

## Premier Issue-November 2009

Greetings! Welcome to the premier issue of *MI Network News*, published by the NCPD Council on Mental Illness to facilitate communication among the members of the recently launched National Catholic Network on Mental Illness (Network). Thank you for being part of our Network. We hope to inspire, inform, and connect with one another on a monthly basis. We want to hear from you about your ministry; what you are doing, what are your hopes, 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. So again, please write us to let us know what is going on in your part of the "kingdom."



Eventually, we hope to make this an interactive network but for now (until we work out the cyberspace details) we will be e-mailing the newsletter to you every third Tuesday. Please e-mail back to us any news or programs or information that you wish us to consider for publication in the newsletter or posting to the NCPD website. Please send all e-mails to me, Deacon Tom Lambert, at [olmcinfo2@aol.com](mailto:olmcinfo2@aol.com) and put **NCPD Council on MI Network News** in the subject line. You can also call me at 773-525-0453 x21 if you have any questions or ideas.

## NEWS

Our July one-day workshops in Washington, DC, Chicago, and Portland, OR were wonderful successes, with over 160 total attendees. We are very excited about the plans participants made to bring greater awareness of the needs of people with mental illness and their families back to their parishes and dioceses. That group is now part of our Network.

The three-day training at the Shrine of Our Lady of Snows in Belleville, IL in late September also was very inspiring. Over 25 people attended from all different parts of the country. Everyone shared their enthusiasm for this ministry. There was a mix of "old hands" along with people new to this ministry. All went home with a plan and commitment for outreach. They too are now part of the Network.



Some of us were able to stay for the Pathways to Promise National Summit that followed our 3-day training. That conference had many people from different denominations who came for the purpose of starting or restarting their networks. I have to say that when I started in ministry to people with mental illness and their families 20 plus years ago, I felt the Catholic Church was way behind other groups in sharing on a national level about mental illness. While we still have a ways to go, after this conference I felt we were one of the groups helping to lead the way.

NCPD executive director, Janice Benton and I shared the efforts of the NCPD Council on Mental Illness and the process of our network building. Personally, it was a privilege to "give back" to the Pathways conference what they had given to me years ago. Connie Rakitan, Co-Chair of the NCPD Council on Mental Illness, also gave a presentation on Faith and Fellowship at this conference which was very well received.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE NCPD COUNCIL ON MENTAL ILLNESS

In preparation for the workshops and training described above, the NCPD Council on Mental Illness produced a 27-minute DVD entitled *Welcomed and Valued* featuring people living with mental illness sharing their faith stories. The video and accompanying 94-page Resource Manual also provide guidance to parishes on how to build communities of support and hope. The *Welcomed and Valued* DVD and Resource Manual can be ordered on the NCPD website ([click here](#)). Bulk discounts are available ([click here](#)). The DVD is accompanied by a list of discussion starter questions.



I have shown the DVD to parishioners, parish staff, and will soon show it to teachers in our school as well as the auxiliary Bishop and Deans in my Vicariate. Each of the people who have seen the DVD have been moved by it and believe it is an excellent way to get our message across.

I encourage you to show the DVD in your parish/Diocese. Feedback on your experience of showing it would be helpful for others to hear. Please send your description via e-mail to my e-mail address, [olmcinfo2@aol.com](mailto:olmcinfo2@aol.com) and put **NCPD Council on MI Network News** in the subject line.

# WEBINAR ON SUICIDE AND PASTORAL SUPPORTS



NCPD's recent webinar on *Suicide and Pastoral Supports* featured Father Ron Rolheiser, O.M.I., noted theologian and columnist, Dr Tom Welch from the NCPD Council on Mental Illness, and Claire Woodruff, president of Suicide Bereavement Support (SBS). The entire webinar is now available on the NCPD website under the WEBINAR ([click here](#)) heading as well as downloadable files containing valuable information about the topic.

May God bless all you do,

Deacon Tom Lambert  
Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago - Commission on Mental Illness  
Co-Chair, NCPD Council on Mental Illness



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PUBLISHED BY THE  
  
COUNCIL ON MENTAL ILLNESS

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## Our Mission:

**Following Jesus who embraced all, we assist the Catholic Community in reaching out to and accompanying our brothers and sisters with mental illness and their families, assuring their rightful place in the Church and society.**

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