

<http://www.ncpd.org/>

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## Feature Story

### Remembering and Celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: A Year-long, Life-long Event

November 16 we will celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities*. It is a good time for all of us to pause and reflect, to dream and appreciate progress, to gain wisdom, insight, resolve and clarity for the journey ahead. In things that came through my mailbox this month I found several events that I believe are results of actions taken due to the influence made and felt in the Church as a result of that document. I want to share and rejoice with you over a few of these wonderful "moments" in the life of the Church!

#### Masses Galore

**Diocese of Allentown** The Most Reverend Edward P. Cullen, D.D., Bishop of Allentown, declared this Sunday, November 16 as "*Diocesan Inclusion Awareness Sunday*" and the Diocese of Allentown, PA will be celebrating *Inclusion Awareness Sunday* in the parishes throughout the diocese in honor of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Pastoral Statement*. Sr. Janice Marie Johnson, RSM, is Director of the Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities. Contact [JJohnson@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:JJohnson@allentowndiocese.org) for information and with questions.

#### Diocese of Salt Lake City

About 50 people came out to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church the evening of Friday, Oct. 24, for a special disabilities awareness Mass, the first of its kind for the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City. Hosted by the Diocesan Commission for People with Disabilities, the mass was held in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the 1978 *Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops' on People with Disabilities*, a document that emphasizes the dignity of all in a unified church - "one flock that follows a single shepherd," a diocese statement read.

"It's not the disabilities but the abilities that make you who you are," Utah's Catholic Bishop John C. Wester said. He spoke of "gifts of the heart," of the ability to learn from, love and forgive one another."

The Salt Lake Tribune has reported on the Mass for Disabilities in the October 25 Faith section. Go to the link to read the article in full.

Updates

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[http://www.sltrib.com/faith/ci\\_10809756?source=email](http://www.sltrib.com/faith/ci_10809756?source=email)

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**Archdiocese of Dubuque** One hundred sixty people participated for the first mass celebrated in support of people with mental illnesses, their friends, caregivers and family in the archdiocese. A cheerful, sunburst yellow invitation proclaimed, "*Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.*" Matthew 11:28 It went on to promise that the liturgy would give attendees the ability to gather and pray as a community in a very special and meaningful manner! And it did! Hospitality ministers wearing large buttons that said "Welcome," did just that. They warmly greeted all who came: people with mental illnesses, family, friends, care givers and health care professionals, as they gathered at St. Pius X Catholic Church, 4949 Council St. NE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, at 2:00 p.m., October 26, 2008.

**Archdiocese of Chicago** At the same time (2:00 p.m., Sunday, October 26), one state away, the mentors of the leaders who brought the idea to the Archdiocese of Dubuque, were very busy, too. They had also selected that date and time to issue an invitation to everyone with chronic mental illness to attend a Special Mass for Mental Illness Awareness. Connie Rakitan and Tom Lambert, members of the NCPD Mental Illness Council and the Archdiocesan Commission on Mental Illness were able to experience that beautiful twin-occurrence of hosting their own successful day with a wonderful mass and social gathering while seeing protégés who are young in this ministry bring to life in a new place, the ministry that has grown from the seeds of the call of that 1978 Pastoral Statement, whose 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrate this month. One generation of leaders has passed knowledge of the treasure on to a new generation. That generational shift is happening in all areas of disability ministry. It is appropriate and timely, and those of us in the "first shift" eagerly wait to see the vision and developments that will be born in this new era.

It is our deepest prayer at NCPD that all your efforts be blessed as you continue to play an active part in this process of carrying on and furthering the ministry that we are called to, in service to the Church, with and for people with disabilities and their families all over the United States.

### **August, 2007: New Diocesan Office Opens for Disability Ministry**

**A new office for Disability Ministry in the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA**, was established by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades in August of 2007 after convening a committee to study the need for such a ministry. Ginny Duncan was named Director. On October 18, they held a day-long symposium, "In God's Image: Disabilities Ministry and Catholic Social Thought". Over 200 people turned out to learn how to better integrate persons with disabilities into their parish community. Such a number is outstanding when you consider that the Diocese of Harrisburg has only 90 parishes and this was their first attempt at bringing people together to discuss this ministry. The field of presenters was rich and included Jan Benton from NCPD.

**The Pastoral Statement 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Sunday, November 16,**

**2008.** We ask that all of you join us in prayer and solidarity as we honor the blessings of the work done in the name of Jesus for all persons who have a disability. And please consider asking your pastor to add this item below to the Prayers of the Faithful on Sunday, November 16, 2008, and/or publish this in your parish bulletin.

