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# Nothing Too Small

**"N**othing is too small to do to help another human person." With these words, spoken as she accepted an award for her service to the Catholic health ministry, Sr. Stephen Brueggeman, PHJC, crystallized the essence of that ministry. Like an unseen but powerful river, this one simple thought flowed beneath all the activities of CHA's assembly. Beneath the expert sessions on responding to the marketplace, the award celebrations, the liturgies. Beneath the words of CEOs, economists, caregivers, and consultants. The founders of Catholic healthcare built their ministry on this thought, and it continues to form a strong foundation for the ministry today.

The assembly affirmed participants' sense of belonging to a community of service—a community enriched by its faith and traditions and its participation in the human condition. Poet David Whyte capsulized the spirit of the ministry, especially in these lines: "Everything we receive we are asked to give away. The more we can pass on our gifts to others, the more at home we feel in the world."

This desire to "pass on our gifts," to build community, motivates the work of people seeking to improve care for persons who are living with life-threatening illness. In an assembly filled with stirring moments, perhaps the most poignant event was the presentation by representatives from Supportive Care of the Dying: A Coalition for Compassionate Care. They demonstrated how caregivers can help patients and their families experience the dying process as a spiritually enriching, natural part of life. *Assembly participants responded enthusiastically. In answer to their many requests for help in diminishing the alienation that current practices engender, the coalition is making available a video of the presentation. (See the assembly report and ad in this issue.)*

CHA has also received helpful feedback on another issue. So far, 70 readers have returned a *Health Progress* fax survey, in the May-June 1997 issue, asking for reaction to a new feature, Prayer Service. Apparently the Prayer Service, too, meets a need. All respondents advised us to continue. Some comments: "We start all our meetings with a prayer, and I would use this." • "You would not believe how well this prayer fits into the program we are planning . . . I applaud you for the idea." • "This is a wonderful, creative, practical idea." If you haven't responded, please send us your suggestions, and don't miss the latest Prayer Service, put together by Sr. Barbara McMullen, CDP, on p. 56 of this issue.



Sr. Stephen Brueggeman, PHJC, received the Sr. Concilia Moran, RSM, Award at CHA's 82nd Annual Assembly in June.

## Health Progress Awards

Two authors recently won awards for their articles in the November-December 1996 issue of *Health Progress*: Sidney Callahan for "A Feminist Case against Euthanasia" (Catholic Press Association) and Laurence J. O'Connell for "Changing the Culture of Dying" (Apex '97 Awards of Excellence). *Health Progress* journal also won an Apex award for publication excellence and CPA awards for general excellence and for best special section for "Violence: Ripping the Fabric of Society" (March-April 1996), which was suggested by Sr. Mary Louise Stubbs, DC, Archbishop's Commission on Community Health, St. Louis.