

SAINT LUKE INSTITUTE

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Saint Luke Institute-Founded 1977

Primary Purpose: to provide medical and spiritual treatment and rehabilitation to the alcohol/drug dependent religious.

An Introduction to the Saint Luke Program ... Our Philosophy and Our Direction.

The Saint Luke Institute offers a special kind of rehabilitation to answer the unique problems that alcohol abuse/chemical dependency pose for men and women in the active ministry of the Church. Research suggests that this population has particular difficulties associated with chemical abuse. An estimated 10,000 Nuns, 5,000 Priests and 2,000 Brothers have alcohol or other chemical dependency problems.

The first question you may ask is... what makes the Saint Luke Institute program different from any other rehabilitation program?

The answer lies in the comprehensive nature of the program and the people who are an integral part of it. At the Saint Luke Institute, the staff is comprised of people with unique and highly specialized experience. Staff members have a strong religious education and professional experience in mental health, with emphasis on alcohol/drug dependency problems.



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Many of the professional counselors also are chemically dependent and in recovery themselves, giving them unique insights into the problems of the chemically dependent religious or priest. Father Michael R. Peterson, M.D.—an ordained priest with the Archdiocese of Washington as well as a practicing physician and psychiatrist—is the founder and director of Saint Luke Institute. His medical and theological training give him unique insight into the needs of the alcohol/ drug dependent religious person. Under his direction, this most comprehensive program has been developed.

The problems of the alcohol dependent, or other chemically dependent person, are guite numerous. In the case of the religious alcoholic, problems are compounded by excessive feelings of guilt, confusion, frustration, and embarrassment. With the religious man or woman, confrontation and identification of this problem present some serious complications...these complications include the exalted role in which persons place the priest, sister or brother, roles which do not allow for human disease to say nothing of human imperfections. Additionally, the communities and dioceses are confused and in need of education and healing themselves concerning the disease of alcoholism. Finally, the priest, brother or



sister who suffers from the disease of alcoholism comes from a background, a system, and a history of values which are difficult for laypersons to understand. Without an understanding of those values and spiritual practices which so formed these persons, it is difficult to help that religious person find the healing which is essential for a total reintegration back into his or her religious family. Due to these complications, the disease of alcoholism presents itself in a truly unique manner in the religious man or woman.

Medical science now recognizes the multiple problems of the chemically dependent person. The Saint Luke Institute program takes the knowledge one step further, recognizing the serious problems of the chemically dependent *religious* person. Within the context of a healing community a religious man, woman, or priest can deal most effectively with an alcohol problem. This is what we believe at the Saint Luke Institute.

Our program looks at the whole person ... emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually. Saint Luke Institute treats both men and women, with a strong belief in the family philosophy. This means that the religious community is as deeply involved as each individual in the program. Reintegration back into the religious community demands a mutual collaboration with the religious family if it is to be successful.



The program is thorough and lengthy. The initial evaluation is four days, and an inpatient stay lasts four months. We believe this to be the minimum amount of time needed to expect a person to learn new skills and patterns of behavior, without the need for alcohol or other chemicals in his or her life.

Pre-Admission Evaluation Program... Inpatient Program... Aftercare Program ... Outpatient Program. These programs comprise the Saint Luke Institute system. The information that follows provides a brief overview of our process. Results are outstanding, and our care is uncompromising. At the Saint Luke Institute, we are here to help.

I. The Pre-Admission Evaluation Program

The Pre-Admission Evaluation Program is a four day program consisting of medical, psychiatric, neurological, and neuropsychological testing. Potential clients are carefully evaluated to assess their medical, neurological, and psychological needs. Upon arriving at the Institute for the short stay, potential clients will undergo the following:

 Interviews with professional counselors who specialize in the treatment and recovery of the chemically dependent religious



- Thorough medical and neurological examinations to determine what effects the chemicals are having on the individual (including studies to determine extent of damage to blood, brain, liver, heart and other vital organs)
- Battery of neuropsychological tests to determine how the individual is coping with the real life situation, including a determination of any damage to the central nervous system
- Psychiatric interview and evaluation to identify other possible complicating issues that may be present
- Meetings and interaction with clients who are presently participating in the inpatient program which help diffuse the fears and anxieties about rehabilitation programs; this allows the potential client that important firsthand contact with other religious and priests who are dealing with the disease and succeeding

