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**NCPD
E-NEWS
JULY 2009**



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"Yes, Love Exists, and Since It Exists, Things Can Change and We Can Hope"

Pope Benedict on Corpus Christi



Sometimes even the strongest and most faith-filled among us feels the challenge of living with a disability, of life, of ministry, of being the parent, catechist or advocate of a child with disability... and wonder if we will ever be able to overcome a persistent weakness or cope more effectively with a serious condition. Pope Benedict reminds us of the transforming power of the presence of Christ on the Feast of Corpus Christi with these inspiring words:

"Love transforms everything, and so we understand that the mystery of transubstantiation, the sign of Jesus--Charity, which transforms the world, is at the center of today's feast of "Corpus Domini." Looking upon him and worshipping him, we say: Yes, love exists, and since it exists, things can change for the better and we can hope. It is the hope that comes from Christ's love that gives us the strength to live and to face every difficulty. This is why we sing while we carry the most Blessed Sacrament in procession; we sing and praise God, who reveals himself hidden in the sign of broken bread. We all have need of this bread, because the road to freedom, justice

and peace is long and wearisome."

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One New Jersey Story

Shared with us by Carol Ann Norland,
Parish Advocate with People with Disabilities

The Catholic Community of St. Matthias in Somerset, NJ had a young man, age 15, with Down Syndrome who served as an altar server. He passed away during the night the week of June 8.

He grew up in the community and touched many people who came to know him. He loved the Mass and was so proud to be an altar server. He would bring a smile to the faces of many while he went about his duties. His funeral, this past Saturday, was among the most touching in the parish. Fifty altar servers in their robes lined the entrance and the aisle when the family arrived at the packed church. His empty robe still drapes the server's chair in church this week. A small write up about the simple faith and sincerity of this incredible young man can be found in the June 14th bulletin on the Liturgy page of St. Matthias' website at www.stmatthias.net. NCPD includes the short piece here, for your convenience.

William Cuddeback Remembered

Will, one of our best altar servers in many ways, died last week. His sudden death was a great shock and deep loss to all of us who had the blessing of getting to know him on any level. As a person, Will just radiated a spirit of innocence and simplicity. Being in his presence, even for a little while, was an experience of grace. He had a way of disarming us of anything that was not good and holy and important. His very presence and personality kind of cut through to a deeper level of living -- beyond competition, or the drive for success, or the need for approval, or our own struggles with misplaced values. He was just real. When we were always concentrating on doing, Will was content with being. Whereas we keep pushing to do more and be better, Will showed us how to be happy with who we are. As an altar server, Will seemed to love doing this ministry. He showed up faithfully, did his responsibilities well, offered

to serve when there was a need (even if it wasn't his turn), and showed himself to be a real team player (an essential characteristic here at St. Matthias). Will worked well with the other servers. He basically got along with everybody.

Thanks, Will. We will miss you, your smile, your pleasant greetings, and the invaluable lessons that you have taught us by just being who you are-- God's beloved child.

St. Matthias' Mission Statement for Ministry With People With Disabilities

We believe that every person is created by God, each is loved by God, and that none should be diminished by another, even by unintentional words or actions.

We believe that if there are barriers of attitude, communication or architecture for anyone, the foundation of the House of God is weakened for all.

Therefore, our Ministry exists to affirm the rights of People with Disabilities, and to welcome them into all aspects of the life of our Church.

Our goal is to educate and to create an inclusive Parish Community whereby the people of our parish will come to recognize the unique gifts that People with Disabilities bring to the Church.

