
New Jersey Catholic Bishops' Statement on National Recovery Month
September 15, 2021

September is National Recovery Month, a time during which we celebrate those who have achieved recovery and continue our support of those still working toward it. During this time, we, the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey, are renewing our commitment to helping those suffering from various forms of addiction and we are calling on all Catholics and people of good will to join us in praying for, supporting, and encouraging those working toward recovery.

Too often, those suffering from an addiction erroneously believe that they have failed and are unworthy of love, dignity, and respect. As a result, they suffer in solitude. It is a stigma that engulfs their lives and hinders recovery.

The Catholic Church in New Jersey is committed to removing this stigma. Every day, our Catholic Charities Agencies and various social service programs do tremendous work in providing comprehensive addiction services. These efforts are rooted in the belief that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and deserving of a better life filled with His love.

Parishes and faith communities are often the first encounter for many individuals and families who seek help. Given the complexity of the addiction, parishes face challenges that leave clergy, parish staff, and volunteers to ask, "How?"

To assist parish communities, a group of multi-diocesan representatives - individuals with expertise in addiction/recovery ministry, parish life, and public policy - have developed resources intended to help parishes respond pastorally to the spiritual needs of those suffering. These resources provide ideas and information on building awareness as well as addiction and recovery ministries in parishes wherever they may be located throughout the state.

To access these resources parishes can go to <https://njcatholic.org/substance-abuse>.

Entrusted to the intercession of our Blessed Mother and Saint Maximilian Kolbe, patron of those suffering from addiction, we hope these resources will enable each parish to provide much-needed assistance and loving accompaniment to individuals and families.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop, Archdiocese of Newark

Most Reverend James F. Checchio
Bishop, Diocese of Metuchen

Most Reverend David M. O'Connell, C.M.
Bishop, Diocese of Trenton

Most Reverend Kurt Burnette
Bishop, Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan
Bishop, Diocese of Camden

Most Reverend Yousif B. Habash
Bishop, Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic
Diocese

Most Rev. Kevin J. Sweeney
Bishop of Paterson