*We pray that we may see the face of Jesus in all those who have any kind of disability, and that on this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bishops' Pastoral Statement, we renew the call to people of good will to make our parish and (arch) diocese a place where all are welcome, where all belong----WE Pray to the Lord.*

(The Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities was signed on November 16, 1978. For 30 years, the Pastoral has been a reflection of the teachings of Christ, a call to action and a blueprint for change.

It's message was so prophetic and foundational, that it was read on the floor of the US Senate before the passage of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. To read the Pastoral, or to learn more about how this statement fostered a vibrant outreach at the national, regional and local level, visit the resources at the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org))

### **Brother Joshua Makes Simple Vows as a Benedictine Monk**

Another historic event occurred on August 15 in Cullman, Alabama. The 1978 Bishop's Pastoral stated:

*"The Bishops look forward to the day when more individuals with disabilities are active in the full-time, professional service of the Church ..."* (par. 24)

We learned of another fulfillment of this statement on August 15. Adam had been a student at OLA/St. Joseph Center in Cleveland, Ohio with Fr. Joe McNulty and his brother, Dr. Dennis McNulty. As Adam grew, he developed a keen religious spirituality and was clearly drawn to ministry.

As Dennis said, "Many of us know of individuals who are deaf, blind and/or have mobility challenges that have been accepted for ordination or religious life. We have wished to see this achieved for a person with a cognitive disability as well."

Around Christmas of 2007, Adam announced that he was going to be visiting a religious community. In July, 2008, Dennis and Fr. Joe received an email from a Brother Joshua (Adam) informing them that he was taking his simple vows on August 15 as a member of the Benedictine Monastery. It is simply beyond most of our imaginations and dreams to guess what a joy it must have been for Dennis and Fr. Joe to be present at the ceremony in Cullman, Alabama. I echo their sentiments: "Congratulations Brother Joshua! You will be in our prayers. Please remember us in yours." Check out this link for

pictures of the two events listed above.

[www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/disability](http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/disability)

## **NCPD News and Tips**

### **Large Print Sacramentary Now Available for Donation to Priest and Deacons with Visual Impairment**

NCPD produces large print Sacramentaries for priests and deacons in font sizes 24, 34, 44 and 54. We have recently reformatted our offering so that it is available in one complete set. Due to the increased font size the Sacramentary is unable to be bound and used in one volume. Previously it had been distributed in liturgical season sections. After months of formatting the Sacramentary is now available as one complete set and distributed with an attractive and altar appropriate red leather-like binder with gold embossing, tabs and ribbons. The set comes with archive binders so that the priest or deacon can exchange the parts of the Sacramentary that are not needed for the current liturgical season. This allows the Sacramentary to be a size that can be manageable for their liturgical needs.

We are pleased to offer the opportunity for others to join us in this blessed ministry of supporting priests and deacons who have visual impairments. We cannot express enough how wonderful it is to receive letters from priests who are so excited and grateful to be able to offer the celebration of the mass again. If you would like to consider supporting a priest by donating a large print sacramentary for them please contact us at [ncpd@ncpd.org](mailto:ncpd@ncpd.org). Donated Sacramentaries will include a request affixed to the inside cover of the binder to remember you and your intentions. Thank you for your support!

### **NCPD Welcomes New Staff/Staff Updates**

**Peg Kolm is NCPD's Director of Development.** This is a new position affiliated with the Catholic Disability Foundation, a partner foundation with NCPD. NCPD is hoping to enlist new donor partners this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, so please consider NCPD in your planned giving, or consider making a one-time gift this anniversary year. Write to [giving@ncpd.org](mailto:giving@ncpd.org) or [pkolm@ncpd.org](mailto:pkolm@ncpd.org) Peg Kolm comes to NCPD from the Archdiocese of Washington, where she worked as the Coordinator of Ministry for Persons with Disabilities. Among her other projects at the Archdiocese, she handled accommodations for the Papal Mass in April 2008. She was also a presenter in NCPD's Pastoral Statement at 30 webinar on August 13. Peg is a former editor at NPR News and worked for a number years for an educational nonprofit, KIDSNET. She and her husband are the parents of two children, Richard, age 20, a junior in college, and Kate, age 17, who is deafblind and attends the Maryland School for the Blind. Peg works as a volunteer at her parish's Disabilities Ministry.

**Yan Orellana is NCPD's Administrative Assistant.** He also works part-time for St. Mark's Parish in Adelphi, MD as their Youth Minister. Yan

Orellana brings numerous gifts with him to NCPD. Besides taking over many of the tasks formerly accomplished so well by Bob Quinlan, Yan's backgrounds in graphic design and translation are being used for brochures and in the production of materials, as well as in making our materials more accessible to Spanish speaking people. Yan and his wife, have three children and live in Maryland.