NCPD News and Tips

NCPD Council on Mental Illness Launches Nationwide Initiative

The NCPD Council on Mental Illness will be holding awareness workshops at three locations in July: Washington, DC (July 11); Chicago, IL (July 21); Portland, OR (July 24). Please [click here to view or download a brochure](#) with more details. Also, see the listings in our Upcoming Events Calendar below and on

NCPD Council on Mental Illness Awareness Workshop:

Increasing Support and Hope in Catholic Parish Communities



—● *Washington, DC*
July 11, 2009

—● *Chicago, IL*
July 21, 2009

—● *Portland, OR*
July 24, 2009

our website at ncpd.org. The major cost of the workshops are provided by a grant from a generous benefactor to the NCPD Council on Mental Illness, so only a nominal fee of \$10 will be asked to help cover the expense for a light continental breakfast, lunch and materials. Register online by [clicking here](#).

What will you learn?

The Mental Illness Workshops will introduce Catholic diocesan personnel, pastoral leaders, and parishioners to the issue of severe and persistent mental illness and will provide them with tools and resources to further the welcome, support, and involvement of individuals with mental illness and their families in the life of the faith community. Participants will be given specific practical, actionable ideas, ready and easy to use in their parishes.

Who will benefit from workshops?

All concerned about the welcome and support of parishioners with mental illnesses and their families, including priests, pastoral staff, deacons, seminarians, people with mental illness and their families, catechetical leaders, parish nurses, DREs, lay ecclesial ministers, youth ministers, liturgists, disability advocates, ushers, care ministers, chaplains, social workers, healthcare workers, pastoral counselors.

For information about workshops [click here](#).

September 2009 Advanced Training Opportunities.

Following the July introductory workshops, participants may apply to attend an **advanced training** sponsored by the NCPD Council on Mental Illness on **September 26-28, 2009**. It will be held at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL. This training is designed for those interested in providing their own local "Support and Hope" Awareness Workshops and to enhance outreach to people with mental illness and their families. Information regarding the application process will be available after July 10, 2009 at www.ncpd.org or by calling 202-529-2933.

Immediately following this training are two additional educational opportunities (also held at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows).

- **September Interfaith Summit** on September 29-October 1, organized by Pathways to Promise, an interfaith center supporting caring ministries with people with mental illness. The NCPD Council on Mental Illness works collaboratively with Pathways to Promise, and two Council members serve on its Board of Directors.
- **Erase the Stigma of Mental Illness** is an interfaith conference which will feature Rev. Craig Rennebohm, on October 2-3.

October 2009 Suicide Prevention Webinar.

On October 20, 2009, NCPD offers an online session on suicide prevention and pastoral

supports with Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, and Claire Woodruff, moderated by Dr. Thomas Welch. Noted author and columnist, Fr. Rolheiser is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. More information on the highly respected NCPD Webinar Series is at www.ncpd.org.

Webinar July 15, 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT

You can still register for our newest access webinar entitled Making Liturgical Ministries More Accessible to People with Disabilities. Due to the proximity of the date of the Webinar to the beginning of the Affiliate Membership year, **Affiliate Members for 2008-2009 can attend without a fee.**

[Click here](#) to register. For downloadable PDF flyer [click here](#); Word flyer [click here](#).



Patrick Gorman, DMA, Director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Madison, will look at the importance of parish leadership in assisting the faithful in identifying and sharing their God-given gifts with others as the parish offers thanks and praise to God, and the impact of removing barriers to effective ministry. Karen Murray, MDiv, Director of the Office for Persons with Disabilities for the Archdiocese of Boston, will concentrate on the power of invitation, the removal of the first barrier to



ensuring that the perception of a person's disability does not obscure the rich gifts given them by God, thus depriving the community of reaching its fullest potential. Lisa Tarker, Executive Director of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) will serve as moderator for the webinar.



Lisa, Pat and Karen have been diligently working on PowerPoint slides and scripts in order to bring you the best information they can find to support your ministry. To download a one page flyer [click here](#). To register [click here](#).

Remember, personnel from NCPD affiliate dioceses (and NCCL members through a prior financial arrangement) attend free of charge. Others pay \$30 per logged-in-computer.

