

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

In This Issue:

[NCPD News and Tips](#)

USCCB Fall General
Assembly

Prayer for Unborn
Babies with
Disabilities

30th Anniversary

I Gave 30 Campaign
New in 2009!

[Diocesan/Partner News](#)

I Believe Too!

NCCL Topics

Green Bay's Model

Richmond Advocate
Day

Metuchen
Symposium

Postcard Campaign
for Life

[Legislation](#)

SSA Class Action

GREETINGS OF THIS HOLY SEASON!

The NCPD staff would like to wish you a very holy Advent, a very merry Christmas Season and a blessed New Year. It has been a tremendous gift for us to see and be part of the exponential increase in disability ministry across the country this year.

It is impossible to adequately express what a pleasure it has been to meet and work with so many of you. We are honored to be able to offer supports for your ministries through our website, trainings, presentations, diocesan evaluations, publications, regional diocesan director meetings, webinars, and other partnerships. And to those who have served so selflessly on an NCPD council, board, committee, film crew, webinar team, or acted as a host for a meeting or filming, we are deeply appreciative.

Please know that the prayers of Jan, Nancy, Peg, Bob, Yan, Steve and our volunteers will be with you throughout these holy seasons and 2009. Blessings to you in all.



Donate a Large Print Liturgical Book

In case anyone is searching for a Christmas gift for a visually impaired priest or deacon, you might want to know that the large print Sacramentary is now available (in three print sizes) as one complete set housed in an attractive, altar appropriate red leather-like binder with gold embossing, tabs and ribbons. The set comes with up to six archive binders, depending upon the print size, so that the priest or deacon can exchange the parts of the Sacramentary that are not needed in the formal altar binder, with the current liturgical season pages. This allows the Sacramentary used at the altar to be a size that is manageable for their liturgical needs.

If you would like to consider supporting a priest with visual impairment by donating a large print Sacramentary as a Christmas gift to them, please contact us at bquinlan@ncpd.org. Donated altar Sacramentaries will include a request affixed to the inside cover of the binder so you and your intentions can be remembered in prayer by its

Suit by American Council of Blind

[Resources](#)

Coping with the Holidays

[Coming Events](#)

Webinars

Other Events

owner. You can be sure that this is a gift that will keep on giving.



NCPD News and Tips

USCCB Fall General Assembly

Janice Benton and I were guests at the USCCB General Assembly in mid November in Baltimore. NCPD is grateful to have attended for many years but I have to tell you that it is such a privilege to witness the bishops at prayer and work in behalf of the Church. It makes me so proud to be a Catholic. It is a joy to meet so many of them face to face and we never pass up an opportunity to thank them individually or with some of them as a group at a breakfast we host with the National Catholic Office for the Deaf, and to affirm the great work that you are doing to support people with disabilities, their families and those who serve them in ministry. We take the opportunity to communicate updates on disability ministry around the U.S. and to listen for ways that we can all be of service in this mission that we share.



Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, a ten year member of NCPD's Board and recently named its Episcopal Moderator, was elected Chair-Elect of the USCCB Pro-Life Committee at the General Assembly. Click on these links to read late November articles from CNS and the Whispers Blog about his activities supporting life on the first anniversary of his being elevated to "cardinal." We are very proud of this faithful servant of God.

<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0805968.htm>

<http://whispersintheloggia.blogspot.com/>



It will be good for you to note that during the Fall General Assembly the bishops approved in both English and Spanish the Order for the "Blessing of a Child in the Womb" for use in the dioceses of the United States. The "Blessing of a Child in the Womb Within Mass and Outside Mass" upon recognitio by the Congregation on Divine Worship and the Sacraments in Rome, will be included in future editions of the Book of Blessings when the text is revised. The "Blessing of Parents before Childbirth" that is currently in the Book of Blessings is distinctly

different from this latest approved blessing because its focus is on the parents and not on the child in utero, itself.

