

MI Network News

The Monthly Newsletter of the National Catholic Network on Mental Illness



January 2010

Greetings! Peace and Joy!

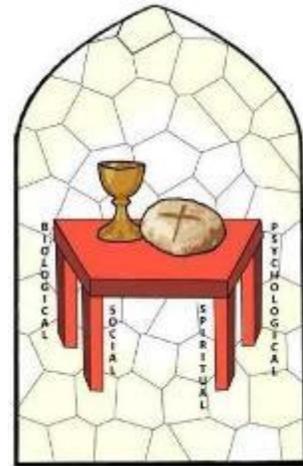
May God's blessing be upon you and your ministry now and throughout the New Year.

This is our **THIRD** NCPD Council on Mental Illness Network Newsletter.

Thank you to those who responded to our request for information about your ministries. It is inspiring to hear what is going on. Included are some stories of what people are doing. We hope these will enrich and motivate us all in our very important outreach and advocacy.

Please tell us about your ministry: what you are doing, what are your hopes, what resources do you find helpful, and what are your struggles. One of our goals is to network ideas and ministries so that we can all share in the day-to-day life of people trying to make a difference by being Christ to one another.

Please send all emails to me, Deacon Tom Lambert, at olmcfinfo2@aol.com and put **NCPD Council on MI Network** in the subject line. You can also call me at 773-525-0453 if you have any questions or ideas.



SHARING FROM THE NETWORK

Colleen Danos of Washington, DC wrote to tell us of a Christmas prayer intention idea. The following information was in their bulletin and left in the pews on Christmas Eve:

Prayer Intentions for Christmas

 At this time of year, we especially remember those who are like the Christ Child, those who are marginalized and poor, the disabled, a person with a mental illness, anyone in need. Today, at the Christmas Masses, there will be an opportunity to write your own prayer request and present it at the altar.



In your pews are pencils and "Prayer Stars." Write a

first name and a heartfelt need on a star. The stars will be collected and presented as part of the gifts brought to God's altar...Please drop them in the collection basket or bring to the Christ Child's crèche after Mass.

God bless you and yours during the Christmas season.
The Blessed Sacrament Disabilities Ministry

Colleen wrote after Christmas to let us know that an estimated 1300 "Prayer Stars" were brought to the altar!!!!!!

Colleen also shared the following:

I want to tell you also how much I loved being part of our group in Belleville, NCPD's warm welcome, and all the friendships I've made and continue to develop.....

..... I joined the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament's Disability Ministry in Sept/October and have been warmly welcomed. With Father Jim Bocabella and (Father John Enzler) we developed and included prayers of the faithful for persons with mental illness (with help from the NCPD website) into the annual Ruppert Liturgy Mass for persons with disabilities--a yearly event.

Additionally, our parish participated in NCPD's Suicide Prevention webinar. It was listed in the parish bulletin for two weeks prior to the live webcast. We had only a few attendees but most importantly Father Jim came and participated and came back and talked with me for over an hour brainstorming about welcoming and valuing persons with mental illness in our parish, overcoming the stigma etc. Father Jim has also beautifully addressed the issue of disabilities and mental illness directly in his recent homilies. I provided nice refreshments and tried to make the atmosphere as warm and welcoming as you and the Council did for us in Belleville at the Advanced Training.

A member of our Disability Ministry told me there is a small group of persons with mental illness that pray together-- she will pass along my name to them and I will try to get more information and meet with them in the New Year. I was also approached by

another parishioner about a Catholic family she knew who had experienced a recent suicide of a young college student in another parish and was able to provide comfort to her and to update her on the Church's updated teachings based on knowledge gained through the webinar. This was a great comfort and she cried tears of relief. Amazingly, I was so strong and did not cry. I know that attending the Advanced Training was a real personal blessing that renewed my strength so that I can reach out and help others with ease.



Thank you Colleen for your beautiful sharing and energy you are bringing to this ministry. You have also energized others by raising awareness of the needs of people with mental illness and their families!

Monsignor Sabourin of the Diocese of Providence wrote; "I am fortunate enough to be able to spend a day a week with 120 persons with mental illness at our state institution."

Let me say - Monsignor they are also very blessed to have your presence there! Thank you for sharing with them and us.

