

March 2010 Parish Advocate E News Update

Dear Parish Advocates,

March is
Hemophilia Month
Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (formerly Mental Retardation) **Month**
National Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Month
National Kidney Month

Prayers of the Faithful . . .

That all people with disabilities, their families and care-providers, know God's tender love and the support of a welcoming community, we pray . . .

That we recognize the gifts and contributions of all people, especially individuals with cognitive disabilities, we pray . . .

Stand with the Disability Office as we join in solidarity to Affirm Life and continue what was begun during our Diocesan Respect Life Week, January 17th – 23, 2010

A Life Like Yours DVD was produced in collaboration with NCPD by the Archdiocese of Washington's Department of Life Issues and the Department of Special Needs Ministries. It premiered at the annual Youth Rally for Life in Washington, DC on January 22, 2010. We commend Peg Kolm, the video's producer, who is the Archdiocese's Coordinator in the Office of Ministry for Persons with Disabilities.

A Life Like Yours, is a 5 minute video about **Madeline** (Mattie), a young lady with Down syndrome. It begins with "Madeline is just one part of this large body . . . To view go to www.ncpd.org

Take Action on Health Care Now

Re: UPDATED Nationwide USCCB Bulletin Insert on Health Care

During October, November, and January, diocesan and parish leaders were asked by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to distribute three consecutive Nationwide



Bulletin Inserts on health care reform. Thank you for your great cooperation in that effort. Since that time the following has occurred:

- The U.S. House passed health care reform that reaffirms the essential, longstanding and widely supported policy against using federal funds for elective abortion coverage.
- The U.S. Senate has rejected this policy and passed health care reform that requires federal funds to help subsidize and promote health plans that cover elective abortions. All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people's abortions through a separate payment solely to pay for abortion. And the affordability credits for very low income families purchasing private plans in a Health Insurance Exchange are inadequate and would leave families financially vulnerable.
- Congressional leaders are now trying to figure out how the rules of the House and Senate could allow the final passage of a modified bill that would satisfy disagreements between House and Senate versions.
- Catholics need to make their voices heard insisting that health care reform protect the lives, dignity, consciences and health of all. Provisions against abortion funding and in favor of conscience protection, affordability, and immigrants' access to health care must be part of a fair and just health care reform bill. Unless and until these criteria are met, the final bill must be opposed.
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- **The U.S. bishops have asked that the attached [USCCB Nationwide Bulletin Insert](#) ([Spanish Insert](#)) on health care reform be distributed in any way possible as soon as possible.** Final votes may take place as early as this weekend.
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- More information can be found at www.usccb.org/healthcare.
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- Thank you for your urgent actions and prayers on behalf of this nationwide effort!

U.S. BISHOPS PROVIDE RESOURCES EXPLAINING FLAWS IN SENATE HEALTH CARE BILL

WASHINGTON-The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has made available several new resources explaining its calls for essential changes to the Senate health care reform bill. In a March 15 statement, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, President of the USCCB, said that the U.S. bishops would, regretfully, have to oppose the final bill if these changes were not made.

The resources are available at: www.usccb.org/healthcare

Among them is an analysis of the abortion funding provisions of the Senate health care bill that highlights the bishops' objections (www.usccb.org/healthcare/030410facts.pdf). Two pieces respond to recent criticisms of the bishops' position on the health care bill, namely criticisms from Timothy Stoltzfus Jost of Washington and Lee University Law School (www.usccb.org/healthcare/jost-response.pdf) and the other regarding the funding of abortion at community health centers (www.usccb.org/healthcare/communityhealthcenters.pdf).

With so much of the health care debate focusing on the nature of the legal "status quo" of federal abortion funding, the page also features a backgrounder on current federal policy on abortion funding (www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/healthcare/abortion_funding_102309.pdf) and an analysis of the House health care bill's Stupak Amendment (www.usccb.org/healthcare/StupakAmendmentFactsheet.pdf).

Upcoming Events

Continuing on with the yearlong education on Respect Life & Disabilities that was started during Respect Life Week on January 17-18, 2010, our Diocese is hosting

Pastoral Care for Parents Receiving a Poor Prenatal Diagnosis for Their Child -

Thursday, March 25, 2010 --7:00 – 9:00 pm – Pastoral Center, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA 23294 Kelly Conference Room

Speaker: Tracy Winsor, Outreach Coordinator of *Be Not Afraid*, Charlotte, NC, will address: **Sensitivity issues associated with the importance of understanding the specifics of a poor prenatal diagnosis**, the differences in male and female grief, how abortions following a poor diagnosis are routinely handled, and the resources available for parents carrying to term, and more...

To download flyer, [click here](#).

