

They miss him, too. "They call and come to see me. They keep track of me," the priest muses.

The rabbi also has his ties. When a young man ran away from a group home recently, the administrators called Rabbi Goldberg. "They knew he'd come to me," he said.

Adaptable as the two chaplains are, they live in a kind of limbo. They've been waiting for the place to close for years.

"I thought I'd be gone by now," Father Malley, who lives in St. Mary's of the Assumption parish in Port Richmond, said. He used to share the position of Roman Catholic chaplain with another priest. That was in the days when there were 700 at mass every Sunday. Now there are an average of 30.

Rabbi Goldberg reports a similar decline, from 1,600 to 200 — and the latter number includes clients at the Karl Warner Center on the SIDD grounds.

With the decline, the rabbi, who used to live on the grounds and now resides in Brooklyn, has become the Protestant chaplain as well.

They may be the last remaining staff members who remember the many years before the scandals about conditions at Willowbrook and the ensuing court cases. "The big stink," Father Malley called them.

Each said change has been for the better. But they said blame was misplaced and there was a lot of unnecessary trampling by people who came in, did their damage and left.

Ironically, the rabbi said, after the court order barred ad-

missions to the institution. "I had parents tearing off my door, begging for placements." As evidence, he picked up a letter with such a request that was written just months ago.

"The group homes are better than what they had here," Rabbi Goldberg said. But he added that with the transition there was a lapse in religious care for a while: "When the (group home) doors were opened, nothing was being done as far as religion."

In the mid '70s, when admissions were stopped and clients were moved out, deinstitutionalization fever ran so high that group home residents were not permitted to come back to the developmental center for the weekly mass they were used to attending, Father Malley said.

But neither was it easy for the mentally retarded to find places in houses of worship in the community, the chaplains said.

The rabbi now focuses his efforts on making sure those in the community get religious programs. He pushes consciousness raising programs such as the "Access Sabbaths" designed to open congregations up to the disabled. He is working on getting a kosher group home for Staten Island. He reports, happily, that the Jewish Community Center provides a Sunday school and transportation for group home residents.

"Right now, I'm more active in the community. I'm expecting the institution to close," he said. And he wants to be sure that clients "get what they got here — top religious care."

107-3