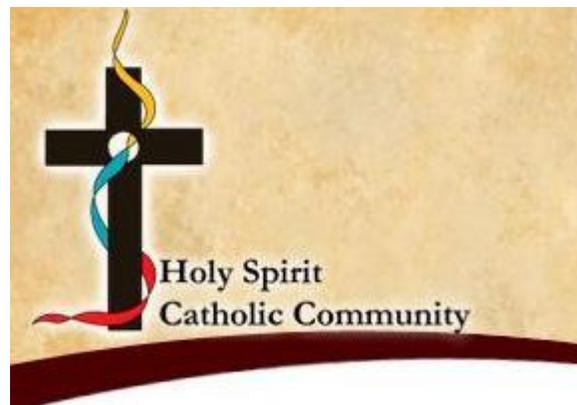
Kathy Ford RN Parish Nurse/Coordinator of Pastoral Care in the Diocese of Joliet wrote to let us know of her ministry:

I hopefully will have a program for high school teens come January that will address the issue of stress and self destructive behaviors. NAMI will come out to assist with that.

I am also working on something for the Junior High kids as well

I had something interesting to share that has happened over the past couple of months that really hasn't happened before.

We at Holy Spirit have a ministry called Stephen Ministry which is a one to one, gender to gender listening ministry. It deals with people going through a crisis situation that would require a listening and affirming presence of someone who cared for them from the parish. Crisis situations can be a loss of a spouse or job, moving in or out of state, empty nesting, or loneliness. This ministry is the only ministry of its kind that requires 50 hours of training and an application/interview process.



(For more information about the Stephen Ministry click on the logo or go to http://www.holyspiritnaperville.org/ministries/stephen_ministry.cfm)

This is our 7th training year, and it's the first time I have three parishioners who have a mental illness come forward to apply. They are successful people in the business world and take care of themselves with medication and a lot of faith and prayer. One of the comments that came up in their interview process was that they feared coming forward to volunteer for this ministry because they thought they would be asked not to volunteer because of their mental illness and they did not want the rejection. I applauded them for their bravery and asked how they finally came to the decision to apply for Stephen Ministry and the response was-- "I saw all of the supportive resources in the bulletin and kiosk and educational information for the parish regarding stigma and mental illness and I felt I could take the chance to step up to volunteer."

I was humbled by their honesty and their courage, I believe they will be a wonderful asset to the ministry.

Kathy thank you for sharing that with us, it is a wonderful reminder of how we can empower people and overcome stigma!!

Kathy Wither from Cleveland, OH advises that she has scheduled a date and place for a Mental Illness Awareness Workshop she is organizing. The date is Saturday, June 26, 2010 at St. Mary Seminary & Graduate School of Theology. More information will be coming.

Thank you Kathy for letting us know about this important effort!

HELPFUL INFORMATION

Our thanks to Ann Sherzer, Director of Ministry with Persons with Disabilities for the Diocese of Kalamazoo who gives us the following information that can be useful for advance planning with parishioners:

Psychiatric Advance Directives



When a parishioner or someone well known to a parish finds themselves in the hospital, privacy rules can be a barrier to visits or other support. Unless the person or their family tells you about the hospitalization, visits or other supports may be impossible. One tool that can be helpful is a Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD). A PAD allows a person with mental illness to state their wishes about treatment when a crisis may make it impossible for them to speak for themselves. On a PAD a parishioner can state that in the case of an emergency hospitalization they would like a person or parish called.

Consider asking members of your community who have serious and persistent mental illness, especially those without close family, to fill out a PAD. If they want to include directions that you or the parish should be contacted, make a copy for your files. More information on PADs including forms in English, Spanish and Arabic can be found at www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-2941_4868_41752---,00.html

RESOURCES

Pathways to Promise

Following our 3-day training in Belleville, IL this past August, Pathways to Promise held a national conference. The following is a link to some of those presentations.

Pathways to Promise Conference Downloads
Presentations from the national summit,
[Companions on the Road to Recovery from Mental Illness: Pathways for the 21st Century.](#)

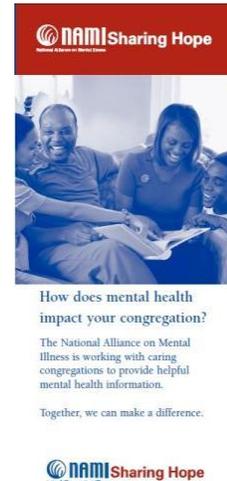


held in October of 2009 in Belleville, IL, are now available on-line as free downloads. The conference agenda is posted on <http://www.pathways2promise.org/> with embedded links to some twenty of the presentations from the conference.