As a parent of a child with a genetically transmittable disability, I can say with assurance what it would have meant to have this formal blessing during my at-risk pregnancies for my children who followed Larry's birth. But can't you imagine the meaningfulness of having such a blessing during any pregnancy? The information about the "Blessing for a Child in the Womb" could be especially encouraging information for you to pass on to families who approach you after finding out that their child in utero was found to have issues that indicate potential problems prior to or following birth.

NCPD Ethics Committee Seeks Prayer for the Protection of Unborn Babies Diagnosed with Disabilities

Abortion is often justified because the baby in the mother's womb has been diagnosed (sometimes mistakenly) as having a disabling condition. Parents often feel coerced by their doctors and others to abort a child who may be born with any number of conditions. It is reported that between 80% and 90% of children with a diagnosis of Down syndrome are aborted. We affirm the value and dignity of every person and turn to our mother Mary for protection of these unborn babies by praying daily the following:

Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought Thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our Life, our Sweetness, and our Hope. To Thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To Thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, Thine Eyes of Mercy toward us, and after this our exile show unto us the Blessed Fruit of thy Womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us O Holy Mother of God that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.

Mary, Immaculate, Protector and Patroness of our country, be with us always.

30th Anniversary Teaching Moments: We encourage all of you to remember the Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities (full text at www.ncpd.org) in all the work you do this upcoming year. The anniversary (Nov. 16, 2008 - Nov. 15, 2009) is a great "hook" to teach the components of sacramental welcome and liturgical inclusion, and as a way to bring new partners to your work. USE EVERYTHING to teach the Pastoral... mention it during every meeting, and make it a part of your everyday work, such as your signature line on emails or on your voice message. Here's some tag line language:

"Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Bishops' Pastoral Statement, proclaiming we are one flock under the care of a single Shepherd."

AND you can reference this statement from Cardinals Justin Rigali and Daniel DiNardo, who wrote:

*We join the **National Catholic Partnership on Disability** in calling on all people of good will to find new pathways, develop new partnerships, and bring new vitality to this ministry, ever mindful that we are one flock under the care of a single shepherd.*

Our Holy Father called us to draw near to "Christ Our Hope" during his recent visit to the United States. Throughout this 30th anniversary year, let us "Live Christ Our Hope," as we honor the gifts that people with disabilities bring to their faith communities, and rededicate ourselves to ensuring their meaningful participation in all aspects of the Church and society.

(August 13, 2008)

(For the full text of the Cardinals' letter, go to the **Disability Ministry Toolkit** page, at <http://www.ncpd.org/Disability%20Ministry%20Toolkit.htm>. The Toolkit contains all the documents, resources and fresh ideas for developing your ministry.)

I Gave 30 Campaign

[Giving@ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) : NCPD is looking to our supporters and partners to contribute to a new effort, the "I Gave 30" campaign, asking for \$30 per month, \$30 per quarter or a one-time donation in a multiple of that magic number, 30! Watch your inbox for a letter soon...or you can donate online now at <http://www.ncpd.org/Donate%20to%20NCPD.htm> . NCPD has been a "keeper of the Pastoral" for nearly three decades, and we need your support to meet the needs of this expanding ministry. For more information on donating to NCPD, contact Peg Kolm, Director of Development at 202-756-4935 or at pkolm@ncpd.org

New in 2009!

NCPD Partners! Here are some coming attractions in 2009:

- New website in 2009, new features! www.ncpd.org
- Enhanced Large Print Sacramentary
- 2009 Webinars on liturgical access, mental health and suicide, and inclusive Catholic education
- Series of awareness workshops on parish support for people with mental illness

