

Preakness Healthcare Center



For the past three years I have been a chaplain at the Preakness Health Care Center, a county-run facility that has existed, in various capacities, for about eighty years. It now has 350 residents, and the large majority are there “for the duration.”

With all the privacy safeguards, I cannot say much about the medical conditions of the residents. But it is safe to observe that the majority are “older”, some have incurable physical illnesses, and others are emotionally afflicted.

It is also safe to say that some of the residents never have any visitors.

It is a great credit to OLV that, for a number of years, Confirmation students have come – week after week – to help at the two Sunday Masses. I am unaware of any time when a resident was not treated with courtesy and respect by our candidates.

All of us know what it is like when someone is willing to be present for us. I see that, through you, each Sunday: wheeling people through the hallways to the dining room (and, as an added attraction, the ramp in building one)....going to everyone at Mass at the sign of peace....handing out cups of water at communion....being part of the tedious process of setting up/breaking down the tables and chairs.....

Believe me, without you, it would be hard to have Mass on Sundays there.

No one at Preakness chose his/her illness. In many instances, they will have to live with it for the rest of their lives. I cannot begin to imagine what that is like.

But I can say that they are God’s presence! Through your hands and feet, your smiles and gestures, they are telling some woman or man that they count.

Of course, it is all God’s credit....but in ministry at Preakness, God works through His volunteers.

***Father Jim Moss
Chaplain
Preakness Health Care Center***