



*Welcome to Opening Doors!*

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

You answered the call to become your parish Advocate for People with Disabilities. Many of you have asked, “Now what do I do?” A good resource is the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD). The website can be accessed at <http://www.ncpd.org>.

### **Building a Disability Ministry requires research**

Here are some good, downloadable “start-up” considerations for a parish disability ministry.

- Go to [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) and hover over the Ministries/Programs dropdown button. Hover over Ministry Models then click Parish Ministry Models. A long article is found there. Scroll to the bottom of the page and you will be able to print it in either a Word or PDF version.
- Click the back arrow to return to the NCPD home page. Hover over Ministries/Programs dropdown button. Hover over Ministry Models, click on Universal Design Ministry. Again, a long article is found there that can be printed in either Word or PDF by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking the format you prefer.

- Click the arrow to return to the NCPD home page. Hover over Ministries/Programs dropdown button. Hover over Spirituality, click on Prayers and Homilies. Examples provided there can be printed by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking your preferred format.
- Click the arrow to return to the NCPD home page. Go to [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) and hover over the Ministries/Programs dropdown button. Click Spirituality to find the NCPD Board Statement on Spiritual Development and Participation of Persons with Disabilities. This can be printed by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking your preferred format.
- Click the arrow to return to the NCPD home page. Hover over Ministries/Programs and click both links to Attitudes and Evolving Definition. There are several articles under Attitudes and one under Evolving Definition. All can be printed by scrolling to the bottom of the page of each article and clicking the button to open the file and print it.

Please note that when you open any of these files listed you can also save them to your computer or a thumb drive. You also can reprint them without seeking additional permission from us. Please do credit NCPD for the articles. [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org)

### **Prayer for Inclusion**

Creator God, we are your people. We look to the future with optimism and with faith in You, as we pursue our call to provide justice and fullness of life for all people with disabilities.

We pray that every man, woman and child may develop their potential and meet You in themselves and in one another.

May we enjoy a very welcoming community, with You as our center, joined hand in hand with our sisters and brothers. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

*\*Based on the Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities.*

## II. What's Happening!

On May 4th, all Parish Advocates for People with Disabilities were invited to hear Maureen Pratt talk on "***From Welcome to Wonderful, The Diversity of Disability and The Blessing of Full Participation in Parish Life.***"

In the workshop, Maureen Pratt offered practical advice on welcoming all people to parish life. All those who attended were able to purchase her most recent book *Salt and Light, Church, Disability, and the*

*Blessing of Welcome for All.* You can find more information about Maureen Pratt at [www.maureenpratt.com](http://www.maureenpratt.com)



**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:

**May 5, 2019**

**June 2, 2019**

**July 14, 2019**

**August 4, 2019**

**September 8, 2019**

**SAVE THE DATE: 15th Anniversary Mass for God's Special Children, Our Families and Friends will be concelebrated by Archbishop Aymond and Bishop Cheri on October 13, 2019, at 2:00 PM at St. Francis Xavier.**

## **Creative Scholars Camp**

July 16 - July 20, 2019

Creative Scholars Camp is to provide interesting, effective techniques to improve study skills, reading comprehension, writing, and math skills to 4th through 9th grade students with characteristics of dyslexia.

Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants must provide evidence that they have been identified within their schools as having characteristics of dyslexia.

Day Camp fee - \$425 + a non-refundable \$25 application fee

Overnight fee (5th thru 9th grade) - \$595 + a non-refundable \$25 application fee

Program information:

(985) 493-2569 or (985) 449-7023

Registration forms are available at <http://www.nicholls.edu/dyslexia>

## **MedCamps of Louisiana**

MedCamps of Louisiana holds a series of one-week, fun-filled camps each summer free of charge for children in Louisiana facing the challenges of a variety of physical and mental disabilities. These include spina bifida and orthopedic conditions, cerebral palsy, asthma, sickle cell anemia, autism, epilepsy, visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech impairment and those developmentally disabled. Children battling these disorders are often unable to participate in normal childhood activities. Consequently, they are often “left out” because they have special needs. With MedCamps, that is no longer the case.

Every week during the summer a different camp is held. Each camp is designed specifically for a particular type of disability – and includes appropriate health professionals, specially trained staff, and tailored activities. (Prior to camp, each parent or guardian is responsible for providing the camp office with the details of the camper’s medical management program as prescribed by the camper’s physician.) The focus is on what campers can do, and all campers are encouraged to reach their full potential in the safe environment of MedCamps, surrounded by other children with similar challenges. These special campers discover they are not alone and gain a genuine sense of belonging, accomplishment, and self-worth.

### **Tall Pines Retreat**

Date: May 03 - May 05

3- day retreat for adults, ages 22 and up, with Cognitive Disabilities. Participants in this retreat must be ambulatory.

### **Camp Rolling Thunder**

Date: May 26 - May 31

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with Spina Bifida, orthopedic conditions, and spinal muscular atrophy

### **Camp Kandoo**

Date: June 02 - June 07, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-10, with cognitive disabilities

**Camp Big Hearts**

Date: June 09 - June 14, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with hearing/speech/vision impairments

**Camp Easy Breeze**

Date: June 09 - June 14, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with Asthma

**Camp Shining Stars**

Date: June 09 - June 14, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with Epilepsy/ Seizure Disorders

**Camp Champ**

Date: June 16 - June 21, 2019

Camp for children, ages 11-15, with cognitive disabilities.

**Camp Hot Shots**

Date Period: June 23 - June 28, 2019

Camp for children ages 8-16, with juvenile diabetes.

**Camp Rough Riders**

Date: July 07 - July 12, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with Cerebral Palsy

**Camp Little Giants**

Date: July 14 - July 19, 2019

Camp for children, ages 6-16, with Sickle Cell Anemia

**Camp Smiling Suns**

Date Period: July 21 - July 26, 2019

Camp for children, ages 16-21, living with cognitive disabilities

**Busy Bees Retreat**

Date: July 28 - July 30, 2019

3-day retreat for children, ages 6-16, with Autism.

Campers accompanied by one parent/guardian.

**High Rollers Retreat**

Date Period: July 31 - August 02, 2019

3 day retreat for adults, ages 18-30, with Spina Bifida, Cerebral Palsy and wheelchair bound

Visit the website for more info [www.medcamps.org](http://www.medcamps.org)

### III. Question Corner ??

Q: With many churches and schools in the Archdiocese being historic, accessibility is often hard to find. Possible solutions seem costly. Any suggestions for a person that uses a wheelchair to be included in church or school activities?

*A: Great question and a common one too! Accessibility under historical constraints requires creativity! Based on the individual parish set up and the person's needs, an adaptation can be attempted on a "trial and error basis." The parish advocates along with some of the CPD board members are here to help! With past experience and knowledge of different parishes' adaptations, our creativity can go a long way!*

*For example, one school removed a stall in the ladies bathroom in order to convert the corner stall into a larger stall with a grab bar. Another church removed a pew in order to have ample space to accommodate people with assistive devices.*

Whatever the situation, the CPD will help brainstorm possible solutions! The Archdiocesan Building Office is also a good resource. You can reach their staff at 504-861-6210.

Please submit your questions or information you would like to see in Opening Doors e-Newsletter to [klivauda@bellsouth.net](mailto:klivauda@bellsouth.net) and 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.