



Madelyn Pocoski reports rise in emergency relief cases.

Family Center Notes Rise in 'Emergencies'

By PAT PETRASKE

The Catholic Family Center's intake department is experiencing a sharply rising influx of emergency walk-in clients seeking financial aid. Madelyn Pocoski, intake worker at the center, stated that the number of cases has doubled over the last 16 months.

In the beginning three month period of 1972, an average of 60 emergency cases were being handled each month. For the last three month period, including May, June and July, of this year, the average number of people coming into the center had risen to 140. An emergency case is one where a client is in immediate need of money for something to eat or a place to stay.

Part of the reason for the increase stems from the fact that summer is in full swing. "More people are out and around in the summer. It's easier, for example, for an alcoholic to get out and look for help. He finds it more of an effort in the winter," Mrs. Pocoski said.

Last July a total of 136 individuals and families were given assistance. This year, the number was 172. However, only 31 emergency cases were handled in July 1971. "This is setting a record," she exclaimed.

Another factor in the situation is increased restrictions at the welfare department. While praising the efforts of the welfare workers, Mrs. Pocoski believes the state has become "more strict" on welfare and has cut some people off.

"Many people do not know that they are eligible," she said. Allen Zufelt, public information officer at the Department of Social Services, reported that the department handled 18,733 cases in January of this year. By June

the number of cases had dropped to 17,772.

The Catholic Family Center is one of the few social agencies in the city that still gives public financial assistance. "I guess more people are hearing about us and are coming for help," Mrs. Pocoski said.

She admits that the easiest thing to do would be to just give out money, but attempts are made to find out why a person is destitute and how the situation can be changed. Each case is also verified if possible.

The most frequent cases concern robberies or muggings, which are the hardest to check. "We give the benefit of the doubt to people who come in for the first time. But some people seemed to be robbed every month," she said.

Contact with the welfare department enables the center to check an individual's welfare status. Often the client can't read and thus cannot handle required procedures. One case concerned a schizophrenic who thought he had money in the bank which made him ineligible for welfare. It was found that he had no money at all. "It was a real achievement to get him on public assistance," Mrs. Pocoski said.

In an average case Mrs. Pocoski's policy is to give \$1 a day per person with a limit of \$20. Often they are given bus tokens to enable them to get to another agency where they can receive more help. Or the center will intercede for an individual by calling a landlord or a utility company if he can't pay the rent or gas bill.

Many people even repay the center for the assistance. "Some people find it degrading to come to an agency and are happy to repay," Mrs. Pocoski remarked.



"Dosie-Doel!"

"Swing your partner," cries Jerry Carmen, a professional square dance caller, at the recent parish picnic at St. Joseph's, Penfield. More than 1000 parishioners attended.

Former Mental Patients Help Each Other Cope

BY PAT PETRASKE

"I was in lowered feelings but I agreed to watch my little niece while my brother went on vacation. This was in addition to my own two kids. My symptoms were racing thoughts, outbreaks of temper, palpitations and added respiration and my imagination was on fire," Josie began.

But then she started to "spot," that is, recognize her symptoms for what they were. Josie's training offered her relief, knowing that the situation was "distressing but not dangerous."

Josie is one of 15,000 nervous and former mental patients taking part in Recovery Inc., a systematic method of self-help after-care.

Before Recovery, she had spent a whole year in bed and was hospitalized four or five times. Depressions, fear of driving and inability to entertain people in her home had stifled Josie's life to the point where she could no longer function. Just as a diet teaches a person new eating habits, Recovery has given Josie new thinking habits.

Recovery was founded in Chicago in 1937 by the late Dr. Abraham A. Low at the Psychiatric Institute of the University of Illinois Medical School. His basic premise is that people can learn to handle the frustrations and irritations of life by their own will and by commanding their muscles to do the things they fear to do. A key phrase is that "a person knows he can function despite discomfort."

Josie explained to those attending a recent Recovery meeting at the Laurelton Presbyterian Church that "I trusted my basic functions and moved my muscles by getting dinner."

Other "spot" devices she used to prevent going into panic were noting her own group mindness (she knew her brother had wanted to get away), not complaining and lowering her standards by letting things go in her house. Josie also realized it was important to endorse herself for the partial things she did accomplish.

The meeting resembled a koffee klatsch of neighbors until Recovery leader, Mrs. Lorraine Burnett, signaled for the start of the reading. Following the Low method, Recovery embraces the same self-help philosophy as



groups like Alcoholics Anonymous. The first stage is a reading of a case history selected from Dr. Low's book "Mental Health Through Will Training" which has become Recovery's Bible.

Members then give examples of trivial situations that have arisen in the past week in which they'd had to distinguish between inner and outer threats to their mental health. First the event is described, then the things that were said and done and finally the "temper reaction" to it. Sandy, on the program for four months, recounted how she was "sure she was having a heart attack" when she was coming down with a stomach virus.

"Before Recovery I would have gone to pieces. I would have tried to get a doctor and my husband would have had to stay home with me," said Sandy, whose anxiety still compels her to sit close to an exit.

"Don't paper your thoughts. Substitute a secure thought for an

Civil Rights Center Announced at NDU

Notre Dame, Ind. [RNS] — Declaring that "our nation is now in retreat from civil rights advances of the last 20 years," Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, CSC, president of the University of Notre Dame, announced the establishment of a Center for Civil Rights at the university.

The new center will be funded through a \$500,000 grant from the Ford Foundation, according to Father Hesburgh, who is the former head of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

He said that among objectives of the center will be public policy analysis in the fields of civil and human rights; preparing a history of civil rights developments from 1957 to 1972; serving as a clearing house for civil rights information; and providing educational

insecure thought. Trust your bodily functions. Change a vicious cycle into a vitalizing cycle. Excuse, not accuse."

These "spotting" techniques used by Sandy were praised by the other members who have borne a similar experience. The atmosphere of acceptance gave hope to those who had felt disgrace. Care was given after each example to note how an "average" person would have reacted. "The average thing to do is to imagine all sorts of things when you have your symptoms," fellow member Betty reassured Sandy.

No diagnosis, treatment, advice, or counseling was offered at the meeting, nor was there any probing into a person's past experiences or into the causes of the problem. Each member is supposed to be cleared by a physician who is not supplanted by Recovery. Between meetings a member may telephone another member for help, but the call must be limited to five minutes, a policy established by Low.

The 950 recovery leaders are volunteers who were former patients and have been trained in the method. Nearly 700 people attend meetings in the Rochester area; many are former mental patients and many are merely psychoneurotic, explained Mrs. Burnett, who was under therapy, including shock treatments, for eight years before she found Recovery.

resources for students at Notre Dame.

One of the original members of the commission appointed by President Eisenhower in 1957, Father Hesburgh was named chairman of the commission in 1969 by President Nixon and resigned last Fall at the President's request.

MUSICAL SHOW

The Borchard Street Players will present an original musical revue "Only Once," at Aquinas Institute, August 3, and 5, at 8 p.m.

Donations, collected at the door, will be divided among Aquinas Institute, The Al Sigi Center, Channel 1 and the group's treasury.

NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHER WANTED

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