

They've got
the
Spearit

Sailors help at HIV camp

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Right: HTFN David Gainey tries to get a smile from a tiny resident of All Saints Camp of St. John the Divine.



Story by JO1 Chris Price, photo by PHAN Amy Hupper

The HIV virus doesn't discriminate — it knows no color, age or gender. It weakens the body and suppresses the spirit. But at All Saints Camp of St. John the Divine in Nassau, Bahamas, the victims of AIDS refuse to wallow in self-pity.

A Christian ministry and health care program, All Saints Camp is unique in that 90 percent of its members are infected with the HIV virus — or they already have symptoms of full-blown AIDS.

The camp, located on Lazaretto Road in Nassau, is far from the mainstream of the city. Except for a makeshift wooden gate manned by residents at the roadside entrance, few signs point to its existence. In fact, very few people venture up the steep road leading to the camp — not because of the rocky twists and turns — rather, the fear of AIDS.

Sailors from the Norfolk-based submarine tender USS *L.Y. Spear* (AS 36) put aside any fear and visited the camp during their Nassau port call in April. The sailors brought food, toys and clothes as well as love

and hope.

"It's not good politics to share what's going on here. In the Bahamian hospitals, the attitude generally is — these people will die," said camp director Rev. Father Glenroy W. Nottage. "Patients will languish in the bed and pity themselves, while the hospital pampers them. I don't do that.

"I feel they [AIDS sufferers] should move around. Put a rake or a paint brush in their hands. Put a hammer in their hands," he said. "That'll bring them back into life. This way, they don't go to bed expecting to die. They go to bed knowing that they've got work they didn't finish."

"I want to help. I want to share a little bit of my time," said Ship's Serviceman 2nd Class Divina Dualan. "I can go to the beach anytime. But I'm so proud today to be here as a representative of the United States."

SH3 Hector Romero echoed that sentiment. "Our visit shows what a little work and love can do."

Price and Hupper are assigned to USS L.Y. Spear (AS 36).

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