

Parish Kit

to assist parishes to acknowledge

World Mental Health Day

Theme: Mental Health Begins With Me!

Saturday 10 October 2015



This kit contains:

- A letter from Bishop Terry Brady
- Liturgy Notes including:
 - Parish Bulletin Notice
 - Homily Suggestions
 - Prayers of General Intercession
 - Scripture Quotes
 - Statistics
 - Prayer card order form

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AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life

Dear Friends in Christ,

World Mental Health Day is observed annually on 10 October. This year, the Church has sought to celebrate this day as an opportunity to encourage a true pastoral view that embraces our total community as the living Body of Christ.

To be authentic, this view must include every member of the community acknowledging their call, their gift and their presence. We cannot claim to be truly disciples of Jesus unless we are totally engaged in honouring His presence in each one, and in building and nurturing this community to be a living witness of that presence. Clearly this is a revealed truth that is fundamental to our sense of our own real value. Just as clearly this truth should be so evident in our lived experience that others are drawn to know, understand and experience the Father's love that Jesus reveals.

People living with mental health challenges, are no less members of the Body of Christ than anyone else. Obviously there are particular challenges to enabling their full participation in the life of the community. Some of these challenges are visible and many others not so clearly identified. Once we acknowledge these challenges we can work together to ensure that all the gifts that flow through the Body of Christ can be shared by each

member of that Body. It is also a reminder to look after our own well-being, especially our spiritual well-being. How are we nourishing our well-being through our spirituality?

I invite you to use the enclosed material to promote World Mental Health Day in your parish. You may wish to use the material to celebrate World Mental Health Day on Saturday 10 October.

Thank you again for your past willingness to engage in this practical pastoral expression of genuine love for Jesus as seen in everyone of His disciples.

Yours sincerely in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terence Brady". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

✠ Terence Brady
Bishops' Delegate for Disability Issues
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Liturgy Notes

Suggested Bulletin Inserts

World Mental Health Day (WMHD) is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy. It is an initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health. WMHD is an annual program held on 10 October to raise public awareness of mental health issues worldwide. Mental Health Week in Australia is held from Sunday 4 to Saturday 10 October 2015.

This year, the theme is

Mental Health begins with me!

The theme aims to encourage people to personal ownership of their mental health and well-being.

One in five Australians will experience mental illness this year. We all have a role to play in looking after our own mental health and well-being.

When our parishes gather, nearly everyone will know someone who has a mental illness of varying severity and length. Because of the stigma attached to it, few will come forward, but it is there. How can we support people living with the stigma of mental illness?

People living with mental health challenges, are no less members of the Body of Christ than anyone else. People with mental illness and their families often feel isolated from their faith community and thus isolated from God. Isolation is often caused by social stigma: the idea that mental illness is a question of character or a punishment from God.

As a faith community, we can offer spiritual comfort through our prayerful presence in people's lives by acknowledging their pain and supporting them through the healing and recovery process.

Parishes may like to highlight the gifts and talents of people with mental health challenges, their families and support people. It is also an appropriate time to recognise the importance of spirituality and well-being.

Everyone can take part in looking after their own well-being and good health, which is important to everyone.

It is a reminder to look after our own well-being, especially our spiritual well-being.

(SOURCE: National Catholic Partnership on Disability – Mental Illness 415 Michigan Avenue NE Suite 95 Washington, DC USA 20017-4501)

“The thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity”

- Pope Francis

Parish Action

As a healing community, we can support people with mental health challenges and their families with unconditional non-judgemental love in the following ways:

- Increase our awareness of mental health, and where to get help when it is needed
- Offer prayers and support to individuals and families who are affected by mental health challenges
- Serve on parish committees for outreach to individuals and families affected by mental health challenges
- Review your parish's inclusiveness of people with mental health challenges in community life, ministry, and leadership
- Be involved in peer-to-peer ministry
- Work on justice issues affecting people with mental health challenges such as health care, housing and employment.

Helpful Links

Catholic Social Services Australia

<http://www.cssa.org.au/memberservices/>

Australian Government

<http://www.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/health/mental-health>

Mental Health Australia

<http://mhaustralia.org/our-work/changing-perceptions-about-mental-illness>

SANE Australia

<http://www.sane.org>

Homily Information

We all have mental health. Our mental health is on a continuum. That means our mental health can change from being well to being very unwell and then bouncing back to feeling well. Along the Mental Health Continuum are three major mental health states in which individuals can be located at various times in their lives.