**Bob Quinlan is now Project Manager.** Bob has worked at NCPD for a year as Administrative Assistant. He has steadily taken on more responsibilities with coordination of projects and now as administrator of our new website till it got to the point that we needed to hire a new person to take over many of the jobs he originally took on when he came to NCPD.

#### **Disability Ministry Toolkit:**

The NCPD Disabilities Ministry Toolkit has an new item that some of you have been waiting for eagerly. It is the "Teen Group Plan" for ministry. The goal is to provide a spiritual community for teens with and without disabilities in your parish. This community might meet monthly to come together for Mass, a meal and an activity. The purpose of the program is to be supportive and inclusive spiritually...to make the parish a real home for young persons who have developmental or physical disabilities. A secondary but equally important goal is to introduce more "typical" peers to see the face of Christ in all persons, including those with a disability.

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**

### **Victorious Missionaries**

We sadly send the news that Bro. Francis Sullivan, OMI, died peacefully on Saturday, October 25, in Belleville, IL. Br. Francis is known by so many in disability ministry for his years of unflinching service as the National Director of the Victorious Missionaries. If you would like to send a note or make a call of condolence, please use the information provided:

Victorious Missionaries  
442 S. DeMazenod Drive Belleville, IL 62221-1023

Bette Meyer: 618-394-6281  
Administrative Assistant

Bro. Tom Ruhmann, OMI: 618-394-6282  
National Director

"We are honored to have known and partnered with Bro. Francis.

**Archdiocese of Washington**

The **Rupert Liturgy for and with persons who have Disabilities** honors a family from Blessed Sacrament Parish who have led the way in supporting programs at the Joseph P. Kennedy Institute and modeled a Catholic faith-based response to support and serve those with disabilities for many years. The work and leadership of the late Carl Ruppert and his wife, Antoinette Ruppert is known well past the parish and archdiocesan boundaries. Their impact grew over the years with their daughter, Colleen. She became one of the first people with disability in the country to become a Eucharistic Minister through the advocacy of her parents and support of her parish, parish priest and bishop. Peg Kolm, Coordinator, Office of Ministry for Persons with Disabilities in the Department for Social Concerns, Archdiocese of Washington, co-hosted the annual event. Other dioceses have found additional ways to honor their outstanding leaders in disability ministry, like naming an annual award after them that is given to honor a current person in ministry.

Ever creative, the Archdiocese of Washington Department for Social Concerns also has another idea that is a terrific one to share from their newsletter:

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON • DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL CONCERNS



### **Diocese of Alaska**

Chris Fortenberry and Sr. Dorothy Giloley serve the rural and more urban areas of Alaska, providing ministry with and for persons with disability, as well. On Thursday, October 30, 2008 10:46 AM, they already were experiencing a temp of minus 20°F and about 10" of snow on the ground-BRRRRRRRRRR. Their challenges related to mileage and severe weather require many creative solutions for ministry to go forward, but they persevere and have some wonderful and award winning successes. They always gather a terrific group to participate together in our webinars and we are thankful that they are able to use the webinar replay links from our web site for rural access. Keep up the good work, Alaska!

### **Diocese of Kalamazoo**

Ann Sherzer, the Diocesan Disability Ministry Director recently shared several creative ideas that she uses in her work in Kalamazoo. Through Knights of Columbus funding, they are able to send five Catholic school teachers a year to disability training. In their work in the diocese, they use translation equipment for audio description when that is needed. And, May 15, St. Dymphna Day, is an annual day of remembrance in the diocese as they hold a memorial service for those in their disability ministry outreach who have

died.

### **Diocese of Erie**

Jackie Johnson, Diocesan Director of Disability Ministry in Erie uses a specialized public door-to-door type of transportation service to pick up folks who have physical disabilities or others with disabilities who need transportation to attend diocesan events, who qualify for that public service and for whom private transportation is not available. She has a contract with the local providers and diocese pays the bill from her diocesan ministry account. This makes it possible for many to attend days of reflection, retreats and other activities, who would not otherwise be able to come.

### **Diocese of Toledo**

Marsha Rivas, Diocesan Director of Disability Ministry in Toledo publishes "Monthly Tips on Disability Ministry". She uploads them to her web site and has generously agreed to make a few modifications for national use and share them with you all through our web site. Watch for them through the E-News. And, here is her first installment! It is entitled:

"November's Inclusion Tip: Aging Caregivers. Remember to hug a caregiver today!

