hindu kingdom find it permeated with religious devotions.

Hinduism, the state religion, and Buddhism are not just declared faiths, but a way of life to Nepalese. On town streets and mountain pathways people greet one another with the Hindu salutation, "Namaste - I worship the presence of God in you."

In the capital city of Kathmandu, sacred cows

walk the streets while revered monkeys clamber around both shrines and trees. Monks and people in varied dress, traditional and modern, stroll past ancient Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries. Along the riverfront, the dead are publicly cremated in ritual ceremonies.

The missionaries find deep-seated religious customs - and profound poverty. "In the shadow of the magnificent Himalayas, life is incredibly difficult" say Maryknoll Lay Missioner Bridget Messana. According to United Nations statistics, Nepal is the fourth poorest country in the world. There are only five doctors for every 100,000 people. Nearly 20 percent of Nepalese children die in infancy. Seventy-one percent of the adults are illiterate. Though proselytizing is forbidden by law in Nepal, religious freedom is guaranteed. The 1967 constitution states, "Every person may profess and practice his own religion as handed down from ancient times, provided that no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another."

The first Maryknoll missionaries came to Nepal in 1977 to serve the poor and handicapped there. They are credited with several "firsts." Father Adam Gudalsky pioneered work with the mentally handicapped; Father Patrick Griffin started the first Alcoholics Anonymous group; Father William Galvin expanded literacy programs in the countryside; Father Joseph Thaler completed the country's first comprehensive survey on mental retardation. Those missionaries no longer work in Nepal, but eight Maryknoll priests, Sisters and associates carry on their work.

Maryknoll Associate BROTHER JOHN HARRIS, a Holy Cross missionary from Indiana who has been in Nepal 15 years, teaches at Jesuit-run St. Xavier High School at Jawalakkhel in Kathmandu.

Maryknoll Father Jerome Peters, who previously worked in the Philippines, works in Damak, a rural town in eastern Nepal. The missionary assists refugees from Bhutan and works with Indian Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny teaching low-caste Hindu tea pickers who have little opportunity for formal education. "The caste system has been abolished but it remains in practice, especially in the countryside," Peters says.

Bridget Messana and Father John Corcoran are the Church's first missionaries in western Nepal. They work in the Nepalganj and Surkhet areas with the mentally handicapped, training parents and extended family members to care for the disabled.

Maryknoll Sisters Anna Maria Hartman and Esther Marie Kelly teach English to students in Kathmandu schools and to Marianist and other seminarians from India, while Sisters Rose Marie Cecchini and Marie Lambert teach grade school boys in St. Xavier School in Jawalakkhel.

Some works begun by Maryknollers have been turned over to Nepalese. In Kathmandu, Krishna and Bhim Kumari Thapa, a Nepalese couple, run a house of hospitality founded by Thaler for rural people who come to the capital for medical treatment. Similarly, after raising national awareness of care of the mentally handicapped, Maryknoll missionaries helped form the Association for the Welfare of Mentally Retarded, now chaired by Doctor Mahendra Prasad. Prasa, a former World Health Organization official and the first Nepalese physician to specialize in pediatrics, accompanied Nepalese athletes to the 1991 World Special Olympics in Minneapolis, where Nepalese won five gold and two silver medals. Their feat, widely publicized in Nepal, gained additional recognition and respect for people with handicaps.

Maryknollers work in Nepal with Father Dahlheimer and his Jesuit colleagues of the Chicago province who initiated modern mission in Nepal. They came in 1951 at the invitation of the Hindu king and queen to provide quality education. Six groups of women religious, including the Maryknoll Sisters, teach and do health work.

Nepal is moving from an absolute monarchy toward democracy. The legalization of political parties in 1990 with the prospect of multiparty elections has promoted freedom of expression and religious tolerance. Christians can now profess their faith more openly.

Jesuit Father Anthony Sharm, who was born in Nepal of Ghurka parents and raised in India, serves as the ecclesiastical superior of Nepal, a country with no Catholic bishop and only one Catholic parish. St. Francis Xavier. Sharma was

baptized in India after studying in Jesuit schools. He has headed the church in Nepal since 1984.

