

*How Parishes can be a  
Part of Their  
Communities' Journey of  
Recovery*

*~A Pastoral Response to  
Addiction as a Spiritual Disease~*

Presented by the  
New Jersey Catholic Committee  
on Addiction and Recovery Ministries  
May 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Dedication	i
Introduction	ii
Mission Statement	iii
Quotes	iv
Chapter One: Get the Conversation Started	1
• Homilies	1
• Mass Intentions	2
• Bulletin Announcements	2
• Get Educated	2
• Gather Resources	3
• Current Ministries	4
Chapter Two: Be Open to the Community	6
• Community Invitations	6
• Community Education	7
• One-on-One	9
• Open your doors	9
Chapter Three: Walk with Them	11
• An Addiction and Recovery Ministry	11
• A Spirituality Recovery Bible Study Group	12
• A Congregation Assistance Program	12
• Spiritual Companionship Program	13
Conclusion	15
Appendix	16

➤ BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION	17
➤ SAMPLES	18
A. A Homily	19
B. Bible Verses	20
C. Flyers	22
❖ Healing Mass	23
❖ Recovery Mass	24
❖ Prayer Service	25
❖ Lenten Stations of the Cross	26
❖ Family Education Workshops	27
➤ ARTICLES, STATEMENTS AND MORE	28
➤ RESOURCES	30
A. MORE INFORMTION AND MATERIALS	30
B. DIOCESAN EDITIONS OF THE <i>RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PARISH COMMUNITIES WALKING WITH GOD'S CHILDREN ON THE JOURNEY OF RECOVERY</i>	30
Acknowledgements	31
CC~ARM - Contributing Members	32

## DEDICATION

This booklet is dedicated to:  
all our sisters and brothers who have struggled  
with addiction and lost their lives to it;  
those who are struggling with addiction,  
but do not yet see the road to recovery that lies before them;  
those who actively seek the road to recovery;  
those who have taken the first step on their journey to recovery;  
those who are in recovery;  
and to those families, friends, and parish communities who want to help.

# INTRODUCTION

Society is being wounded every day by addiction; one life at a time; one family at a time. Every day, our future is being impacted by this epidemic, one death at a time.

While addiction clearly has serious physical and psychosocial components, it is also a *spiritual disease* – a relational disconnect from God; as such, the addiction crisis also requires a pastoral response.<sup>1</sup>

In 1990, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) called for such a response in their letter on addiction, *Communities of Hope: Parishes and Substance Abuse. A Practical Guide*.<sup>2</sup> It states: “The Church is called to serve, to reach out, to help rebuild lives, and to support individuals, families and communities in the fight against the slavery of drug and alcohol abuse. This is a noble calling worthy of our most generous and dynamic response.”

Just as there is no doubt that addiction is a spiritual disease, it is clear the effectiveness of the pastoral response hinges on the abilities of Catholic parishes to meet the needs of those seeking to break free from the bonds of addiction.

While we acknowledge the tremendous work of New Jersey’s Catholic Charities agencies in providing comprehensive addiction services, there is more we can do in our parishes. Catholic parishes have front line access to many of the individuals and families struggling with addictions. Many of our parishes, however, encounter challenges that hinder them from doing more to serve these individuals and families.

To help all Catholic parishes, a group of multi-diocesan representatives - individuals with expertise in addiction/recovery ministry, parish life, and public policy - began working together to look at possible ways to put this pastoral response into action. With the support of the New Jersey Catholic Conference of Bishops (NJCC), they formed the

New Jersey Catholic Committee on Addiction and Recovery Ministries (CC~ARM).

The committee’s goal was simple: explore, identify, and develop resources to assist parishes in providing the Church’s pastoral response to address the human, societal, and spiritual needs of those suffering from addiction.

It may seem like a daunting task, but you are not alone. The Committee has also prepared a *“Resource Guide for Parish Communities Walking with God’s Children on the Journey of Recovery,”* adapted into Diocesan editions (hereafter the *Resource Guide*).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See a broader statement of the “Biology of Addiction” in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Information on this document as well as other documents available from USCCB can be found in the Appendix under “Resources.”