Upon completion of the four-day evaluation period:

- Individual meets with interviewers and the entire Evaluation Team to receive an objective assessment of the chemical dependency pattern, and how it has affected the individual's life
 - Results of physical testing are presented



- Detailed report is sent to the Ordinary or Religious Superior with a copy to the evaluated client
- The Ordinary or Religious Superior can discuss results at a later date, now more freely, since the client's initial fear has been diffused by visiting the Institute. In addition, the individual now has an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, and not be a passive participant only.

The final step... an objective recommendation from the Saint Luke Institute. Some may need an inpatient program. Some may not. In fact, in some cases, alcohol or other drugs may not even be the problem. Every person is evaluated as an individual, with a specific set of circumstances. Every recommendation is tailored to fit those circumstances.

II. The Inpatient Program

Frequently, before a client's arrival at the Institute, the Bishop or Superior needs assistance with confronting the chemically dependent person. A Saint Luke Institute professional will assist, either by telephone or in person, at this crucial time. Typically, there is severe denial of the problem by the affected individual, even after the four-day evaluation. Saint Luke Institute staff members understand the



"confrontation model," and can help prepare the religious family for that necessary and painful confrontation process. This is a most difficult time—a time when professional help may be needed to suggest innovative and effective ways to confront the individual with the problem.

If the affected individual cannot stay in residence at the Institute (due to specific problems or a lack of space at the Institute), every attempt is made to help with interim measures. If a case qualifies as an emergency, the Saint Luke Institute will, of course, make the necessary arrangements immediately.

- Upon admission, physiological needs receive first attention. There are generally many medical needs as a consequence of chemical abuse, but detoxification is a primary concern. Scientifically, detoxification occurs at two levels:
- Level #1—Immediate critical detoxification where patient must be hospitalized for acute withdrawal symptoms. This situation is uncom-
- mon in this population, but sometimes necessary.
- Level #2—Gradual period of detoxification, where 30-60 days must pass to clear memory and other brain functions, before beginning the complex re-education process.



- At the time of admission to the Saint Luke Institute, we ask the Community to pray with the new arrival at the Eucharistic Liturgy where we administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. This is a concrete expression of our belief that the Holy Spirit is at work in this complex healing process and our dependency on that Presence to make effective our medical, psychological and other human tools for healing.
- Because the disease of alcoholism is also a spiritual disease, we do everything possible to help that religious person renew his or her commitment to the service of Our Lord. The daily Eucharistic Liturgy is a central focus of nurturance and healing for all of us in the Saint Luke Community. Weekly theological workshops help also to renew our understanding of the working of the Church in the world. Speakers are drawn from across the country to cover topics such as prayer, new theological insights, liturgy, new views of critical Biblical scholars, marriage, counseling and others.
- The Spiritual Recovery Program of Alcoholics Anonymous is the cornerstone of any competent treatment program. It is also the cornerstone of the Saint Luke Institute Program. It is very difficult for the priest or religious man or woman to use this program after leaving the Insti-



tute if they are not properly introduced to the steps of A.A. and have positive, quality experiences in the beginning of their rehabilitation. All residents attend four meetings of the A.A. fellowship each week as a minimum and continue this pattern on discharge from the Inpatient Program.

- An individual counselor meets with each client and helps guide him or her through the treatment program. The same counselor guides the client for the duration, excluding the two year Aftercare Program. Two year aftercare is an individualized program for each client.
- Daily psychotherapy groups are held to help the religious or priest clients learn about themselves and their relationship with others. Clients learn specific techniques in dealing with anxieties, sleep disorders, undergo biofeedback, structured relaxation training and personal effectiveness skills.
- Each individual takes part in a structured exercise program, facilitating the physical healing process.
- Alcohol and other chemicals impair many endocrine functions as well as damage organs. For this reason, it becomes necessary to prescribe individual dietary programs for each client.
- Saint Luke Institute is committed to returning priests and religious men and



women to active ministry. Assisting in this effort is a vocational assessment that helps individuals re-evaluate their position and goals within the religious community, as well as suitable vocational assignments for the future.

