

## **First in a series of what our Faith Community can do to support those with mental illness and their families.**

Mental Illnesses are health conditions involving significant changes in thinking, emotion, behavior or a combination of these. According to the National Institute of Health, in any given year, 1 in 4 people will have a diagnosable mental illness, such as depression, anxiety, bi-polar disease, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress, among others. For one 24 people it will be severe and persistent. Mental illness affects the biological, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions of individuals. The illness also impacts the lives of the person's family and their friends. Severe mental illness often raises profound questions of faith such as why does God allow sickness and/or why me?

As a faith community we are called to support individuals and their families when the illness first occurs and in their ongoing managing of their illness and their recovery. Spiritual supports and companionship are critical to the recovery process. As a faith community, we can offer spiritual support through our prayerful presence in people's lives and our understanding of what people are experiencing. Mental illnesses often isolate people from their communities due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of these illnesses by the person and by the community. When we acknowledge the pain of a person's illness, understand the facts versus the myths surrounding mental illness, and provide support and companionship throughout the healing and recovery process, we can make a huge difference in the ability of people to manage these types of illnesses.

### **Mondays for Mental Health Starting Oct. 8**

Learn more about mental health. What can we do to help family and friends who suffer with a mental illness? St. Mary of the Annunciation (SMOTA) and St. Mary of Vernon (SMOV) are partnering in a 5 part series of weekly informational meetings. All the meetings are from 7:00 – 8:30 PM.

The dates at St. Mary of Annunciation 22333 W. Erhart Road, Mundelein, IL 60060 are 10/8, 10/15 and 11/5. The meeting room is off the narthex in the new church. The new church is next to the large parking lot at the end of the driveway.

The dates at St. Mary of Vernon Parish Center 236 U.S. Highway 45, Indian Creek, IL 60061 are 10/22 and 10/29. Drive straight onto the parish grounds to the building at the far end of the driveway.

For more information, contact Deacon Al Sedivy (SMOTA) [uscals1@yahoo.com](mailto:uscals1@yahoo.com) or Deacon Jerry Nora (SMOV) [geinora@aol.com](mailto:geinora@aol.com).