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## **Feature Story**

### **NCPD Board approves statement on "Futile Care."**



The Governance Board of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability recently issued a statement explaining its position on "futile care." The term refers to the practice of physicians withholding or withdrawing life-support they consider non-beneficial. The practice received national attention last year when a Catholic hospital in Texas sought to remove a respirator from a dying infant, against his mother's objections, on the grounds that the procedure was causing substantial pain and that the hospital's first duty was to the infant. The incident revealed that many states permit physicians to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment they consider medically inappropriate contrary to their patients' wishes.

Although recognizing that most physicians act with compassion and competence, the Statement acknowledges the reality that physicians are not immune from resting the decision to withhold or withdraw life-support on their patients' quality of life rather than on the quality of the treatment involved. This is especially true today given the emphasis on containing costs. Since such decisions would impact disabled people disproportionately, NCPD, with its mission to implement the Bishops' 1978 Pastoral Statement on people with disabilities, decided to provide an analysis of "futile care" in light of Catholic moral teaching.

Click here for copy of [NCPD Statement on "Futile Care."](#)

## **NCPD News and Tips**

### **Upcoming Webinar**

"Come to the Table:  
Supporting the Sacramental Life  
of People with Disabilities"

[Parish Contact Workshop and Meeting:](#)

Sept. 27  
Philadelphia, PA

[National Mental Illness Awareness Week](#) October 5-11, 2008 (Sunday-Saturday).

[Victorious Missionaries National Conference](#)

Oct. 17-19

[Diocese of Harrisburg: Commission on Catholic Social Doctrine](#)

Oct. 18  
Harrisburg, PA

[2008 Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry](#)

Dec. 4-7  
Cleveland, OH



Steve Schrader using a nestled ambo.



Renee at an accessible ambo at St. Ann's

Oct. 6, 2008 1PM EDT

For handouts from previous Webinars please [click here](#).

**Disability Ministry Toolkit:**

Fresh Ideas for Implementing the *Bishops' Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities*. Available at: [ncpd.org](http://ncpd.org) or by clicking [Disability Ministry Toolkit](#)

## Diocesan/Partner News

***In Silent Prayer: A History of Ministry with the Deaf Community in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia***

Written by Father Anthony Russo, who has devoted himself to the deaf community for over forty years, *In Silent Prayer* traces the history of this special ministry in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Through insightful text, as well as historical documents and photographs, Father Russo not only tells the story of the great men and women who have

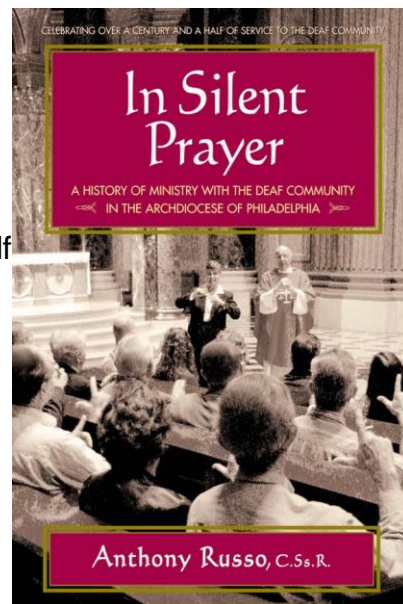
provided this important service, but also looks forward to the coming years and considers how this service can be further shaped and improved. Specific examples of how to establish an effective ministry are included along with a discussion of the ideas and attitudes necessary to effect change and progress in ministry today.

Father Anthony Russo, C.Ss.R., grew up in Clifton, New Jersey, and has experienced some degree of hearing difficulty throughout his life. In 1955, he received a Bachelor of Science degree from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, along with a commission in the US Army. Ordained by Cardinal Spellman of New York in 1965, Father Russo was sent in 1967 to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where he has dedicated his life to working with and for the deaf.

To purchase from the publisher:

[http://www.squareonepublishers.com/titles\\_SilentPrayer.html](http://www.squareonepublishers.com/titles_SilentPrayer.html)

To purchase from Amazon:



<http://www.amazon.com/> Put -In Silent Prayer - on the search line.

### **Accessible Ambo Designs and Ideas**

If you are looking for a company from which to purchase a wheelchair accessible or universally accessible ambo you might have trouble finding a company that produces them. We have some unique responses to the need for an accessible ambo that we have collected from dioceses around the U.S. We will feature examples of four different accessible ambos and one altar lift. Each one was built to order and is not “mass produced” (no pun intended).

Fr. Michael Eswein uses a lift that his father built for him that is situated behind the altar and raises him in his chair to a “standing height”. At right is a picture of Fr. Mike at an altar in St. Louis.



The Diocese of Toledo is represented at left in a photo they shared of Renee at an accessible ambo at St. Ann’s. Marsha Rivas is the diocesan director there.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has an accessible ambo. A picture can be found at their website: <http://www.olacathedral.org/> then go to Art then Ambo for a picture and the story of the accessible ambo and information about the artist who designed it.