<sup>3</sup> If you do not have the *Resource Guide*, see the Appendix under “Resources” on how to obtain one.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Catholic Dioceses of New Jersey recognize that widespread addictions of all kinds have invaded our communities and inflicted a great toll on our brothers and sisters - physically, emotionally and spiritually. In response, the New Jersey Catholic Committee on Addiction and Recovery Ministries (CC~ARM) was established to address this crisis through a state-wide collaboration. The committee seeks to provide ideas and resources to enable parishes to respond pastorally in order to build addiction and recovery ministries in parishes wherever they may be located throughout the state.

When I think of my journey in my son's struggle with addiction,  
I feel like he and I were often standing alone looking into the  
abyss. We so desperately needed the embrace of community.

A mother who lost her son

All addicted persons continue to have, more than ever, dignity as  
persons and children of God.

Pope Francis

## Chapter One

### *Get the Conversation Started*

“... love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.” (John 13:34)

Many people struggle silently with addiction. We never know if the person sitting in the pew next to us is struggling with addiction. We all need to be sensitive to this possibility.

This first chapter is meant to begin *in-house* so to speak. It starts with the pastor, the parish staff, parish ministry leaders, ministry participants and volunteers as well as any parishioners who actively volunteer at parish functions. It is meant to include those parishioners who have been directly impacted by the scourge of addiction - either directly or indirectly. It is about getting the conversation started in every way you can. Consider the following and implement any or all of them as you begin this journey:

#### Homilies

Homilies at Sunday Mass afford an excellent opportunity to provide information about substance abuse to parishioners and encouragement to those confronting substance abuse and addiction. Many of those recovering from an addiction credit their motivation to seek treatment and their ability to remain sober to their religious beliefs and the support of a community of believers.

As pastor, associate pastor, priest, or deacon, you are in the best position to make an impact through your homilies. As you read the scripture for the day and prepare your homily, look at whether the scripture speaks to any of the following concepts and consider incorporating them into your homily. So, if relevant to the scripture, incorporate how to:

- Characterize addiction as the spiritual disease it is - a disease not a disgrace. Help to lift the cloud of shame that hangs over this disease. Addiction is not a moral failing and physiology plays a huge role. To treat a spiritual disease, the Church is the place of healing.
- Urge families to spend time together, such as sitting down all together at least once a week for a meal at which no electronics are allowed. This is an activity known to help avoid the temptations of substance abuse or other addictive activities.

- Encourage involvement in parish activities and ministries.
- Promote good problem-solving skills and coping mechanisms.
- Use Bible verses, which also prevent the blaming of God that sometimes occurs. See “Bible Verses” in Appendix.

To request more information on homily talking points, consider contacting your local Catholic Charities or one of the organizations listed in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

### Mass Intentions

Dedicate a Mass to the intentions of those struggling with addiction and recovery. At that dedicated Mass, as noted above, the homily is an excellent opportunity to provide information about substance abuse to parishioners and encouragement to those confronting substance abuse and addiction.

Add one of the following or a similar petition in your prayer for intentions and petitions at all parish Masses:

“For all individuals and families suffering from substance abuse or addiction”  
“In gratitude for all those in recovery from abuse of alcohol or other drugs”

Encourage all your parishioners to pray every day for those struggling – both the individuals addicted and their families who suffer along with them.

### Bulletin Announcements

Use your bulletin to raise awareness of addiction. For example, include a request to pray for those struggling with addiction and recovery. As you become more aware of addiction and recovery services and available ministries, include information in your bulletins.

### Get Educated

As leaders of your parish seeking to address the needs of community members struggling with addiction and recovery, education about what such struggles really involve is a key starting point, which should then be expanded to the broader community. Parish

leaders and staff should have some basic education about addictions and the Church's response to be better prepared to minister to their parishioners.

Parish education should begin with the recognition that an addiction is more a medical condition than a moral condition. A fundamental goal is helping people understand that recovery is a lifelong process that involves the whole person - physical, psychological, and, most importantly, spiritual. And, that lifelong process needs the support of the community.

