

EDITOR'S NOTE

Can you imagine how often the prodigal son, once back in his father's house, told the story of his redemption? How many guests at table or strangers in the market listened to the tale of his wayward life and how his father's enormous love and forgiveness restored him to health and wholeness? He must never have tired of the telling.



MARY ANN
STEINER

Many years ago I heard the Episcopal theologian and author Morton Kelsey tell his own story of a prodigal father. He told it so powerfully that I remember it decades later. Of course, by the time I heard it, he, like the prodigal son, must have told it many times.

Kelsey was an esteemed author and speaker, who admitted that when choosing among priorities, family didn't always come first. His son, especially, was a mystery, even a disappointment, to him, and they had little to do with each other until the son, suffering from an illness he'd kept from his parents, came home to die. In their house by the ocean, his parents cared for him in the room with the view he had always loved. The father came to know how narrow his own frame of understanding had been and how large his son's heart was. Overwhelmed by the losses and how little time was left, Kelsey wept as he asked his son's forgiveness for not being there for him. Not the man of words his father was but eloquent in his brevity, the son said, "But you are now." Forgiveness and healing in another father's house.

This issue of *Health Progress* is focused on healing spaces. For too long I thought the emphasis was on the noun rather than the adjective: that we would feature beautiful architecture and innovative design. It turns out that the more important word is "healing," and that the wise authors who wrote for us never allowed the healing to fall second to the spaces that support it. Modest clinics that care for trafficked victims, sacred corridors through which patients are wheeled to urgent treatments, private rooms where families wonder what to do next, quiet nooks that nurses find to relieve the stress and grieve the losses. These are the healing spaces.

Special thanks to Philip J. Boyle, who served as guest co-editor for this issue of the magazine.

Boyle led Trinity Health's initiative to explore how its mission statement, which calls the ministry to be a "transforming, healing presence to those it serves," should be carried out in the system's buildings, chapels, hospital corridors, lobbies and employee lounges. He led us to intriguing article topics and expert authors.

First titled *Hospital Progress*, the official journal of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, published its first issue in May 1920 and changed its name to *Health Progress* in 1984. With this issue, *Health Progress* begins its 100th year. Without stretching the point too far, we like to believe that the magazine has served as its own kind of healing space. In its very first issue, Fr. Charles Moulinier, SJ, CHA's first president, called for a standardization of excellence across Catholic hospitals as a part of Catholic identity rather than an alternative to Catholic identity. In this issue, Fr. Charles Bouchard's article on how *Health Progress* has led discussions of identity and sponsorship over the decades, makes exactly the same point: we aren't an either/or ministry, but a both/and one. Each of the next five issues will host an article on other topics that define CHA's work as an association: community benefit, advocacy, ethics, international outreach and mission integration.

As Kai Ryssdal, host of National Public Radio's "Marketplace," says when he opens program, "Let's do the numbers." *Hospital/Health Progress* has published 1,030 issues since 1920. Each issue has about ten articles on the special topic, one in-depth feature, six regular columns and one original prayer. Last year the magazine won 12 national publishing awards. You are one of 15,637 who'll receive the print version this month; if you're reading us online, welcome to a growing readership. Whatever your preference, please keep reading and visit www.chausa.org/HealthProgress100 for other interesting facts, pictures and updates.

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