



## **Welcome to *Opening Doors!***

### **I. *Did You Know?***

#### **Xavier Society for the Blind**

##### **Mission Statement:**

To provide the Word of God, and the best of Roman Catholic teaching and literature, spiritual and inspirational material, to blind or visually impaired persons of any faith in whatever format best meets their needs at no charge and to continually explore ways to make that material more accessible and available to the widest possible audience of those in need. To offer opportunities for volunteer service for those who wish to help in this work through their donation of time, talent or financial support.

Xavier Society provides religious, spiritual, and inspirational reading materials in braille and audio to blind and visually impaired individuals worldwide. *We are able to provide these materials free of charge thanks to the generous support of our donors.* We support this community of faithful in understanding, developing and practicing their Faith. Our service began in 1900 and we hope to serve many more people in new and innovative ways for many years to come. For more information, please visit their website [here](#) or call 212-473-7800.

## **We are One Flock**

God bless those who open doors:  
With faith, with love, with knowledge,  
Assuring all your people may worship here.  
God bless those who welcome all your people  
To the celebrations and obligations  
Membership within your Church  
God bless those who feel excluded.  
Give them faith  
Give them love  
Give them the knowledge  
Of your welcome  
Open our hearts  
To move swiftly  
Within your grace;  
To hear your message in silent words;

To glimpse your glory beyond our sight;  
To find your wisdom in simple truths;  
To accept our Weakness in your strength.  
Let us join Christ  
In breaking down those walls  
Which separate us, one from another.

<https://ncpd.org/disabilities-ministries-spirituality/prayers>

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## **Tips for Persons Living with a Mental Illness**

Remember the importance of self-care.

Maintain regular routines for sleeping, eating, and exercise.

Keep appointments with mental health professionals and support groups.

When overwhelmed by large group gatherings, excuse yourself for some quiet time alone.

Take advantage of opportunities to help others to keep your own problems in perspective.

Find joy in the present; let go of past regrets.

How faith communities can help:

Make a special effort to invite all to Church, especially people who are struggling.

Share familiar Scripture stories and hymns to bring comfort to those who feel disconnected from their faith community.

Be aware of silent sufferers who may be afraid to share their pain.

Contact shelters and community mental health centers in your area for wish list donation opportunities.

Visit parishioners who cannot leave their home, residential placement or hospital with a token gift from your parish to help them know they are not forgotten.

Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministries, Diocese of Toledo, 419-244-6711 or [mrivas@toledodiocese.org](mailto:mrivas@toledodiocese.org)

## II. *What's Happening!*

- **Social and Fellowship**-Third Saturday of every month @ 1:00 PM  
Piccadilly Cafeteria located in the Clearview Palms Shopping Center,  
2222 Clearview Parkway, Suite 107, Metairie, LA, 70001  
Contact Kristen Cipriano (504)723-5601 or Carol Burke (504)577-1415

*ALL are invited! Join us for lunch, a glass of water, just to chat, or bring a game! (We will play dominoes if no one brings their favorite game). This is a wonderful opportunity for able-bodied people to assist people with various disabilities so they can have a social experience. The result is a truly incredible social experience for everyone!*

- **Gulf Coast Faith Formation Go Conference**, Thursday thru Saturday, January 9-11, 2020 -  
Pontchartrain Center, 4545 Williams Boulevard, Kenner, LA 70065
- **Mass for God's Special Children**, their families and friends is held every month at 2:00 p.m. at  
St Francis Xavier Church, 444 Metairie Road, Metairie, LA on the following dates:

Nov 3, 2019	April 5, 2020 (Palm Sunday)
Dec. 8, 2019	May 3, 2020
January 5, 2020	June 7, 2020
February 2, 2020	July 12, 2020
March 1, 2020	

- **St. Matthew the Apostle in River Ridge** held its Fall Festival in October. New this year was an “Evangelization” booth. Volunteers, including Disability Advocate Ann Lupo (far left), worked the booth to promote various parish ministries, take advantage of parish-wide opportunities, and to identify and welcome people with disabilities and their families.



(Ann Lupo, Peggy Rubio, Brian Comboy)

- **Best Practice**



In an effort to keep true, our vision that every person with a disability will be full, active participant in ALL aspects of our church community the Committee on Persons with Disabilities at **St. Mary Magdalen Church** asked the Fall Festival Committee to provide accommodations for our parishioners with disabilities. Those visiting were asked to check at the information booth. There was a special covered area with tables and chairs for those with special needs, which allowed room for wheelchairs/walkers. In addition, there was a handicap accessible portable toilet on the grounds. This made it easier for our special parishioners to enjoy the Fall Festival.

### **III Question Corner?**

What options do those with celiac disease have for Communion?

Given the serious health risk for those suffering gluten intolerance, it is important for pastors and other Church leaders not only to be aware of the reality, but prepared to address the situation of Catholics with celiac disease who come to parishes and seek to receive Holy Communion in a safe, sensitive, and compassionate manner. It is recommended that individuals with gluten intolerance arrange through their parish the purchase any low-gluten hosts. In addition, anyone affected by celiac disease who is unable to receive even a low - gluten host may receive Communion under the species of wine only. For more information click [here](#).

In 2004, the Congregation for Divine Worship wrote in its instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* that “The bread used in the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharistic Sacrifice must be unleavened, purely of wheat, and recently made so that there is no danger of decomposition. It follows therefore that bread made from another substance, even if it is grain, or if it is mixed with another substance different from wheat to such an extent that it would not commonly be considered wheat bread, does not constitute valid matter for confecting the Sacrifice and the Eucharistic Sacrament.”

That said, the church recognizes that it must not exclude from receiving Communion Catholics with celiac disease, and has made accommodations for those who are unable to consume normal bread. More information can be found [here](#).

We welcome and encourage you to share any information or questions you would like to see in Opening Doors e-Newsletter to [klivauda@bellsouth.net](mailto:klivauda@bellsouth.net). Please use Opening Doors in the subject line. We encourage you to share some of what is in **Opening Doors** with your parish by publishing some info in your church bulletins.