## **Legislation**

If you or a person you serve in ministry receives Social Security benefits or sometimes have questions about them, the following two releases made by the Social Security Administration in October will be beneficial information for you to have for yourself or for your files.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY**

#### **Social Security Announces 5.8 Percent COLA Benefit Increase for 2009**

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits for more than 55 million Americans will increase 5.8 percent in 2009, the Social Security Administration announced today. The 5.8 percent increase is the largest since 1982.

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits increase automatically each year based on the rise

in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers* (CPI-W), from the third quarter of the prior year to the corresponding period of the current year. This year's increase in the CPI-W was 5.8 percent.

The 5.8 percent Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that over 50 million Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2009. Increased payments to more than 7 million Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries will begin on December 31.

## **Social Security Announces Nationwide Launch of Compassionate Allowances: Process Will Fast Track Applications For People with Cancers and Rare Diseases**

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, today announced the national rollout of the agency's Compassionate Allowances initiative, a way to expedite the processing of disability claims for applicants whose medical conditions are so severe that their conditions obviously meet Social Security's standards.

"Getting benefits quickly to people with the most severe medical conditions is both the right and the compassionate thing to do," Commissioner Astrue said. "This initiative will allow us to make decisions on these cases in a matter of days, rather than months or years."

Social Security is launching this expedited decision process with a total of 50 conditions. Over time, more diseases and conditions will be added. A list of the first 50 impairments - 25 rare diseases and 25 cancers - can be found at [www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances).

## **Resources**

Check out this fun, free, reproducible resource for Thanksgiving activities. The age range is pre-k through gr. 6. You might find some age and/or skill appropriate activities to use in an adaptive setting.

Free Online Reproducible Activities for Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Puzzle: A fit-the-pieces activity for preschoolers

A Thanksgiving Prayer: Identifying what we're grateful for, for grades K-1

Pilgrims and Prayer: A crossword game for grades 2-3

A Circle of Family and Friends: A centerpiece celebrating those at the table, for grades 4-6

They're all available on the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies Family Pages. [Click here](#) to register if you haven't already. It's free!



## **Coming Events**

**Tuesday, November 11, 2008**

Veteran's Day: Mental Health Ministries is offering an interfaith Veteran's Day resource that can be used as a bulletin insert. A bulletin insert is printed on

both sides and cut in half. We hope this will raise the important issues (including post traumatic stress syndrome) faced by our returning troops and give your faith community some ideas on how to be supportive. This resource is available in English and in Spanish. <http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/>

**Sunday, November 16, 2008 - 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities***

**Sunday, November 30, 2:00 p.m.**

A Place to Belong: Liturgical Celebration with Archbishop Donald Wuerl  
Partnership Mass with Persons who have Disabilities

St. Mary of the Mills Church, Laurel, Maryland

In honor of the 30th Anniversary of the Pastoral Statement of the US Catholic Bishops Archdiocesan Rocky Stone Award will be presented, and a reception will be held following the liturgy. Contact Office of Ministry for Persons with Disabilities, Department for Social Concerns, Archdiocese of Washington at 301-853-4560 for more information. Note: fully accessible.

**Thursday, December 4 to Sunday, December 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)

**Friday, December 12, 2008**

Call for Proposals

25th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disabilities May 4-5,  
2009 Honolulu, Hawaii Hawaii Convention Center [www.pacrim.hawaii.edu](http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu)

Go to: [Call for Papers Home](#) | [Pac Rim Home](#) for more information.

**Sunday, January 18, 2009 to Tuesday, January 20, 2009**

2009 NCEA Special Needs Conference

The third annual NCEA Special Needs Conference will take place at the

Doubletree Guest Suite; Charleston-Historic District in Charleston, SC

Contact Br. Robert Bimonte, FSC or Janice Kraus at 202-378-5706, by email at [jkraus@ncea.org](mailto:jkraus@ncea.org), or go to

[http://www.ncea.org/events/event.asp?event\\_id=119](http://www.ncea.org/events/event.asp?event_id=119)

at the National Catholic Educational Association web site for more information.

**February 22-25, 2009**

CATHOLIC SOCIAL MINISTRY GATHERING

"Christ Our Hope: Healing a Broken World"

Partner Organizational Meetings - February 19-22

NCPD Wrap-around - February 22, 1-3:00 PM

Core Meetings- February 22-25

Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill - Washington, DC

[www.catholicsocialministrygathering.org](http://www.catholicsocialministrygathering.org)

**Monday, April 27 through Thursday, April 30, 2009**

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership Annual  
Conference Dearborn Michigan Hyatt, Archdiocese of Detroit To register or for  
additional information contact NCCL at [www.nccl.org](http://www.nccl.org).

### **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.