

Parish Bulletin Announcement:

April is Autism Awareness Month

Catholics believe that all people are made in the image and likeness of God, and that all the Baptized share in the life and mission of the Church. This includes people from every range of ability throughout the world. As we commemorate Autism Awareness Month, let us remember especially, those people affected by autism spectrum disorder and their families, who often feel left out or rejected due to this disabling condition.. With one of every 110 children born having autism, it is safe to say that every parish community has many autism-affected families, whether you are aware of them, or not.

Autism is a serious, life-long, neurological developmental disability that ranges from mild to severe along a wide spectrum of possibilities. Usually diagnosed before age three, people with autism often have difficulties with language, with relating to others socially, and may engage in repetitive or restricted patterns of behavior. Autism is not well understood, but seems to have a significant genetic component and may also be affected by environmental triggers not yet identified. It is not caused by bad parenting, as is sometimes alleged. Autism is diagnosed in equal numbers across all racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groups, but occurs four times more frequently in boys than in girls. For more information about autism spectrum disorders, go to www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov. For pastoral resources, visit the website of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, <http://www.ncpd.org/ministries-programs/specific/autism>.

(Share information here about your parish's outreach to people with disabilities and a contact person.)

For more information on inclusion for people with disabilities in the life of the Church check out www.ncpd.org. **April is AUTISM Awareness Month**

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