BROTHER JOHN HARRIS reflects the feeling of church people now that Nepal has adopted a more liberal political system. "I hope we will soon see more missionaries working here to offer even greater service to the poor," Harris says. "And I'm sure the missionaries will learn a lot from their contact with the people. Nepalese simplicity and sanctity cannot fail to impress you."



FINDING FRIENDS AT AIRPORT

The beauty of ideas that work best is their simplicity. That's why there should be a sterling future for the Friendship Center recently opened at the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport by Senior Friendship Centers Inc.

The concept, the first in the nation to take form, makes sense and possibly will do as much or more to elevate this area's reputation as a destination resort as all the four-color slick brochures adorning tourist agency desks throughout the nation. For the presence of the Friendship Center extends the welcome embrace of help and hospitality to travelers who, already disoriented by their travels and travails, know not where to turn.

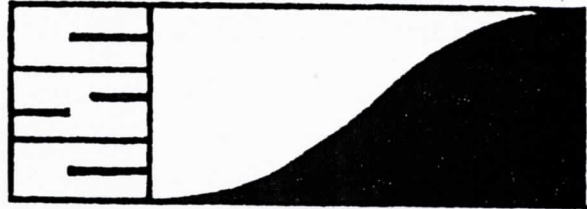
It doesn't matter to travelers whether they are passing through, or are on their way in or out of, the Sarasota-Bradenton area: They'll remember which airport was hospitable.

And it is entirely fitting the Center dropped "senior" from its name for this specialized role, for the community of troubled travelers is ageless. During a pre-opening trial run, for instance, the

center helped two nursing mothers find the privacy they needed in surroundings more comfortable than the airport women's lounge.

BROTHER WILLIAM GEENEN, the founder of the Senior Friendship Centers, and the volunteers fulfilling this much-needed function deserve praise for their Inspiration and dedication to see it through. We look forward to the day predicted by Geenen when airport "Friendship Centers" will be as common as ticket counters - and far more accommodating. (Taken from Sarasota Herald Tribune, April 12, 1993)

HOLY CROSS



COUNSELING GROUP

A new face was put on our social ministry with the establishment of Holy Cross Community Services, Inc. and the opening of Holy Cross Counseling Group. For years the Brothers of Holy Cross have been active in social ministry in the South Bend Area. Outside of the Justice and Peace Center, most of the work was on behalf of other agencies and many times with little recognition for the Holy Cross Community.

Tom Balthazor and Tom Shaughnessy requested authorization from the Provincial Administration to develop the framework through which Holy Cross social ministry in the South Bend area could be funneled. The concept involved the establishment of a counseling service as well as the framework to undertake community projects. They also wanted this to be available to Holy Cross priests and the Sisters of the Holy Cross as a collaborative effort.

It was agreed with the Provincial Administration that surplus funds from the counseling service will remain with Holy Cross Community Services to provide seed money or/and support to local projects in the area of social ministry.

In March, 1993 Holy Cross Community Services, Inc. was established as a not-for-profit Indiana corporation. It was established with a board of directors of up to nine members, two thirds of whom must be members of the Congregation of Holy Cross. This gives us the opportunity of seeking priest and sister members to the board as well as lay people.

The first project of the new corporation was to set up Holy Cross Counseling Group. Building on the already established counseling practice of Brother Thomas Balthazor, it is our intention to invite qualified members of Holy Cross to join us in providing professional counseling services to the community. The counseling group is intended to be self supporting. All group members must provide an amount of low cost or pro bono service.

Holy Cross Counseling Group will provide a broad range of counseling services. Tom Balthazor will continue to specialize in sexual abuse and sexual assault evaluation and treatment. Chris Dreyer is expressing an interest in counseling services for elementary age children. It is also hoped he will provide service at Holy Cross College.