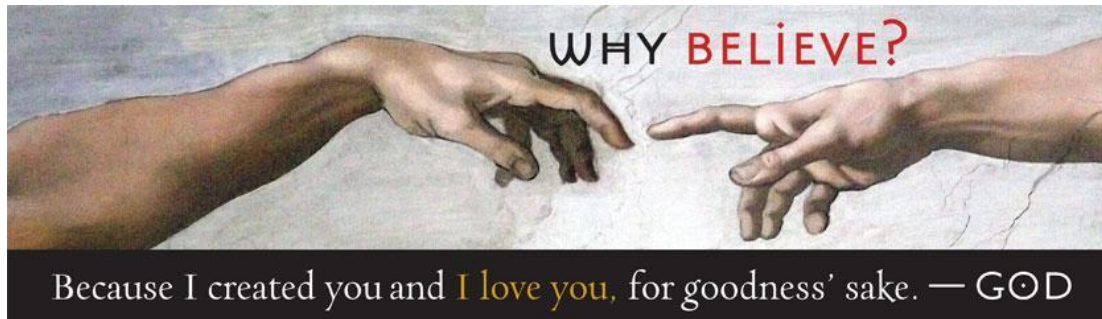
Diocesan/Partner News

I Believe Too

One of our Mental Illness Council Co-Chairs, Deacon Tom Lambert of Chicago, has a daughter who has taken a stand that is a beautiful witness in the D.C. area. Tom's daughter, JoEllen Murphy, initiated an "I Believe Too" campaign to counteract bus ads in D.C. that say "Why Believe in God...Just be good for goodness' sake," initiated in November by the American Humanist Association (AHA). JoEllen explained her motivations on the "I Believe Too" web site at <http://www.ibelievetoo.org>: "After a friend forwarded me an article about the AHA ad campaign, I thought, 'Enough!' I am so tired of God and religion being attacked that I decided to

start a counter ad campaign."

A Catholic News Agency article of Dec. 3 noted, "Following a secular humanist ad campaign in Washington D.C. which questioned religious belief, an initiative called "I Believe Too" has been launched to "counteract" the secular campaign with "a positive, upbeat ad that identifies God as mankind's 'true and loving creator' ([CNA](#))."



NCCL Topics

The National Conference on Catechetical Leadership is a valued partner of NCPD and many of you are members of NCCL as are we. The NCCL Conference planning Committee is still accepting nominations for persons to conduct Roundtables, Poster Postings and Hot Topics events at the 73rd NCCL Annual Meeting and Conference to be held in April. We encourage you to download and complete one of the forms found on their website www.nccl.org, and recommend topics and people who can present on issues related to inclusion or access for children and youth with disabilities in catechetical ministry if you would like to see this topic covered. You might recommend yourself if you are already planning to attend, and bring a Poster Posting on something you have achieved in ministry to display and make available for all to see during that important conference. It is a great "awareness" opportunity to share the message of inclusion.

Green Bay Model for Awareness Activities

The Diocese of Green Bay Retreat for Adults with Disability was recently featured by Sam Lucero, Editor of the Compass, in the Diocesan newspaper. He spent almost the entire day at the retreat and wrote a wonderful article that you will find at the link below. Mr. Lucero also presents a slide show of activities during the day at this link that is narrated by adults with disabilities whom he interviewed.

Deacon Bill Burkel, a member of Prince of Peace Parish in Bellevue, directs the retreats. The retreat team also consists of Mary Eckert, activities director, and Donna Sommers, music coordinator. Eckert attends Prince of Peace Parish in Bellevue and Sommers is administrative assistant for the diocesan Department of Stewardship and Pastoral Services. Numerous volunteers serve as co-retreatants, leading small-group activities and assisting retreatants who have special needs.

Susan Perrault, a former diocesan director and current parish minister and NCPD Board member who was a co-retreatant, shared this link with us. The slide show provides a wonderful model that we all can use, featuring interviews that let people with disabilities tell their own

stories and share their faith in their own words.

Note: Once the web page is up, don't start the slide show for about a minute to allow adequate time for the slide show to fully load. Then it will not stop for "buffering" during your viewing.

<http://www.thecompassnews.org/compass/2008-11-14/news5.shtml>

Diocese of Richmond

November 15 Parish Advocate Day Diocesan Disability Director, Nita Grignol, hosted a first annual Parish Advocate Conference with a variety of workshops, networking opportunities and presentations for her 88 parish advocates serving in 72 parishes. NCPD Executive Director Janice Benton gave a keynote and I provided a closing prayer as we enjoyed the day with all. Nita held her meeting at two sites through the use of video conferencing technology the diocese has recently installed. It was her maiden voyage with the technology but the 15 people gathered at a distant site seemed very happy to have the opportunity to participate through that means.