For more information and to reserve a seat contact Nita Grignol, Office for Persons with Disabilities at (804) 359-5661, ext. 260 or email Wendy Henderson at whenderson@richmond.org.

**Making the Case...for Life:
World Down Syndrome Day, Sunday March 21**

This Sunday is World Down Syndrome Day. We honor the giftedness of all our brothers and sisters, including those who were born with Down syndrome. But we know that about 90 % of women, when they receive a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome, decide to abort.

That's why Catholic ministries across the country are making the case this week that all life is sacred. In the Archdiocese of Washington, **Isaiah's Promise**, which helps pregnant women carry to term following unexpected prenatal diagnosis, is placing an ad in the *Catholic Standard* March 18. Isaiah's Promise is collaborating with Charlotte, N.C. **Be Not Afraid Ministries** to produce this outreach.

A similar ad will be in the *Washington Post* on Sunday, March 21, paid for by Catholic parents of a child with Down syndrome, who is a student in an archdiocesan elementary school. Please join with me in congratulating Isaiah's Promise for their vision. For more information, go to www.isaiahspromise.net

Saturday, March 27, 2010: Affirming Life Workshop, Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Washington, DC, 1:30 pm & 2:30 pm. Workshop presented as part of the second annual Archdiocese of Washington's Conference on Faith, Deafness and Disabilities. Registration at www.adw.org.

Wednesdays, 6:30pm to 8:30 pm, at McGuire Veterans Hospital Room E121, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Peer-to-Peer.

Join a free course of Veterans helping Veterans recover from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental illnesses. This course started the end of February and is still continuing. [Click to see NAMI Peer to Peer Flyer](#) for more information.

Sunday, April 18th, 2010 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm at St. Gregory the Great Catholic School Auditorium, 5345 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach.(Across from Haynes Furniture Store) A family celebration of Interfaith WORSHIP, FOOD and FELLOWSHIP

Come participate in FIN's first family event for people with disabilities, their families and friends. There will be a short, child friendly, interfaith worship service followed by a time to meet new friends, have some good food and browse through a large selection of faith based and community related disability materials. Hope to see you there.

-This FIN event is FREE and open to all

For more information and to RSVP email Karen Jackson at

faithinclusionnetwork@gmail.com

Or call 423-4027

Recent Event

The recent event held on **Saturday, March 6, 2010 -Catholic Social Teaching – A Day of Learning, Reflection and Transformation**, was well attended and received great evaluations.

Watch for an article, ***Catholic Social Teaching inspires work for change***, in the March 22, 2010 issue of the Catholic Virginian.

The presenters, Robert Nalewajek, President, Centesimus Annus Pro Pontific* (CAPP) ** – USA and a Director of the Foundation at the Vatican and Dr. Karen Wright – Director of The Catholic University of America – CST Certificate Program, presented what is true to the teaching of the magisterium of the Church.

*100 Years

** CAPP is a lay-led, pontifical foundation established by Pope John Paul II that is headquartered at the Vatican. CAPP is the vehicle for lay education and evangelization of Catholic Social Doctrine.

Legislative

Virginia Budget Bill -

On Sunday, March 14, 2011, The General Assembly passed Virginia's 2010-2012 Biennium Budget.

Thank you **Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC)** and for all of you who responded to VCC's Action Alerts by contacting their legislators. .

Restorations of home and community based services in the 2010-2012 budget include:

- 250 new ID Waivers for individuals/families on the ID Waiver waiting list (start date of 7/1/10)*
- Elimination of the proposed cut to respite services. *
- Elimination of the proposed cut to HCBS Waiver provider reimbursement rates *
- Elimination of proposed freeze on HCBS Waiver enrollment *

- Elimination of proposed cuts to Medicaid podiatry and optometry services.*
- Monthly income for HCBS Waiver eligibility would not be reduced from 300% SSI to 250% SSI *
- No cuts to consumer directed services

Cuts/Policies that remain in the 2010-2012 VA Budget include:

- \$23 million to rebuild a 75-bed institution at Southeastern Virginia Training Center in Chesapeake.
- \$24 million to renovate Central Virginia Training Center, an institution in Lynchburg.
- 750 ID Waivers and 134 DD Waivers eliminated (this would make 4 years of no new DD Waivers).
- Assistive Technology (AT) will be reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000 per year in FY12.*
- Environmental Modifications (EM) will be reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000 per year in FY12.*

**-Restorations dependent on FMAP funding. Like many other items in the budget, these restorations are contingent upon a 6 month extension of the enhanced FMAP (a temporary increase in the federal share of Medicaid spending). On Thursday of last week, the U.S. Senate passed the FMAP extension, which was included in the American Workers, State, and Business Relief Act of 2010 (H.R. 4213), by a vote of 62-36. The U.S. House of Representatives has not yet decided on whether to adopt the Senate bill or develop its own bill, which, after passage would be conferenced with the Senate bill. The Arc will be sure to keep you updated on the status of FMAP, letting you know when action is needed.*

What happens next?