James Greteman will return to South Bend to develop his practice in the adult area with emphasis on marriage counseling and divorce adjustment. Tom Shaughnessy will be a part time member of the group and will do general counseling and will work with HIV and AIDS patients. Finally, the group will benefit from the experience of John Chysostom Ryan (EBP) who is going to help facilitate groups and assist in alcohol and drug evaluations.

Because of the financial support of the Province, Holy Cross Counseling Group was able to obtain an excellent office location at Memorial Skyway Plaza, across from Memorial Hospital in South Bend. The financial support of the province also extends to other start-up costs for this ministry. Brother Harold Ruplinger developed the logo for the organization and Brother Joe Fox took on the interior decoration of the office.

The members of the Holy Cross Counseling Group look forward to hosting the members of the province at an open house on Wednesday, June 16, 1993 during community meetings. We look

forward to this new venture having a positive impact on our social ministry community for the Michiana area. We seek the prayerful support of the community for its success.

STRATEGIC PLANNING OPERATIVE WORDS

NT Intuitive Thinking Design	NF Intuitive Feeling Growth
SJ Sensing Judging Stability	SP Sensing Perceiving Adventure

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PRESCRIPTION

by
Thomas Shaughnessy

The high cost of medical services and prescription drugs is a major concern of the majority of Americans. Our community also shares this concern. It is important that we be wise consumers if we are to contain the medical costs within our religious community. Until recently, I was unaware of how our prescription drug program worked and particularly the use of the prescription drug card with which you pay \$2.00 to have a prescription filled. I would like to share this information with you.

1. The prescription card is a convenience; it is not the cheapest way to purchase drugs. **IN FACT USING THE CARD, IN MOST CASES, IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE WAY TO PURCHASE DRUGS.** It is meant as a convenience to purchase drugs for short term use.

2. The mail order service is the most economical way to purchase drugs. It can easily save you 40 per cent off the cost of using the card and 15 per cent off prices of chain drug stores like Walgreens.

3. Always keep in mind that we are self-insured, i.e., we are eventually going to pay the cost of the drugs. The \$2.00 that you pay when using the card is not the cost the community pays. We pay the full cost of the drug and the service.

Let me illustrate this for you:

**Are you being strangled
by the soaring costs of
health-care insurance?**



A thirty day supply of 150 mg Zantac tablets using the card will cost about \$94.00.

A ninety day supply of 150 mg Zantac tablets through the mail order will be about \$140.00 or equal to \$47.50 for a thirty day supply.

Zantac is for most persons a maintenance drug, by that we mean a drug that you take on a regular basis for a long period of time. Our drug reports from Christian Brothers indicates that about 80 per cent of the drugs we use are maintenance drugs. These are most economically ordered through the mail as you can see by the above illustration. This demonstrates that we can make a substantial impact on our drug costs if we understand how to purchase. Even more savings can be obtained if the doctor authorizes a generic substitute.

What can you do to help control costs?

I. Only use the card for short term prescriptions and for acute illness.

2. If a doctor is going to prescribe a drug you are going to use over a long period of time, ask him to give you two prescriptions, one or two weeks that you can purchase with the card, the other for several months or a year that you can mail in to take advantage of the best possible drug prices.

3. Whether it is short term or long term, ask the doctor if there is a generic substitute he will approve.

If we are able to do this consistently, it would be my estimate we could save 25 per cent off our current pharmacy bill. This is significant since our drug bill last year was nearly \$150,000 on our Christian Brothers plan.

A final question is why use the card at all?

1. It guarantees the average wholesale price at pharmacies.

2. Prescriptions sometimes cost large amounts of money and the card enables you to obtain them for the \$2.00 co-payment.

3. Finally, it is the formal process by which we pay for drugs through our participation in the Christian Brothers Religious trust. Through the use of the card and the mail in program our costs are credited to our Christian Brothers account.

I know this is not a total explanation of how the program works. I would be happy to go into more detail for those who have an interest. I do hope this gives you enough information to assist you to be more astute consumers when it comes to filling your next prescription.

