



From Sr. Janice...

Advocates who have been in their role for several years may be familiar with the **"You Are Not Alone"** ministry of the Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities of Catholic Life and Evangelization while our newer advocates may not. This program has a network of concerned parents and professionals who have experienced or worked closely with issues surrounding poor prenatal diagnosis. If a couple is considering carrying to term but uncertain how to find resources and support, **You Are Not Alone** ministry is here to

help. It is a free service of practical guidance and compassionate care which focuses on meeting the needs of expectant parents as they seek to honor the life of their baby no matter how frail or how brief.

To expectant parents, we offer unique insight and sensitivity regarding such difficult issues as mourning the loss of the anticipated baby, maintaining hope when a prognosis is poor, medical decision-making during pregnancy and beyond, stillbirth and neonatal critical care.

Although articles have appeared in the A.D. Times and parish bulletins, as well as rack cards being given to parishes for display in vestibules and hospitals and doctors offices, the number of couples participating has been few. Please be another source of spreading the word among family, friends and ladies groups.

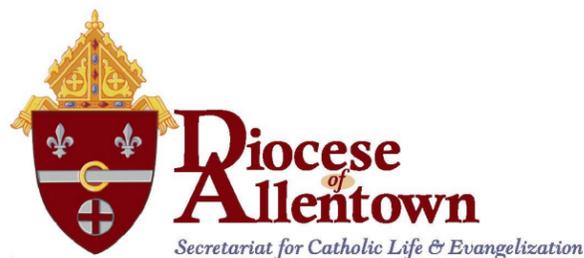


During Lent and the Easter Triduum incense is used frequently. Please approach your pastor now asking him to consider purchasing hypo-allergenic Incense if your parish does not already have it. If it is going to be used it is a good idea to put a

blurb in your bulletin telling people that is what will be used so they won't stay away from church because of an allergy to the incense.

Please contact me for places to purchase this type of incense.

Sr. Janice Marie Johnson, R.S.M.
Director,
Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities
Catholic Life & Evangelization
(610) 289-8900 Ext.2282
jjohnson@allentowndiocese.org
www.allentowndiocese.org/pwd



The Parish Advocate

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALL WHO ADVOCATE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Volume 17, Issue 1

Winter 2019

Upcoming Events

Parish Advocate Conference



ADVOCACY:
*Acting on behalf of
or in support of
another person*

April 13, 2019
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

St. Mary Religious
Education Center,
Kutztown



April is
National
Volunteer
Month



2019 PARISH ADVOCATE CONFERENCE

ADVOCACY:
*Acting on behalf of
or in support of
another person*

The 2019 Ministry with Persons with Disabilities half day conference for all Parish Advocates will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2019 at St. Mary Parish Religious Education building, Kutztown. Registration and light refreshments begin at 8:30 a.m. and the Welcome and Opening Prayer will be at 9:00 a.m.

All advocates are strongly urged to attend. (If unable to do so, a representative should be sent in their place). This is often the only time during the year we are able to meet with advocates in person to provide direction and catch up with the latest news and developments.

Our key note speaker will be Jessica McKenty, Advocacy Director at The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties. She will address advocacy, the important skills needed to be an advocate and the specifics of advocating for people with disabilities. Learn more about Jessica from her bio on page 2.

Thanks to the participation and efforts by all of our advocates, we will be able to make our parishes more inclusive and welcoming to those who are differently abled.

Please watch for the brochure and registration form to arrive in mid March.

Blessed are you who help us with the graciousness of Christ,
for often we need the help we cannot ask for.

PARISH ADVOCATE CONFERENCE Guest Speaker

Jessica McKenty, Director of Advocacy



Jessica is a passionate nonprofit program leader within the Disability Rights Movement, focusing on advocating for education, employment and societal inclusion of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/D). Her experience has allotted a proven ability to manage federally funded projects, operate nationally ranked statewide programs and cultivate relationships that further independence and social integration for people with ID/D.

Prior to her arrival at The Arc of Lehigh & Northampton Counties, Jessica served as a Program Manager for Community Services Group, Program Coordinator for UConn University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CT UCEDD), and Program Director for Best Buddies Connecticut. Jessica has earned a B.S. from DeSales University in Medical Studies, two graduate certificates from Bay Path University in Nonprofit Management & Nonprofit Governance and completed a fellowship in Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) at the University of Connecticut.

Make Holy Week Special Adapted from "Loyola Press" Website

Make Holy Week special. Take advantage of the traditions of our church for celebrating Holy Week. Take steps to indicate that this is not life as usual, but a special time set apart.

Do that through what you eat, what you do in the evenings, what you talk about, and what you do upon waking and going to sleep. For example, you might set aside an evening to read the Gospel accounts of Jesus' Passion and Death. Encourage your local parish to try to involve younger people in any Holy Week ceremonies, and prepare your children for such participation by explaining what the symbols and readings mean to you.

If you know of Easter and Holy Week traditions from your ethnic heritage, introduce them to your children. Many families decorate eggs—symbols of the Resurrection—or put together Easter baskets that will be blessed at church. Our churches have services that are filled with meaningful symbols—like light shining forth in the darkness that cannot overcome it—and those rituals speak volumes directly to your child's heart. The story of Jesus' suffering and Death are at the heart of Christian faith. They are at the heart of our very existence and meaning. It's easy to be too busy or too distracted to attend to these rites and lessons. But we deprive our children of life and meaning when we do so.



Online Stations of the Cross for Children

<https://media.loyolapress.com/assets/lent/stations-eng/stations-eng.html>

Evolving Definition of Disability

Adapted from Opening Doors: National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities



Some Background

A growing community of concern has taken a fresh look at what it means to be disabled. The following ideas reflect current thought developed within the disability leadership.

An Expanding Community of Concern

The challenge of the 1978 Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities that people with disabilities be offered the opportunity to participate fully in the celebrations and obligations of membership within our faith community still guides our efforts toward inclusion. Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 brings with it federal guarantees of equity and dignity for 49 million citizens who have too long awaited recognition of their gifts.

A Common Yet Unique Experience

The risks, stresses and strains of the living process result in the development of assorted impairments. These may occur early in life or in old age. Each person's journey toward disability is highly personal and unique, just as each of us is unique. Our shared vulnerability means that the development of such disabilities is less an individual tragedy than an experience which grows more common with each passing year. Future plans in all aspects of the Church and society must include recognition that access for those who currently have disabilities is insurance for all.

Looking More Specifically At Language

Impairments: Impairments are the physiological glitches which hamper one or more basic life functions. These include physical, sensory, mental, and emotional difficulties. This word is most closely associated with medical aspects of the experiencing of human vulnerability.

"I have an impairment." - "It is a medical condition which hampers my vision or hearing, my mobility or my comprehension."

Disabilities: A disability is the personal experiencing of those limitations and impairments mentioned above. One moves through the world "with" a disability. As the Americans with Disabilities Act has recognized those with disabilities as members of the newest minority, many now speak of the disability community with emphasis on the commonality of disability, rather than emphasizing the separateness of each individual.

"I have a disability." - "I have some difficulty seeing or hearing, moving my body or understanding everything quickly and clearly."

Handicaps: The word "handicapped" was used in past legislation. Currently it is used to describe the relationship between one who has an impairment and the environmental features which hamper function.

"There is no ramp into this building, therefore I am handicapped in my attempts to worship."