The budget bill now goes to Governor McDonnell for his review. The Governor has the ability to propose amendments to the budget before the General Assembly's veto session on April 21st.

National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities

NCPD's Webinars

For review of the past webinars, go to www.NCPD.org and click on webinars, then click "replay" on which ones you would like to view. Each webinar has great handouts to download.

Upcoming Webinars

Spring 2010	Advanced Considerations on Children and Youth with Mental Illness
Summer 2010	Advanced Considerations on Catechesis and Children and Youth with Disabilities
Fall 2010	Advanced Considerations on Threats to the Life of People with Disabilities: Part 1, Pre-Natal Diagnosis

More Information on the webinars will be disseminated as we receive it.

Parish Advocates What creativity, energy, and passion our Parish Advocates have. As we continue the year long education on Respect Life and Disabilities that was started during Respect Life Week on January 17-18, our Parish Advocates have done the following:

- Maggie Disney at St. Bridget's, Richmond recently arranged for speakers after each of the March 6 – 7 Mass to talk about welcoming People with Disabilities.
- Similarly, Sheila Talley and Mary Beth Maino, Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville hosted a table after all February 13-14 Masses regarding "embracing all with disabilities." They also distributed a Needs Assessment Survey which they would be happy to share with other advocates, and drafted the following "*mission statement*."

Our mission statement for this group (which is a work in progress) is "Through outreach and inclusion, to offer a faith-based support group to individuals and families impacted with disabilities within our Redeemer Community" - This group is open to any or all who interface with those with disabilities, those impacted directly or indirectly with disabilities or want to be involved to support those with disabilities. This could include families impacted, teachers, professionals, elderly, etc. ~ Everyone is welcome!!

Program Meetings

Outreach In Love, a Catholic based religious education program designed for the intellectually and/or physically disabled. It is open to all faiths and all ages. For more information call Joan Congable at 804 501-0022 or email at outreachinlove@yahoo.com.

Outreach in Love is having their annual Spaghetti Dinner, March 17, 2010 at St. Edward's Church in Richmond. All families and students with disabilities are invited to attend. For more information call Joan Congable at 804 501-0022 or email at outreachinlove@yahoo.com

Living in Holland Support Group for families with children with disabilities meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament, Norfolk. All families, regardless of their church affiliation, who have children with disabilities, are invited. For more information on this, please contact Karen Jackson at DaCapomusic@cox.net or 757 423-4027.

Young Life Capernaum, a program for young people with intellectual and physical disabilities will be meets the first 3 Mondays of the month at Holy Family Church in Virginia Beach. They are also hosting a Valentine Dance. For more information, contact Sue Stefonowich via email - parishadvocate@gmail.com.

The **Parish Advocate Directory** is now available. The Directories can be picked up at the Pastoral Center in Richmond. We will also be sending the directories via diocesan staff that travel to the individual parishes. Please contact Wendy Henderson at whenderson@richmonddiocese.org or Nita Grignol at ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org if you or someone in your parish is coming to the Pastoral Center and can pick up your directory.

Resources

The launch of the world's first **online Animated Sign Language dictionary prototype** was a huge success. We are entering the second phase now and plan to add 1500 Sign Language terms.

This revolutionary dictionary will finally allow Deaf children to look up vocabulary in their own, primary language – sign language - along with the English vocabulary counterpart, without having to rely on adults for definitions. An animated rabbit (created by Braam Jordaan) signs the words and a magician provides the definitions and signed words in sentences with the option for English and voice over. Hearing children can also learn sign by finding words according to the English alphabet in a creative way with full live-action sign in motion rather

than through photographs. It is noted for its creativity both in animated presentation as well as unique ability for how to find signed words – a first of its kind! The Animated Dictionary for Children has the attention of the world as it is a landmark resource for Deaf children and their families accessible online for free at www.aslphabet.com ©.

Opportunities

Annual Mass for the Deaf – Pilgrimage to Poland – Annual Mass for the Deaf, Shrine of our lady of Czestochowa, September 11, 2010. For flyer, [click here](#).

Other

A L'Arche home is in the formation stages for the Richmond/Glen Allen area. If you would like to be on their email list for information, please contact, Marybeth Meacham 804 273-9533/ marybethmeacham@me.com, Cheryl Emory 804 [747-4486](tel:747-4486)/cherylemory@comcast.net. L'Arche communities are caring homes where persons with and without disabilities live with comfort, spirituality, and respect.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

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