Army Chaplain who Suffered Disabling Injuries in Iraq Passes Away

[Chaplain Dies From Iraq War Injuries](#) -- Priest Embraced God's Will in Line of Fire

"NEW HOPE, Minnesota, JUNE 22, 2009 (Zenit.org).- Father Timothy Vakoc, an Army chaplain who was injured in Iraq in 2004, passed away Saturday [June 20] at the age of 49. The priest's personalized [CaringBridge](#) Web site reported that he was "surrounded by family and friends who prayed him into heaven" at St. Therese nursing home in New Hope.

He was wounded on May 29, the 12th anniversary of his priestly ordination, when his humvee was struck by roadside bomb while returning from celebrating Mass for the soldiers in Mosul."

Fr. Tim, as he was lovingly remembered by many readers of the E-News, profoundly affected the lives of those who knew him. He was a constant inspiration to visitors and friends in spite of the severe injuries he sustained and his slow progress toward healing, up to the time of his death. Calling Father Vakoc "a man of peace," Archbishop Nienstedt of Minneapolis/St. Paul said "he chose to endure the horror of war in order to bring the peace of Christ to America's fighting men and women. He has been an inspiration to us all and we will miss him. Check the web links below for details about the life and impact of the first Chaplain to die from the Iraq war.



\$30 to honor the 30th Anniversary

"If I had a dollar..." Remember that expression? Well, that's what we're asking of you---one dollar (or more) for every year since the *Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities* was signed. It's been thirty full, enriching years since then, and NCPD could use a dollar from you, your colleagues, family and friends...

That \$30 donation, or monthly donation of \$30, will help pay for our webinar series, new resources such as the Foundations in Disability Ministry, and new initiatives, such as the autism task force. Go online today to make your pledge of \$30 at www.ncpd.org. Help NCPD teach the *Pastoral* to a new generation of clergy, (arch) diocesan and parish staff. Thank you!

Partner/Organization News and Tips

Disability Awareness Night at the Ball Park



I would like to share with you a wonderful idea for awareness and partnership that comes from Christina Desmarais, Director - Options Program from Paul VI Catholic High School in the Diocese of Arlington. She worked in conjunction with *Exceptional Parent* magazine, to host their 6th annual Disability Awareness Night at the ballpark of their minor league baseball team. The Will Call and a Disability Resource Fair opened at 3:00 p.m. with the first pitch at 4:35. Some free tickets were made available for individuals, their family or organizations and awards were presented for outstanding work in the field of disability: one for inclusive sports programs, one for inclusion in a faith/Catholic Schools program, and one for local community advocacy for people with disabilities. The first pitch was made by a Special Olympian and the National Anthem was sung by an

individual with disability. What a wonderful idea, Chris. Thank you! We are always looking for creative and engaging ways to spread the good news of people with disabilities and resources for ministry with them.

Another New Partnership

In a June 4th press release the acquisition by Our Sunday Visitor of the publishing division from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company was announced by OSV. For those who are unaware it, Our Sunday Visitor has a lengthy history of commitment to disability ministry. Let us hope, pray and advocate that as they seek to "provide a dynamic approach to systematic and intentional catechesis for all members of the faith community," they will include those with disability.

Greg Erlandson, president and publisher of Our Sunday Visitor, stated, "The joining of our product lines not only reinforces both missions, but it leverages similar corporate cultures that value innovation, hybrid solutions, and sharing what the Church teaches and why to Catholics of all ages."

Diane Lampitt, president of Harcourt Religion Publishers, affirmed, "Together, we'll be able to respond to parish and school needs like never before -- with exceptional speed, creativity and new formats."

The statement noted that in the next months, "customers can expect to see expanded service support, expedited fulfillment services, and new hybrid products and services."