At the “healthy” end of the continuum are individuals experiencing Well-Being, a state of good mental and emotional health. These individuals may experience stress and discomfort resulting from occasional problems of everyday life, but they experience no impairment to daily functioning. All other individuals, for whom problems are more serious or prolonged, and for whom coping become progressively more difficult, are described as having “mental health problems”.

People experiencing emotional problems have mild to moderate distress, and mild to temporary impairment in functioning (insomnia, lack of concentration, or loss of appetite). This may include people with situational depression, general anxiety, or mild attention deficit disorder (ADD).

People having emotional problems that rise to the level of mental illness experience marked distress, and moderate to disabling or chronic impairment. It may include relatively common disorders such as depression and anxiety as well as major disorders such as schizophrenia.

The distinguishing factor in mental illness is typically chronic or long-term impairments that range from moderate to disabling in nature.

As a faith community, we can offer spiritual comfort through our prayerful presence in people's lives by acknowledging their pain and supporting them through the healing and recovery process.

There are many urgent situations that need to be addressed as part of our duty to be awake and ready.

Pope Francis invites us to heal wounds, warm hearts and be close to people struggling with challenges.

“The thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity”

- Pope Francis

How are we, as a parish, encouraging and promoting the full participation of people with mental illness and their families in our faith community?

How are we healing wounds and warming hearts?



Prayers of General Intercession

For all those who face discrimination and stigma due to mental illness, that they will find welcome and inclusion as branches of Jesus' vine,

Let us pray to the Lord.

For all men, women, and children, and on this day especially mothers, who themselves or within their families deal with mental and emotional crises, that the joy and love of Jesus may bring them comfort,

Let us pray to the Lord.

For all those who struggle with mental health problems, that the Church and public agencies will act with justice to ensure the availability of necessary support services to aid in their recovery,

Let us pray to the Lord.

That the Holy Spirit will inspire Christians everywhere to open their hearts and arms to welcome those who face mental illness,

Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who provide services for people whose lives are affected by mental illness – social workers, counsellors, mental health professionals, pastoral caregivers – that they will bear witness to God's spirit of love,

Let us pray to the Lord.

For persons with a mental illness, and their families
to find effective treatment for their illness and
understanding and acceptance from others,

We pray to the Lord.

For families who strive to understand and help their
loved ones with mental illness,

We pray to the Lord.

For people who live on the streets without homes or
hope,

We pray to the Lord.

For people with mental illness who are confined in
prison,

We pray to the Lord.

In thanksgiving for the compassion and dedication of
mental health professionals and those providing care,

We pray to the Lord.

For our elected officials to come to an understanding of
the need for increased funding for mental health care,

We pray to the Lord.

That the darkness of stigma, labels, exclusion and
marginalisation might be dispelled by the light of greater
understanding, acceptance and respect for the dignity of
every person,

We pray to the Lord.

Scripture

"I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13

"If God is for us, who can ever be against us." Romans 8:31

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10

"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!" Psalm 31:24

"The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him." Exodus 15:2

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Statistics¹

Almost half the total population (45.5%) experience a mental health disorder at some point in their lifetime.

One in five, or 20% of the Australian population aged 16-85 years, experienced mental disorders in the previous 12 months. This is equivalent to 3.2 million Australians.

One in 16 (6.2%) had affective (mood) disorders; one in seven (14.4%) had anxiety disorders; and one in 20 (5.1%) had substance use disorders.²

Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent mental disorders experienced by Australians. Depression alone is predicted to be one of the world's largest health problems by 2020.³

Around one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year. On average, one in five people will experience depression in their lives; one in four females and one in six males.⁴

Among young Australians aged 12-25 years, depression is the most common mental health problem. Around one in ten young Australians will experience an anxiety disorder in any given 12 month period.⁵

At least one third of young people have had an episode of mental illness by the age of 25 years.⁶

1 Source: Mental Health Council of Australia :Fact Sheet: Statistics on Mental Health

2 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007

3 The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability, Injuries, and Risk Factors in 1990 and Projected to 2020, World Bank, Harvard School of Public Health, Geneva, 1996

4 Beyond Blue National Initiative, 2006

5 Orygen Youth Health.

6 Making Sense of Orygen Youth Health

Mental disorders and suicide account for 14.2 % of Australia's total health burden – which equates to 374,541 years of healthy life lost (DALYs).⁷

Estimates suggest that up to 75% of people presenting with alcohol and drug problems also have additional mental health problems.⁸

Reports indicate that up to 85% of homeless people have a mental illness.



7 Time for Service, MHCA 2006

8 Drug Use in the Family, ANCD Report, 2007

This parish kit has been produced by the
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You are the body of Christ,



and each of you is part of it

(1Corinthians 27)

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