

May Disability Parish Advocate E News

Dear Parish Advocates,

May is

National Mental Health Awareness Month
Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
Hepatitis Awareness Month
Huntington's Disease Awareness Month
National Arthritis Month
National Stroke Awareness Month
National Trauma Awareness Month
National Suicide Awareness Week

Prayers of the Faithful . . .

For increased sensitivity and creativity to break down the attitudinal and architectural barriers preventing the full inclusion of people with disabilities, we pray. . .

For members of our communities and families touched by the loss of a loved one through suicide, we pray . . .

Upcoming Events

"Save the Date" Saturday, October 9, 2010 – Parish Advocate
Training - *Affirming Life: Making A Difference!*

Tuesday, June 8, 2010 – 7 – 8:30 pm Columbian Center, 2324 Pump Rd.,
Richmond, VA 23233
Central Virginia Friends of L'Arche: Dinner and a Movie, ***"The Heart Has Its Reasons: The Story of Jean Vanier and L'Arche."*** For the flyer which has more information, [click here](#).

Upcoming Webinar Rescheduled to June 10.

Advanced Considerations: Mental Illness in Youth and Young Adults, June 10, 2010

Presented by the NCPD Council on Mental Illness as part of its Welcomed and Valued Initiative, and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), helping parishes support the spiritual life of youth and young adults.

Presenters: Dr. Robert McCarty, Executive Director of NFCYM and Dr. Paul Myers, Director of Student Health Services, University of Portland, OR.

Partners for this production: National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), and National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL), in consultation with National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association (NCYAMA).



[Click here](#) for flyer. [Click here](#) to register. To access any of the webinars, you must have high speed internet service. Registration for the webinars is free for parishioners of the Diocese of Richmond since we are affiliate members of the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD). The webinar will also be shown at the Pastoral Center. To attend, call or email Wendy Henderson at 804 622-5125 or whenderson@richmonddiocese.org.

Wednesday, June 30 - Saturday, July 3, 2010

2010 NAMI National Convention

Washington, DC

For schedule and registration information on the annual convention of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, [click here](#).

The NAMI FaithNet Networking Session on Wednesday, June 30th -- 3:15 pm to 4:30 pm may be attended without registering for the entire NAMI Conference.

Wrestling with Our Inner Angels: Faith, Mental Illness and the Journey to Wholeness - Nancy Clare Kehoe, Ph.D. - Friday, July 2 - 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm.

Getting Started with NAMI FaithNet Outreach- Friday, July 2, 3:45 pm - 5:15 pm - Craig Rennebohm and Carole Wills.

Sunday, July 25 - Friday, July 30, 2010

Holley Family Village's Catholic Family Week

Brooklyn, Michigan

This program focuses on Catholic families with persons who are deaf who want to deepen their faith as a FAMILY while having a good time at beautiful De Sales Center.

To register or see more details go to: <http://holleyfv.org/ASLWeek.aspx>

Saturday, July 31, 2010

National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry (NAfIM)

Annual Membership Meeting & Workshop

9 AM to 5:00 PM

Washington Theological Union

Washington DC

Topic: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Call 800-736-1280 or email info@nafim.org for more information

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

Preview of Oct. NCPD Webinar Topic Advanced Considerations: Threats to the Lives of People with Disability, Part I, Poor Prenatal Diagnosis

On March 25th, the Diocesan Disability Office hosted an informational meeting on the Be Not Afraid Ministry, *A network of support for parents with poor prenatal diagnoses*. Tracy Winsor, Peer Minister with Be Not Afraid Network was the presenter.

Marianne, another peer minister with Be Not Afraid, a parish-based ministry supporting parents in the Diocese of Charlotte who are carrying to term following the diagnosis of a lethal or disabling condition affecting their unborn child. Below is a letter she wrote to a mom who had just received a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome. (For purposes of this article, personal information was removed from the letter.) She begins:

“Dear Fellow Mom,

I feel compelled to write to you. I know nothing about you except that we share one common thread. We both received a Down syndrome diagnosis while pregnant. Mine came in the Spring of 2008 when I was 11 weeks pregnant with my fourth child. I can tell you two absolute truths. Number one is that Adam (now 16 months) and my three other children are the lights of my life. Number two is that if anyone had told me I would feel that way about him while I was still pregnant, I would never have believed them.” [Click here](#) for more of her letter



To learn more about this program, go to [the National website](#) or contact Be Not Afraid Ministry by calling Sandy Buck at 704.948.4587 or by email at benotafraidnc@live.com

Parish Advocates

Our Parish Advocates 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:

Parish Advocate Margo Perry, recently worked with her parish, St. John the Apostle, Virginia Beach to present a seminar for teachers focusing on the challenges of educating our special needs students. The seminar was well attended by teachers from Saint John's School, before and after care staff and religious educators.