Ministry Formation for Deaf Adults

Fr. Michael Depcik and Sr. Rita Wigginton are running a Ministry Formation Program (MFP) for deaf lay people who want to understand more about their Catholic faith. They are looking for new students who would be interested in joining. MFP is a four year program, offered at six weekends of classes in the Chicago, IL area. The instructors are professionals who understand Deaf culture and Deaf issues within the Church. They are also fluent in American Sign Language.

Such MFP students need to:

- be over 22 years old
- be a practicing Catholic
- commit themselves to class attendance during the four year program
- be actively involved in local church during the program.

The yearly cost for attending MFP is \$800. Contact Sr. Rita's or Fr. Mike at <RAwigginton@insightbb.com> <depcik@desales.org>, respectively with questions.

Question for you from Marsha Rivas, Diocese of Toledo

"I'd like to know if any (arch)dioceses have hosted any programs for returning veterans with disabilities." Please contact Marsha Rivas, Director of Equal Access Ministry, Diocese of Toledo with your responses. 419-244-6711 voice, 419-243-1475 tty, mrivas@toledodiocese.org.



Marsha's Inclusion Tip Sheet for the topic of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity that she would like to share with you is found by [clicking here](#).

Xavier Society for the Blind

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: December 1 - 10, 2009
(Note: **Deadline for Registering is August 1, 2009**)

Fr. John Sheehan will lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, designed specifically for people who are blind or visually impaired. The pilgrimage includes visits to Nazareth, Bethlehem and the most important sites in Jerusalem. Mass will be celebrated each day and you will have free time to explore or shop on your own. Basic fee of \$2800 includes air fare, double occupancy room, meals and air-conditioned coaches for travel in the country. For more details, contact the Xavier Society by Email at Xaviersocietyfortheblind@Yahoo.com or call (212) 473-7800. A full itinerary and a full-color brochure will be sent as soon as we receive your request. Visit their website at www.xaviersociety.com.

Resources



If you are not yet aware, the Xavier Society for the Blind now has their own website! Make note of it and their other contact information to access the largest Catholic provider of Braille, large print and audio resources anywhere.

XAVIER SOCIETY for the BLIND
154 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010-4599

www.xaviersociety.com (212) 473-7800

Large Print Sacramentaries



When looking for large print sacramentaries, come to NCPD for font sizes 24, 34 and 44 print versions and for the lectionary on CD, formatted in all three sizes to print as you need. For more information contact Bob Quinlan, Project Manager at bquinlan@ncpd.org or 202.529.2933.

DOJ Releases New Guide on Accessible Meetings

The Department of Justice (DOJ) recently published new ADA guidance on conducting accessible and inclusive meetings. The 28-page guide, "Accessible Information Exchange: Meeting on a Level Playing Field," covers access to meeting sites as well as presentations, printed materials and other forms of communication. Information is provided on how to evaluate the accessibility of meeting rooms, parking, routes and entrances, and restrooms. This guidance also covers the layout of meeting spaces, accessible circulation and seating, provision of printed materials in accessible formats, and making audible communication accessible through assistive listening systems, real-time captioning, and sign language interpretation. The guide is available on DOJ's website at www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg.htm.

Coming Events

Saturday, July 11, 2009

NCPD Mental Illness Workshop: Washington, DC

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Archdiocesan Pastoral Center

5001 Eastern Avenue

Hyattsville, MD 20782

Contact: Janice Benton

202.529.2933 (v); 202.529.2934 (tty)

jbenton@ncpd.org

Registration deadline: July 10

Register online at by [clicking here](#).

Monday, July 13 - Friday, July 24, 2009

Deaf Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Two week summer day camp for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and use American Sign Language, ages 6-14. The cost of camp is \$75.00 (Scholarships are available). The camp

includes religious education (Bible Stories), swimming, arts and crafts, drama, sports and daily afternoon cultural entertainment. All children who are deaf/hard of hearing are welcome to attend. The site of the camp is at St. Charles Seminary on City Avenue. To register a child for camp call 215-587-3530 Voice; and/or 215-587-0510 TTY; and/or 866-892-6063 VP or e-mail pcpddeaf@adphhila.org. The registration form is on the web at www.archdiocese-phl.org/evangelization/resplife/deafapos.htm.