- At the end of the third month, the Ordinary or Major Superior is expected to come to the facility to meet with the therapy team and the client. At this time there is an introduction to the Inpatient Program, as well as the Aftercare Program. In addition, contractual arrangements are made in preparation for the important reintegration process back into the real-life, religious family.
- After the client is discharged and returns to his or her religious family, a member of the Saint Luke Institute Staff will go to that individual community for the very important Re-Entry Workshop. It has been our experience that the religious family needs help with the reestablishment of communication with the client as much or more than the chemically dependent person. The time of re-entry allows for an establishment of a new communication process, the exciting sharing of new experiences of sobriety, an openness about the disease of alcoholism, and an education of the community or "Priestly family" about the disease and about their recovering brother and sister.



This important workshop proves to be valuable in dealing with the symptom of taking another drink or using the pills again. Our philosophy is that alcoholism is a chronic disease which is characterized by recurrences of drinking episodes. We discourage them, warn against them, plan for them; they may still occur without warning at times in the future of that person's life. No one wants to think about that "slip" or recurrence of drinking behavior, we believe that the person should be well prepared so that guilt, shame and catastrophising do not occur. The person then knows what to do, whom to contact, where to rearrange his or her schedule. The religious family needs to know this also. Discussion openly of the possibility, plans for contacts to be made, and return to A.A. or Al-Anon, can be crucial for continued sobriety of the recently healed client.

III. The Aftercare Program

Following the Inpatient Program, there is always a need for follow-up communications with a client. Contact must be maintained to assess the on-going progress of an individual in recovery. This on-going program is critical and essential. Program statistics bear out the importance that after 18 months of sobriety, including some contact with Alcoholics Anonymous, a



person has a 90% chance of remaining sober for his or her life. This is a message of hope to those afflicted with a disease that otherwise appears hopeless.

For two years, Saint Luke Institute stays in contact.

- Monthly telephone calls with clients and religious family, if necessary
- Four workshops, every six months, where client makes return visits to the Institute for education, re-evaluation, and vital sharing with each other.

IV. The Outpatient Program

The Saint Luke Institute also has comprehensive psychiatric outpatient programs. Because of our desire to be helpful to all persons, whether clergy, religious, or laity, we will design programs which are individually tailored to the needs of the persons and their families.

The comprehensive psychiatric program includes many outpatient services:

- --Comprehensive psychological and psychiatric assessment
- -Comprehensive neuropsychological testing services and consultation
- Individual psychotherapy
- Group psychotherapy including assertiveness training, communication skills training, parent effectiveness training



- -Family therapy including conjoint family therapy
- -Evaluation and treatment of childhood and adolescent disorders
- -Marital therapy
- --Chemical dependency and alcoholism programs including group psychotherapy, individual counseling, Day Care Program
- -Behavioral therapy including phobic disorders and anxiety disorders
- -Relaxation and biofeedback training

Where to Find the Saint Luke Institute

Inpatient Facilities:

Saint Luke Institute 120 Goulding Street Holliston, Massachusetts 01746 (617) 429-4307 Contact: Evaluation and Pre-Admission Coordinator

Saint Luke Institute 2420 Brooks Drive Suitland, Maryland 20023 (301) 967-3700

Contact: Evaluation and Pre-Admission Coordinator



Outpatient Clinics:

Marsalin Clinic 120 Goulding Street Holliston, Massachusetts 01746 (617) 429-4307 Contact: Outpatient Coordinator

Saint Bernardine Clinic 2420 Brooks Drive Suitland, Maryland 20746 (301) 967-3700 Contact: Outpatient Coordinator

If you or your religious family are in need of assistance, or if you feel you may be in need of assistance, please contact us, or call directly to one of the aforementioned telephone numbers.

Saint Luke Institute... providing care and guidance to the alcoholic/drug dependent religious. Hopefully, the existence of this program will make it easier for the alcohol/drug dependent religious to reach out, establish communication, and begin that important path to recovery.

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