One Parish Advocate Can Make a Big Difference Our day in Richmond was filled with conversations and lots of listening to very creative parish advocates. I would like to feature one of those parish advocates, Karen Jackson, to encourage anyone who is thinking of implementing this approach to consider the possible benefits.

Nita is a new, energetic and creative diocesan disability director, who works part-time in a one-person office. She reports directly to the bishop but realized that she would need a lot of help and a structure to initiate the kind of impact she hoped to generate for disability ministry in the diocese. This is where her parish advocates come in. This is only one story of 88 that could be told of Nita's parish advocates.

On the "job" for this past year, Karen Jackson makes herself available to consult on a variety of inclusion/access questions and needs that come to her attention, as do most parish advocates. She is a parent of a child with disability herself and was sensitive to the need of a faith support group for parents of children with disabilities at her parish, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Norfolk, and began one called the Living in Holland parent support group. This support group meets monthly.

Karen also created a network for faith inclusion in the Tidewater area. Called the Faith Inclusion Network (FIN) of South Hampton Roads, it is an interdenominational and service provider network group that promotes awareness of and provides support for the inclusion of people with disabilities and their families into faith communities in the South Hampton Roads area. This creative idea that Karen envisioned she now directs. FIN has 41 members, 12 of which are representatives of various service agencies in the area and the rest are religious leaders, staff and some parent leaders. FIN is hosting its first conference on Saturday, May 30, 2009 (contact Karen Jackson if you would like to receive the brochure at dacapomusic@cox.net).

Diocese of Metuchen

The Diocese of Metuchen is holding a *Symposium to Foster Awareness for People with Disabilities* on March 7, 2009, at the St. John Neumann Center, 146 Metlars Lane, Piscataway,

NJ 08854. It is being sponsored by the Offices for Catechesis and Respect for Life. This day-long symposium is held for all those who have special needs, those who minister with them, and parents/family members. Participants will be able to choose from diverse workshops that promote awareness, develop programs and fine-tune what is already being offered in parishes. The day will include keynote speaker Steven McDonald, a NYPD Detective Lieutenant who was paralyzed by three bullets in 1986 and now travels the world inspiring audiences with his powerfully moving message on nonviolence and forgiveness. The day will also provide a choice of workshops, lunch and prayer. For more information contact Patricia Martin, Program Coordinator, Office of Religious Education, Diocese of Metuchen at 732-562-1900 or at pmartin@diometuchen.org.

Postcard Campaign for Life

We received a maillist alert from the USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development on November 25 that we want to share with you. In the email from John Carr, Executive Director, he states

"The USCCB Pro-Life Committee has authorized a major postcard campaign to communicate our opposition to any legislation that would expand abortion, especially the Freedom of Choice Act. The goal would be to collect postcards in parishes and deliver them to members of Congress. ... At this time we are looking at a January 2009 effort in the parishes, which will be preceded by educational outreach to Catholics and the public at large on the seriousness of the threat to pro-life policies. ... This is an important time to demonstrate our commitment to the dignity of human life from conception to natural death. We urge you to contact your pro-life colleagues and do everything you can to cooperate with them on the postcard campaign."

The draft texts of the postcards are available for viewing at <http://www.nchla.org/docdisplay.asp?ID=206> .

A draft of a non-formatted Parish Instructions Manual is available at: [nchla.org/docdisplay.asp?ID=207](http://www.nchla.org/docdisplay.asp?ID=207) .

When the postcard, educational flier, and manual are ready they will be available at NCHLA's website at www.nchla.org .

To contact the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development JPHD about general information, email JPHDmail@usccb.org. The USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities also has valuable resources, including a poster and analyses: www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/FOCA

Legislation

SSA Class Action Suit

The American Council of the Blind filed a class action suit against the Social Security Administration (SSA) asking for additional notice options for individuals with a visual impairment. A federal court has certified a class composed of applicants, beneficiaries and representative payees with visual impairments that substantially limit their ability to see so that they require communications from SSA to be in an accessible format in order to participate in the Social Security or SSI programs. The class action does not include any claims for money damages.