NAMI's Multicultural Action Center Releases New Sharing Hope Brochure

Research has shown that African Americans seek help from the clergy more frequently than from other professionals, and mental health issues are no exception. When dealing with mental illness, African American families might look for guidance, support and understanding from their faith community.

Such reasons are why NAMI has developed [Sharing Hope: Understanding Mental Health](#), a presentation targeted at the African American community to increase awareness of mental health recovery and introduce NAMI education and support programs. See NAMI website www.nami.org to view and download the new Sharing Hope program tri-fold brochure.



NCPD WEBINARS

As mentioned last newsletter, please tell people about NCPD webinars on mental illness at www.NCPD.org/webinars. Posted at this site are links to view the webinar and accompanying materials. These are available for free and are valuable resources for ministry to people with mental illness and their families. There are three on mental illness.

October 20, 2009:

*Access to Tools in Addressing Suicide:
Pastoral Supports and Prevention Strategies*

October 6, 2008:

*Come to the Table:
Nurturing the Sacramental Life of People with Mental Illnesses*

October 10, 2007:

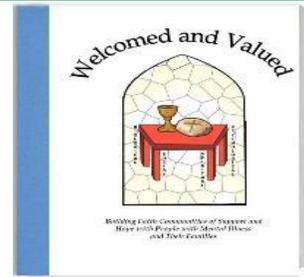
Supporting People with Mental Illness in your Parish

* Webinars are available for replay up to one year from the event date. They will also be available for purchase at <http://www.ncpd.org/resources> .

NCPD : WELCOMED AND VALUED DVD & RESOURCE MANUAL

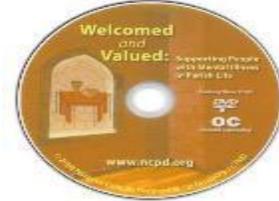


The *Welcomed and Valued* DVD and *Resource Manual* can be ordered on the NCPD website at www.ncpd.org/resources. The DVD Discussion Starters and the Resource Manual are both available online for a free download ([Click here](#)).



UPCOMING EVENTS

NCPD's spring webinar will be devoted to the topic of *Advanced Conversations: Youth and Young Adults and Mental Illness*. More information in upcoming newsletters. ([Click here](#) to visit the NCPD Webinar web page.)

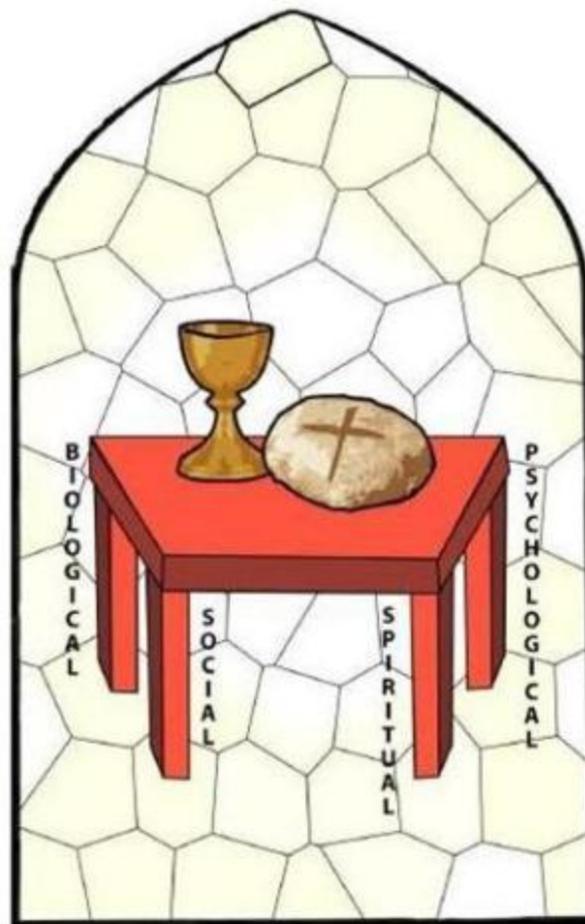


We are hopeful of getting funding to do more one-day awareness workshops and 3-day advanced trainings like what was piloted in 2009. The Council can also be a resource for people planning their own local meetings. Please let us know if we can be of assistance.

The logo depicts the Eucharistic table, to which all are called.

It also presents four dimensions to personal wholeness, each important to healing and recovery—spiritual, biological, psychological, and social.

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