

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

The dignity of the individual is paramount in our belief that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. Our language and our actions should reflect that belief. When talking about mental illness, we should use “people first language.” We refer to people as the person they are - not the disease they have. So we say “a person who has a mental illness” or “a man or woman with a mental illness.” We avoid referring to people using terms like “the mentally ill” or “the depressed,” or even worse terms. We all want to be known for the person we are not the illness we have. We are more than the illness we have! As people of compassion and justice we should never use stigmatizing language or demeaning terms when referring to people with an illness.

Careful use of language is a way of communicating that people with mental illness, as Pope John Paul II said, “have the inalienable right not only to be considered as an image of God and therefore as a person, but also to be treated as such.”

We make the dignity of the individual real by following the example Jesus gave us. Jesus calls us to seek out and include people in our faith community who are suffering and isolated. Jesus gave us many examples like story of the Good Samaritan who helped someone when no one else would, and the story of the father of the prodigal son that teaches us about unconditional love. It is when we love in these ways that we experience the love that God has for us.

#### **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).