

April Disability Parish Advocate E News

Dear Parish Advocates,

**April is
Cancer Control Month
National Autism Month**

Prayers of the Faithful . . .

That we remain patient, sensitive and understanding to the needs of people with disabilities and their families, we pray . . .

That we are sensitive, understanding and supportive to the needs of individuals and families who have children with autism spectrum disorders, we pray . . .

Upcoming Events

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

Newest NCPD Webinar coming soon!

Advanced Considerations: Supporting Youth and Young Adults with Mental Illnesses
Tuesday, May 4, 2010, 1-2:00 p.m. Eastern.

Presenters include Dr. Bob McCarty, DMin, author and international presenter, Executive Director, National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and Dr. Paul Myers, PhD, Health Services Director, University of Portland University Health Center and therapist, Northwest Catholic Counseling Center, Portland, OR.

A young woman will join with Bob and Paul to share her experience of faith as she was treated for mental illness. [Click here](#) for additional information, a downloadable brochure and registration link.



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, May 5, 2010 from 7:00-9:00 p.m
The Father Factor: Understanding the Special Needs of Fathers
St. John the Evangelist parish, Newark, NJ
[Click here](#) to see flyer. Contact 201-384-3601 for reservation.

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

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

Legislative

Bishops Encourage Vigilance that Health Care Legislation Protects Conscience and Does Not Fund Abortion

- Applaud efforts to expand health care to all.
- Emphasize need to guarantee federal money does not go to abortion.
- Need to address flaws in health reform plan just signed into law.

March 23, 2010 Washington---The U.S. bishops called on Congress and people in the Catholic community to make sure promises are kept that new health care legislation will not expand abortions in the United States. [Click here for more...](#)

Census 2010—be sure to be counted

The disability community is hard to count—be sure to encourage people to be counted. There is a Toolkit for Reaching People with Disabilities designed to help organizations that serve people with disabilities communicate the benefits of census participation. Below are descriptions and suggested uses of all available resources associated with the toolkit. Depending on your needs, you may follow instructions to download and print individual documents, or you can [download the complete toolkit](#) with all components (ZIP 102.9 MB). [Sign up for e-mail updates to receive information changes.](#)

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Can Help People With Disabilities

EITC and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) are two vital resources that are underutilized. The EITC when coupled with the use of a VITA location and financial literacy is a proven strategy to help low-income individuals raise themselves out of poverty. To learn whether an individual is eligible for the EITC, visit the website below. The program will also assist in determining correct filing status, determining whether child(ren) meet the tests for a qualifying child, and estimate the amount of credit an individual may receive. <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=130102,00.html>

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 Dick Surrusco, Our Lady of Nazareth, working with Youth Minister Victoria Rosenberg and parent leaders including **Ellen Tutaj**, also a **parish advocate** from Our Lady of Perpetual Help, reports the opening of a Young Life Capernaum Ecumenical Social Ministry program in his parish.

Ellen Tutaj, Parish Advocate, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, is currently working with her pastor, Fr. Kevin Segerblom and the Parish Staff, to form a Living in Holland Support Group.

Parish Advocate, Karen Jackson, Blessed Sacrament, Norfolk and Director of the Faith Inclusion Network (FIB) of South Hampton Roads story, “A Place to Call Home,” appeared in the recent issue of the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD) website called Voices of Faith ([click here](#)). You won’t want to miss this inspiring piece about her daughter, Samantha which begins,



“Hand in hand, we slip as quietly as possible into the sanctuary to receive communion at the Saturday evening Mass. First, we stop at the baptismal font to bless ourselves. I carefully guide my daughter’s hand into the warm Holy Water and, hand over hand; helped her to make the sign of the cross.

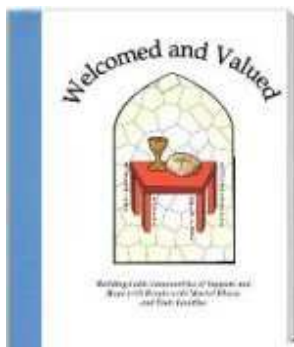
Next is the more difficult part.” [Click here](#) for the rest of the story

Correction: In the March Parish E News, Maggie Disney, St. Bridget’s Richmond, reported that disability surveys were distributed to parishioners the weekend of March 6-7. This was inadvertently omitted.

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.

Inclusion Tip

Marsha Rivas, Diocese of Toledo brings to us a tip sheet this month that she received from the Diocese of Columbus, and encourages us all to remember to keep couples who have a child with disability in special prayers this month.

Marriage and a Special-Needs Child: Tips for Meeting the Challenge

Carolyn called me to discuss her marriage to Tom. “We were like a lot of couples. It used to be hard to find time for each other what with work and the boys, but when our Jimmy was diagnosed with profound autism, it was like a bomb went off.” [Click here](#) for the tip sheet.

To learn more about disability ministry in Toledo visit the [Equal Access Ministry](#) webpage.

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 on which ones you would like to view. Each webinar has great handouts to download.

Diocesan Programs

Outreach in Love had their annual Spaghetti Dinner, March 17, 2010 at St. Edward’s Church in Richmond. Below is a picture of those who attended the dinner. Outreach in Love will end their classes for this year with a Closing Prayer Service at St. John Neumann in Powhatan. The Prayer Service will be followed by an Ice Cream Social. All are invited to attend. 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

Office for and with Persons with Disabilities

7800 Carousel Lane,

Richmond, Virginia 23294.

804 622-5260

ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org

www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/index.htm