St. Pius X Church in Cedar Rapids, IA in the Archdiocese of Dubuque has what is called a “nestled” ambo for wheelchair users or short people. A short duplicate of the ambo is nestled under the standard sized ambo and can be pulled out for use when wanted. It is the perfect height for people using wheelchairs. The parish is unique in that most all of the liturgical furnishings were made by parishioners, and that is the case with this ambo. Steve is pictured at left using the nestled ambo.

Andy Hasley at [ahasley@aol.com](mailto:ahasley@aol.com); 319-651-1019 is a member of the Access Manual Committee member mentioned earlier. Andy has designed an ambo built by Hasley Construction, Inc., that is height adjustable for anyone who uses it, from child to adult, wheelchair user to an

ambulatory person.

## Resources

### **Fighting Stigma**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers free posters to fight stigma and discrimination surrounding mental illness. The poster text, which could be ideal to use in a parish during Mental Illness Awareness Week, Oct. 5-11, 2008, reads:

### **Know me as a person not by my mental illness**

*We are your friends, neighbors, and family.*

*We improve and recover.*

*We are major contributors to American life.*

*We deserve dignity and respect.*

Copies of the poster can be ordered online at <http://nmhicstore.samhsa.gov/catalog/ShoppintCart.aspx> or by calling toll-free the National Mental Health Information Center at 1-800-789-2647. Request inventory code OEL99-0001.

### ***Walking on a Rolling Deck: Life on the Ark***

Kathy Berken has authored a book that shares from her experience of living in a L'Arche community in Clinton, Iowa. This moving and spiritually insightful book is available at Liturgical Press (Collegeville, MN. 2008). I communicated recently with Kathy and she said, "My new book is a collection of stories about my life in a L'Arche community." From my experience of Jean Vanier and L'Arche, I can hardly wait to read my review copy. If you would like a review copy, contact Kathy at [kberken@mchsi.com](mailto:kberken@mchsi.com) and she will have her publisher send you one.

You might have read a recent CNS book review by Barb Arland-Fye that came out in many diocesan papers the week of August 31, that gave a glowing endorsement of the moving and candid stories in Kathy's book, as did Lee Nagle of the National Conference on Catechetical Leadership, who is an old friend of Barb's. The compelling title sounds so real to our lives, for those of us who share life and spiritual journey with a person having intellectual disability.

# Coming Events

## September 26-28, 2008

Institute for Pastoral Initiatives and IREACH  
(Inclusive Religious Education for All Children)  
18th Annual Network of Inclusive Catholic Educators  
Conference  
"Salt of the Earth, Light of the World, We Are One Body"  
Hotel Sofitel, Miami FL  
Contact Lily Diaz [lilyrdiaz@ireachfl.org](mailto:lilyrdiaz@ireachfl.org) or visit  
[www.ireachfl.org](http://www.ireachfl.org)

## September 27, 2008

Archdiocese of Philadelphia: Department of Pastoral Care for  
Persons with Disabilities  
Fall Parish Contact Workshop and Meeting  
*Behavioral and Mental Health Disabilities*  
Archdiocesan Office Center, Philadelphia, PA  
Contact PCPD at 215-587-3530 or (215) 587-3913 TTY/VP

## October 6, 2008

NCPD Mental Illness Council Webinar: Supporting the  
Sacramental Life of People with Mental Illnesses, 1:00-2:00  
p.m. Eastern Time.  
Registration information at [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) or contact Dr.  
Nancy Thompson at [nthompson@ncpd.org](mailto:nthompson@ncpd.org).

## October 5-11, 2008

National Mental Illness Awareness Week: Building  
Community, Taking Action. Click  
<http://www.ncpd.org/MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek.htm>  
for prayer and other resources.

## October 17-19, 2008

Victorious Missionaries  
National Conference  
"The Journey of Life: Reflections for the Spiritual Explorer"  
The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville IL  
Registration Form [www.vmusa.org](http://www.vmusa.org) or call 613-394-6281  
(voice and tty)

## October 18, 2008

Diocese of Harrisburg: Commission on Catholic Social  
Doctrine

Diocesan Symposium  
"In God's Image: Disabilities Ministry and Catholic Social Thought"  
The Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg, PA  
For Information Call: Ginny Duncan 717- 657-4804

**December 4-7, 2008**

National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry  
2008 Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry  
Biennial Education Conference for Adults Working with High School Youth  
*Formed by Living Waters*  
Cleveland Convention Center, Cleveland, OH  
[www.nfcym.org/nccym](http://www.nfcym.org/nccym)

**Our Mission:**

**Rooted in Gospel values that affirm the dignity of every person, the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) works collaboratively to ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of the life of the Church and society.**

**Visit our Website:**[www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org)

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**Our goal with NCPD E-NEWS is to be brief, timely, and relevant. We trust that you'll look forward to these postings, read them, and pass them on. We count on your feedback. NCPD Director of Programs, Nancy Thompson, edits NCPD E-NEWS. Please submit to her at [nthompson@ncpd.org](mailto:nthompson@ncpd.org) any items you want considered for inclusion, using the phrase "E-NEWS Submission" or "E-NEWS Response" in the subject line.**

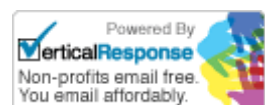
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