

# JESUS' HEALING REVEALED

BY SR. M. PETER  
LILLIAN DiMARIA,  
O.CARM



*Sr. DiMaria is director, Avila Institute of Gerontology, sponsored by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, Germantown, N.Y.*

**H**ow many of us can't wait to turn 86 and live in a nursing home? I would venture to say that most people, when considering how they would like to spend their elder years, prefer the idea of remaining at home and living a healthy, independent life style. This is our hope for our loved ones and certainly for ourselves, yet we have no way of really knowing what lies ahead, or how much will really be within our control.

What Catholic long-term care can "control" are the services provided to our residents. We are the people and places that seek to offer quality care; and to enhance the quality of life for each individual, who entrusts us with his or her care. We strive to help people discover a new independence, find a new normalcy, as well as purpose and meaning in their lives, while helping them remain connected to their spirituality and to God.

There are innumerable circumstances that bring people to long-term care. One consistent mark of the experience of those living in Catholic long-term care facilities is the enduring presence of Jesus' compassion made very real through the actions of all who are dedicated to this ministry. The journey we share with our residents is a privilege. Our service to them extends and enlivens Jesus' healing mission today. We walk with those closest to God, allowing each person to be treated with dignity and within the context of his/her diseases. We accompany each of them through every stage of their disease, never abandoning, but always present.

There are many stories that reveal Jesus' healing presence in Catholic long-term care. Here are some of the many faces of those we are honored to serve; those who show us everyday how to truly *live* on this journey to the communion of saints.



From left, Sister Raphael Schmitz, O.Carm., activity therapist, and Dorothy (middle) and Virginia, who are both residents at St. Patrick's Residence, Naperville, Ill., participate in a "Sittersize" class.



Mae, left, a resident at St. Patrick's Residence, Naperville, Ill., and Sr. Raphael Schmitz, O.Carm., activity therapist, enjoy a day in the garden with Maggie, the facility's yellow Lab.



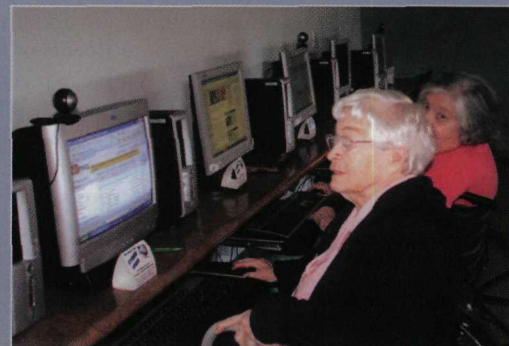
Mildred, right, a resident at St. Patrick's Residence, Naperville, Ill., and Sister Jeanne Haley, O.Carm., administrator, share a hug in the garden.



Sr. Jeanne Haley, O.Carm., administrator, and residents of St. Patrick's Residence, Naperville, Ill., ring in the new year.



A resident at Kahl Home for the Aged and Infirm, Davenport, Iowa, practices driving a car on the It's Never 2 Late (IN2L) computer system. The IN2L is an adaptive computer system specifically designed for older adults. This system offers activities, engagement tools and the opportunity for unique experiences such as being able to drive again.



From left, Sr. Virginia Schumann, RSCJ, and Sr. Barbara Kearins, RSCJ, residents at Teresian House Nursing Home, Albany, N.Y., work on their computer skills at the home's Cyber Café. Teresian House provides every resident with the means for communicating with their family and friends interactively using e-mail, instant messaging and webcams. The Cyber Café offers residents opportunities for virtual visits.