The presenters included Margo and Christina Boone, Principal of Ghent School, Chris Meissel, Educational Specialist with pre-school children.

This initial training session included descriptions of three disability categories, strategies for the classroom, and ended with an inspirational note of keeping hope alive, thankfulness, values, commitment and making a difference.

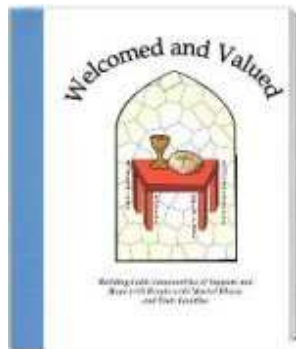
Many of the Parish Advocates attended and helped with the March 6th Catholic Social Teaching Seminar. **Parish Advocate Dick Surrusco** eloquently expressed his thoughts in a Commentary in the May 17th issue of the Catholic Virginian. Click here to link to [Catholic social teaching](#).

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Opportunities Resources

NCPD has resources available for sale and for free viewing or downloading from its website, including: NCPD Mental Illness Resources

The NCPD *Welcomed and Valued* DVD and Resource Manual are available for purchase by [clicking here](#). The DVD features in-depth looks at people with mental illness and how they participate in parish life. (27-minute open-captioned DVD. Discussion guide included.) To download the Resource Manual [click here](#).



NCPD has suggested that we look at ways for parishes to raise awareness on Mental Illness. May is Mental Health Month. **Maybe your parish would like to show the NCPD *Welcomed and Valued* video and have a panel discussion of some people who live with mental illness or family members.** The video is 27 minutes long, and has been very well received.” For information on this, please contact Nita Grignol at 804 622-5260 or email at ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org.

Resources

Determining Readiness for Sacraments



Anne Masters, Director, Pastoral Ministry w/ Persons w/ Disabilities, Archdiocese of Newark: shares a discussion of readiness for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation for your use. It's one page, simple and references Canon Law and *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments for Persons with Disabilities* ([Click here](#)).



Inclusion Tip

Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministry, Diocese of Toledo Inclusion Tip: When Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Grieve ([click here](#)). This is a terrific resource for sharing not only life's joys, but also the sorrows of people with disabilities. For a complete listing of Inclusion Tips, [click here](#).

National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities –News and Notes

Monday, July 26, 2010 is the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Did you know that when the ADA was first debated on the floor of the U.S. Senate, the following words were read by one of the prime sponsors:

“Defense of the right to life implies the defense of other rights which enable the individual with a disability to achieve the fullest measure of personal development. . . .These include the right to equal opportunity in education, in employment, in housing, as well as the right to free access to public accommodations, facilities and services. Passage of the bill will mean discrimination solely on the basis of handicaps will be not only immoral but illegal.”

These words came from a letter of support from the U.S. Catholic bishops. Click here for [more](#) on this.

Government/Legislative News and Notes

100 Day Countdown: ADA's 20th Anniversary

From Disability.gov:

"We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future." With these words (penned by George Bernard Shaw), we want to introduce you to 100 Days to the ADA, a countdown to the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The official countdown began on Saturday, April 17, 2010.

Over the next four months, Disability.gov will explore one of our nation's most important civil rights achievements, including examining the ramifications of the ADA, historical points leading up to its creation and how supporting the rights of individuals with disabilities supports ALL Americans. We invite you to present your personal perspectives on how your life has been touched by the ADA and welcome ideas for new topics.

Check back every day for a new post on Disability.Blog ([click here](#)) and for more information on the ADA 100 day countdown.

NCPD's Webinars:

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

Diocesan Programs

Outreach in Love recently ended their classes for this school year with a closing Prayer Service followed by an ice cream social at St. John Neumann in Powhatan. They will resume meeting their meetings in October. For more information, call Joan Congable Mackay 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

Other

Assisi House which will be located on the property of the Church of the Ascension, Virginia Beach is in the planning stages. For information on this go to www.assisihouse.org. Assisi House will be a group home for 8 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities who need 24/7 supervised care.

To learn more about Assisi House, click here

http://www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/documents/Assisi_House.pdf

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. To learn more about the **L'Arche Home**, see the Catholic Virginian article

<http://www.catholicvirginian.org/archive/2008/2008vol84iss4/pages/article2.html>

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

Nita Grignol

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www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/index.htm