

FLORIDA

Where the Surf Is Heavenly But 'Over 65' Is Hell

Miami, Fla. — (RNS) — The sunny beaches of South Florida may be a vacation paradise for the affluent, but for the not-so-rich retirees clustered there, life is fast becoming a nightmare.

Directors of church- or synagogue-related retirement facilities estimate that at least 20,000 and perhaps as many as 50,000 retirees are in serious trouble. They are reported to be "barely existing" and "suffering."

Recent statistics show that Florida has more people over age 65 than any other state. Nearly a quarter of the population of South Florida is reportedly over 65. Three quarters of them have no close family ties and half are either chronically or seriously ill.

In Dade and Brevard Counties there are between 70,000 and 100,000 elderly people and only about 30,000 beds available for them in nursing homes, extended care centers and retirement homes.

The most pressing problems

School 'Crisis' Really Not, Cardinal Says

Boston — (NC) — Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston called the word "crisis" in connection with the problem-plagued Catholic school situation "something of an exaggeration."

He said "it suggests that matters are out of hand, it even carries with it a note of panic."

Making his first public appearance April 19 since being hospitalized a month ago, the cardinal offered Mass and spoke at the 25th anniversary celebration of the opening of the Julie Billiart High School here.

"What we are experiencing is really a period of decision, a time when we must evaluate our resources and act in a manner consistent with them," Cardinal Cushing said.

"This may be a painstaking task and even an uncomfortable one, but we should not turn away from the road ahead merely because the path is unclear. We did not do that 25 years ago when we established this school and we will not do it now," the cardinal said.

Scotch Orders Offer Pledge On Celibacy

Glasgow, Scotland — (NC) — Leaders of Catholic Religious orders in Scotland sent Pope Paul VI a telegram pledging their "whole-hearted support" for his stand on the issue of priestly celibacy.

The telegram also welcomed the joint statement of the Scottish bishops supporting priestly celibacy.

Meanwhile, writing in the daily Glasgow Herald, Cardinal Gordon Gray of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, president of the Scottish Bishops' Conference, declared: "The celibate priest deliberately and freely sacrifices the lesser good of one Christian family for the greater good of the many Christian families he is called upon to serve. In doing so, far from devaluing Christian marriage, he uplifts it."

Courier-Journal

are in the Negro ghettos and among Jews concentrated in south Miami Beach. Those subsisting on welfare checks ranging from \$75 to \$165 a month are considered fortunate.

A recent study by Arthur Kalish, executive director of the Douglas Gardens Jewish Home, has shown that 20 per cent of the estimated 200,000 Jews in Dade County are over 65, and 70 per cent are concentrated in Miami Beach.

Virginia Gardens, the only synagogue-related institution for the aged in South Florida, has a waiting list of 90. It can accommodate 222 persons. More than 75 per cent of its residents receive public welfare.

However, Kalish pointed out that while waiting lists continue to grow at facilities sponsored by religious groups — there are currently 2,500 empty beds in the expensive private institutions which make up 90 per cent of the facilities in Dade County.

Even the relatively inexpensive facilities operated by religious groups are too expensive for the poor. For example, the "founder's fee" for residents at a Baptist institution ranges from \$7,500 to \$35,000.

The initial fee covers facilities ranging from efficiency rooms to luxury two-bedroom apartments. In addition, residents at Baptist Village in Pompano Beach, must pay maintenance fees of \$150 to \$230 a month.

Rhodesia: Churches Back Catholic Bishops

Salisbury — (RNS) — Church leaders of most Rhodesian Christian denominations have given unanimous support to the stand already taken by the country's Roman Catholic bishops to defy the government's drive toward apartheid and racial polarization.

After an all-day meeting here, representatives of 11 denominations issued a joint statement warning the Ian Smith regime that the Churches intended to carry on their work without regard to the allocation of land to black or to white people.

The statement declared further that the Churches would refuse to register as "voluntary organizations." This regulation is required, under the terms of a provision known as the Land Tenure Act, for a group to own or occupy land in either of the racial areas.

The Land Tenure Act, which will become effective in four

The Rev. Mark R. Douglas, executive director of Baptist Village, noted that 50 per cent discounts are given to missionaries and a 25 per cent discount is given to pastors and other "worthy persons." Baptist Village, the only Baptist institution in the three South Florida counties, plans a 200-unit expansion. It now has 80 units.

At the Catholic-sponsored St. Elizabeth Gardens in Pompano Beach, rents range from \$77.75 to \$105 a month. Residents there must have an income of less than \$5,400 a year for a couple or \$4,050 for individuals. However, no medical care is provided.

Ed Tucker, director of community services for the Miami archdiocese noted that private medical facilities are available nearby. St. Elizabeth Gardens has 200 residents with a waiting list of 600.

"The Church does not necessarily want to be in the retirement home business," Tucker said. "But the Church has stepped in to stimulate and set an example until the community accepted its responsibility."

Although Negroes are eligible for entry into any of the existing facilities, it was noted that no church-related retirement or nursing home has been established especially for them. At the present time the predominantly white nursing facilities have very few Negro residents. A center catering to black senior citizens has been suggested.

months, divides Rhodesia into two "equal" parts—one for the 250,000 whites, and the other for the nearly 5 million blacks—and gives government authorities discretion to prohibit interracial worship, interracial education, and black residence in white areas.

Church leaders also expressed "deep concern" at a government rejection of their appeal for a delay in a 5 per cent cut in a grant-in-aid from which teachers' salaries are paid by mission primary schools.

Besides the Roman Catholic prelates, the meeting was attended by the Anglican bishops, representatives of the Salvation Army and the Evangelical Lutheran, African Reformed, Methodist and United Methodist, United Congregational and Presbyterian Churches, the Baptist Mission, and the United Church of Christ.



Elderly people relax in the sun along the shore at Miami Beach. One bored man yawns. (RNS Photo)

The need for supplementary programs was stressed such as "meals on wheels," housekeeping services, shopping and cooking assistance, and a visitor service to overcome loneliness.

Kadish pointed out that "admission to an institution should be the last resort," since "it costs three times as much in an institution as it would if we could care for them at home."



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