SSA will display a poster of the class action notice in large print in field offices across the

country from November 14, 2008 through January 16, 2009. At the same time, there will also be links to the notice on www.socialsecurity.gov and at www.segurosocial.gov/espanol and a toll-free number will be available for people to call to hear a recording of the notice in English or Spanish. The toll-free number is 1-866-940-0765.

Please direct any questions about the class action to plaintiff's counsel at 1-800-348-4232 or by e-mail to ssaclassaction@dredf.org. SSA employees are not able to answer any questions concerning it.

Resources

Plan ahead and download the brochure, "Coping with the Holidays", featured on the Mental Health Ministries homepage (www.MentalHealthMinistries.net). This popular holiday resource is available in English and Spanish.

Coming Events

Upcoming Webinars

2009 Webinar Schedule Features Access We are happy to announce the theme, topics and the months of our upcoming webinars in 2009. Make a note in your calendars! We will be able to confirm exact dates with our production company and presenters before the end of December, but wanted to alert you in this E-News. Be watching future E-News and our website at www.ncpd.org for complete information. We will be partnering with many of our previous webinar partners, in addition to three new ones: the Georgetown Center for Liturgy, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), and the USCCB Secretariat on Catholic Education.

We will have some wonderful presenters and feature a special 1½ hour session that includes a live interview with Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI with questions by participants and live answers from Fr. Rolheiser and psychiatrist, Dr. Tom Welch, on *Access to Suicide Prevention and Ministry Support*. We will launch our new *Access Manual for Church Properties and Worship Spaces*.

March 2009 *Access to Liturgy*, NCPD webinar in partnership with the Georgetown Center for Liturgy/Envision Magazine and others. We will explore what constitutes an accessible liturgical space and how to achieve it.

May 2009 *Access to Suicide Prevention and Ministry Support*, NCPD Mental Illness Council webinar and others. We will feature noted columnist, teacher and theologian Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI and Dr. Thomas Welch, a forensic psychiatrist with a Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry who is a member of the NCPD Council on Mental.

July 2009 *Access in Liturgy*, NCPD webinar in partnership with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) and others, will describe ways to make liturgical ministries more accessible to those with disabilities.

October 2009 *Access in Catholic Elementary Schools*, NCPD webinar in partnership with the USCCB Secretariat on Catholic Education and others, with Marie Powell, Director, serving as

moderator.

We look forward to producing these webinars for the support of your ministry in the Church. Thank you to all who have helped make the previous webinars so successful and through whose suggestions the present schedule has been developed. Contact Dr. Nancy Thompson at nthompson@ncpd.org with questions.

Other Events

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

Friday, January 16 to Wednesday, January 21

National Catholic Office for the Deaf Pastoral Week

"Bridging the Gap"

Marriott Hotel at San Francisco Airport.

See www.ncod.org for more information and to register.

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, or go to 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"

Join NCPD staff, board, and other advocates to bring a disability perspective to social action directors and members of Congress.

Partner Organizational Meetings - February 19-22

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

Core Meeting- February 22-25

Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill - Washington, DC

www.catholicsocialministrygathering.org

Monday, April 27 through Thursday, April 30, 2009

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership Annual Conference

NCPD will host a Liaison Group Session relating to catechesis and disability on Wednesday April 29, 2:00 - 3:30 PM. Join us!

Dearborn Michigan Hyatt, Archdiocese of Detroit.

To register or for additional information contact NCCL at www.nccl.org.

Thursday, July 2 to through Sunday July 5, 2009

Celebrating 35 Years of Handicapped Encounter Christ

Interested in a Journey to the Heart of God?

Held in Mount Kisco, NY
Contact John L. Keck at Keck.j@worldnet.att.net (914) 737-6889

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

NCPD E-NEWS is distributed by the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), 415 Michigan Ave., NE, Suite 95, Washington, DC 20017; 202-529-2933, 202-529-2934 (tty), 202-529-4678 (fax).

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