Wednesday July 15, 2009, 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT
NCPD Webinar

Access in Liturgy: Making Liturgical Ministries More Accessible to People with Disabilities, in partnership with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), NCCL and others, will describe ways to make liturgical ministries more accessible to those with disabilities. Patrick Gorman and Karen Murray presenting. Lisa Tarker moderating. [Click here](#) to register online. For downloadable PDF flyer [click here](#).

Tuesday, July 21, 2009
NCPD Mental Illness Workshop: Chicago, IL

9:00 am - 4:00 pm
St. John of the Cross Parish Center
5005 S. Wolf Rd.
Western Springs, IL 60558
Contact: Connie Rakitan
708.383.9276; cmr1551@comcast.net
Registration deadline: July 14
Register online at by [clicking here](#).

Friday, July 24, 2009
NCPD Mental Illness Workshop: Portland, OR

9:00 am - 4:00 pm
St. Pius X Parish Center
1280 NW Saltzman Road
Portland, OR 97229
Contact: Dorothy Coughlin
503.233.8399; dcoughlin@archdpdx.org
Registration deadline: July 18
Register online by [clicking here](#).

Sunday July 26 - Friday July 31, 2009
Religious ASL Week 2009

De Sales Center, Brooklyn, MI
Go to the following link for a flyer ([click here](#)) and registration form ([click here](#)).
Read and share it with others who work in Deaf Ministry. RID CEUs are available.

Saturday, August 1, 2009
Reaching People with Autism and Other Communication Disorders

2009 Annual NAFIM Meeting and Workshop
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; \$30.00 registration (overnight accommodations available)
Cleveland, OH

[Click here](#) for a flyer with registration form.

Click <http://www.nafim.org/conference.php?section=events&cat=conference>
for online information.

Call 800.736.1280 for information and accommodations.

Tuesday September 29 - Thursday October 1, 2009

Pathways to Promise: Interfaith Ministries & Mental Illness, 2009 National Summit

Companions on the Road to Recovery from Mental Illness

Pathways for the 21st Century

Belleville, IL

<http://www.pathways2promise.org/>

For color brochure, [click here](#), for black and white brochure [click here](#).

Friday October 2 - Saturday October 3, 2009 9:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m.

Erase the Stigma of Mental Illness

This is an interfaith conference which will feature Rev. Craig Rennebohm.

Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL

For an information brochure see, <http://www.snows.org/pdf/2009/2009erasebrochure.pdf>

Tuesday October 13, 2009, 3:00-4:00 p.m. EDT

NCPD Webinar

Access in Catholic Education: Elementary Schools, in partnership with the USCCB Secretariat on Catholic Education, NCCL and others, with Marie Powell, Director, serving as moderator. Sally Todd and Eileen Grams presenting.

Tuesday October 20, 2009, 1:00-2:30 p.m. EDT

NCPD Webinar

Access to Tools in Addressing Suicide: Pastoral Supports and Prevention Strategies, in partnership with NCCL, NCYFM, NCPD Council on Mental Illness, NCOD, NAFIM and others, with Dr. Tom Welch as moderator/presenter/interviewer and Fr. Ron Rolheiser and Claire Woodruff presenting.

Tuesday February 16, 2010, 3:00-4:00 p.m. EST

NCPD Webinar

Access in Catholic Education: High Schools, in partnership with the USCCB Secretariat on Catholic Education, NCCL and others. Karen Tichy and Doreen Engel presenting. Marie Powell moderating.

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

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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, Dr. Nancy Thompson, edits NCPD E-NEWS. Please submit items for consideration to her at nthompson@ncpd.org using the phrase "E-NEWS Submission" or "E-NEWS Response" in the subject line.

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