

Second in a series of what our Faith Community can do to minister to those with mental illness and their families.

Many people with serious mental illness are challenged doubly. On one hand, they struggle with the symptoms and disabilities that result from the disease. On the other, they are challenged by the stereotypes and prejudice that result from misconceptions about mental illness. As a result of both, people with mental illness are robbed of the opportunities that define a quality life: good jobs, safe housing, satisfactory health care, and affiliation with a diverse group of people.

Many people with mental illness are in recovery and lead normal lives, others struggle with symptoms and are not able to work full time, and some may not be able to work at all. Due to the stigma associated with mental illness, you and I are probably not aware of the severity of their illness or their struggles to find the right doctors, medications, or the right services for their condition. As a result of stigma and misconceptions about mental illness, people are not likely to tell anyone at work or in the neighborhood or at Church that they have a mental illness and need help and support. Some will not seek professional help feeling that they will be judged or treated differently once their illness becomes known. Sadly, some who do not seek help may wind up homeless or in jail due to the symptoms of their illness.

As a faith community we can make a difference in people's lives by educating ourselves on the facts about mental illness, being accepting of a person's illness, comforting them in time of crisis, supporting them in their ongoing need, and assisting them in their search for mental health services.

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 or Deacon Jerry Nora (SMOV) geinora@aol.com.