

Parish Ministry Programs to Consider Related to Trauma and Mental Health:

1. Whole Hearted from Catholic Charities USA:

<https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/our-vision-and-ministry/leadership-development-catholic-identity/psm-and-behavioral-health/> Whole Hearted is meant to provide basic and helpful trauma awareness. It is not clinical or professional therapy. It informs participants of trauma's impact and how one might begin to move forward mentally and spiritually.

The first two sessions focus on recognizing and responding to life's hard experiences. The last two sessions focus on the dynamics of renewal and restoration. Whole Hearted introduces an ongoing process of:

- **Recognition:** Seeing your experience of trauma and assessing your response(s) to it.
- **Renewal:** Prayer and other spiritual exercises as sources for strength and newness.
- **Restoration:** The ongoing and intentional work needed to move forward in a healthy way.

These three dynamics of Recognition, Renewal, and Restoration do not have to be followed in a sequence. They are more like three rooms in a dwelling, each with its own unique purpose. Those dealing with the impact of trauma can spend as much time in each of these different spaces as they wish. And each of us can go from one room to another as needed. Whole Hearted is just an introduction to this ongoing process of inner work. However, persons who have experienced trauma are also recommended to seek professional treatment. Whole Hearted can be an excellent adjunct or addition to a therapeutic process.

Parishes and organizations can offer Whole Hearted as a day of reflection or four weekly sessions. Sessions take no more than 60 minutes and can be conducted onsite or remotely. If necessary, individuals can work through Whole Hearted on their own.

Attachments: Participant Journal and Facilitator Guide available from Disability Ministry Office Diocese of Des Moines

2. Mental Illness with Grace Series:

Awareness: The series will create mental illness awareness in parishes/deanery grouping of parishes through a series of presentations on mental health issues. One in 4 people deal with a mental illness in any given year and for 1 in 22 it will be serious and persistent. Everyone who experiences a mental illness has family and friends who often are in search of how to help their loved ones. Therefore, in any parish there is a high percentage of parishioners affected by these issues. It is recognized by many professionals in the mental health field that spirituality is a key component of recovery. (See the American Psychiatric Association booklet "Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders.") Parish mental illness ministries can reduce stigma that causes isolation, while providing a sense of God's comfort and care that helps in the recovery process. (See California Bishops Statement "Hope and Healing" on role of Church.)

Acceptance: The series will foster acceptance of people with mental illness and their families and reduce the stigma of these illnesses through education and factual information about mental health conditions. The series reinforces our Catholic core belief that everyone has dignity and everyone has value. Inclusion in our parishes is not only desirable, it is necessary for the parish to fully experience the image of God's kingdom. (See article "A Community of Faith is like a Stained Glass Window")



Accompaniment: The series provides models for journeying in faith with people with mental illness and families. It will demonstrate how a faith community can offer concrete support for people who often feel isolated and alone.

Desired Outcome:

The outcome of the initial 5 meetings on mental illness would be to form a mental health team that would consider how to minister and accompany people and families dealing with mental illness. This could include the following:

- One or more of additional presentations or trainings
- Group discussions
- Support groups – See our webpage on starting a support group
- Resource teams that can be guides to services in the community

3. **Mental Health Support Options from Office of Family Life in Diocese of Orange County:**

Includes a menu of options and ideas for parishes to consider to build communities of belonging and accompaniment for people with mental illness. It includes a list of resources/events/organizations that you can use to bring awareness and accompaniment to your parish, in order of time/effort commitment. Most are free or low cost.

Attachment available from Disability Ministry Office in Diocese of Des Moines

4. **Ideas from Mental Health Ministry group:**

That has been meeting for over 15 years in Connecticut with what they are doing:

Mental Health Ministry Shoreline - CT

- Meetings open with Prayer and Lighting candles
- Opening Statement
- Roundtable: Introductions and Mental Health Instructor (1-10)
- Sharing with group support
- Spiritual Activity / Sharing
- Petitions
- Closing Prayers
- Blessing
- Social Activity
 - Refreshments
 - Library: Books, Pamphlets, DVD's

Mental Health Ministry is not Mental Health Treatment

Ministers do not provide diagnosis, counseling, treatment, medical assistance or behavioral health support.

The tasks of mental health professionals are different (although complementary) from the tasks of the Church.

The primary task of the Church is to love and heal without the demand for a cure.

The Churches' call is to accompany those with mental illness with persistent and patient love.

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5. **Support Groups through NAMI:**

That could be hosted at our parishes for adults living with mental health conditions.

<https://namicentraliowa.org/support-and-education/support-groups/nami-connection-recovery-support-group/>

6. **NCPD Mental Health Resources:**

[National Catholic Partnership on Mental Illness Theological Framework](#) and they also. They also have a new course that has just come out this summer called Parish Based mental Health ministry—Create a Sustainable Mental Health Ministry. <https://ncpd-us.teachable.com/courses/>

7. **Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers:**

which I have registered as a member offers several resources including Mental Health First Aid training.

<https://catholicmhm.org/> They do provide grants that diocese and parishes can apply to develop mental health ministry. Resources on formation and training are listed here <https://catholicmhm.org/formationandtraining> include:



- a. Introduction to Catholic Mental Health Ministry Introduction course
- b. Sanctuary for Catholics: <https://portal.sanctuarymentalhealth.org> or through ACHMS resource page to here: <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/catholics/>

They also have resources available in Spanish. They offer a Sanctuary course and it includes study guide for small groups designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches regarding mental health. It is also available on the Formed Catholic Faith through many parishes for movies, programs, audio and books: <https://formed.org/> and also on-line at their website.

The program trains the trainers to go out to parishes on their own and empower the parishes to do the foot work. They talk about creating regional ambassadors to help neighboring parishes. The program is through the psychological, social and theological lens. Films in the program show self-advocate first person experience and are very beautifully produced.

c. Companionship Workshop- A Partnership with Pathways to Promise

Participants will be introduced to the revolutionary Companionship Model that has five very important tenets: Hospitality, neighboring, side-by-side, listening, and accompaniment. The 3-hour workshop will provide participants an understanding of how to move from a transactional exchange model to a relational engagement model that enables substantial change when helping others. Workshop participants will also learn the importance of integrating Companionship into their organizations and communities.

8. Mental Health First Aid from National Council for Mental Wellbeing:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/> They are trying to promote the program so it will be as popular as being CPR certified.

9. Mental Health First Aid through Iowa Extension Services:

Free funding through August 2023. Below is the link with general information regarding Mental Health First Aid and their list of upcoming classes. Request Mental Health First Aid Planning Guide from Diocese Disability Ministry office.

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/MHFA>

[Mental Health First Aid | Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Human Sciences](#)

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. This training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.

Intended audience: Adults

Format:

- In-person: 8-hour certification training **OR**
- Online: 2-hour self-study course **plus** 6-hour virtual instructor-led certification training.
*Note: participants will receive access to the self-study course **two weeks before** the virtual training.*

Agribusiness professionals, advocates, and commodity groups can use the code **AGPRO** to register at **no cost**.