Substance abuse and addiction education programs are available to work with you and the members of your parish ministries to better understand what may be happening to a person or family you encounter. Not to teach you how to treat it, but to help you identify someone who might need encouragement and support to get professional help. The providers of these educational programs can help you better understand such topics as, including but not limited to:

- Chemical dependency/addiction as disease;
- Dynamics of chemical abuse in families;
- Pain management;
- The process of recovery;
- The spirituality of recovery;
- Family communication;
- Identifying potential dangers and family prevention;
- Good Samaritan Laws;
- Alcohol as a drug; and
- Helping the alcoholic or addict who does not want help.

Ultimately, developing an understanding of these topics is about helping to raise your awareness of when someone may be struggling and in need of accompaniment, encouragement and love.

There is a lot of information available, but for assistance in facilitating this educational process, consider contacting your local Catholic Charities, or one of the resource persons or organizations found in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

### Gather Resources

Education about the types of services available for addiction and recovery is also an important part of walking with those seeking to escape addiction. Part of your education process should include obtaining a variety of written materials and resource guides. You

should also include presentations by representatives from addiction and recovery programs.

Written materials, including posters and other handouts, may be obtained from a variety of sources, including but not limited to:

- your local Catholic Charities;
- your local county mental health and addictions council;
- the State of New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

(For more information and where to obtain materials, please see the Appendix.)

### Current Ministries

Arrange a meeting with the leaders of each of your current ministries to talk about what they already know about addiction and recovery needs in your parish. If this group is already made up of parish staff, lay leaders, youth, religious educators, parents, elders and persons in recovery, then you are well on your way. If your group does not include representatives from each of these groups, consider expanding the group to invite whoever is missing.

Convene your group and begin to explore and assess where your parish is in relation to your knowledge of and current level of understanding of the addiction and recovery needs of your community. Explore how each ministry may already be touching upon addiction and recovery issues or how they can incorporate ways to be more supportive of those within the addiction and recovery community into what they already do. Here are two examples:

- Ask your Rosary Society to designate one prayer gathering a month to say the Rosary for those dealing with addiction and recovery.
- Add to your parish's prayer list for the sick a reference to those struggling with addictions and recovery.
- At your food pantries or soup kitchens, make information available about addiction and recovery services or something to raise awareness, like a prayer card for those struggling with addiction.

Have the group identify what they need in order to become more fully supportive of the needs of the community. Do they need education on what addiction is? Do they know what's going on already in the community or do they need to find out more? What resources do you have at your parish and in the community? (Some of these questions are also addressed in other parts of this booklet and in the available *Resource Guide*.)

Seeking outside assistance never hurts. So, for assistance in facilitating this conversation, consider contacting your local Catholic Charities.

## Chapter Two

### *Be Open to the Community*

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."  
(Matthew 11:28-29)

This second chapter is meant to begin to bring what you have done *in-house* out to the *broader community – your parish and beyond*. You started with the pastor, the parish staff, parish ministry leaders, ministry participants and volunteers as well as your faithful parishioners who actively volunteer at parish functions, and those parishioners who have been impacted by the scourge of addiction - either directly or indirectly. You got the conversation started.

Now, begin to use the resources you already have to raise awareness and educate the broader community about the scourge of addiction. Through these activities you are dedicated to fighting and seeking to help God's children come home. Consider the following and implement any or all of them as you begin to open up to the community (some sample flyers are available in Appendix):

#### Community Invitations

- Healing Mass  
A Mass dedicated for all to come to pray for the healing of those struggling with addiction as well as mental and physical health issues.
- Recovery Mass  
A Mass dedicated for all to come to pray for those who are working on their recovery and to show support for their life-long journey of recovery.
- Prayer Services  
For any prayer services already scheduled, consider adding those struggling with addiction and recovery to the intentions for which prayers are offered.
- Monthly Rosary  
Dedicate at least one day each month to praying the Rosary for all those touched by addiction whether with your Rosary Society or as a whole parish.

- Liturgical Seasons

Advent, Christmas and Lent are all filled with special events. Consider including activities in each liturgical season that brings attention to addiction and recovery. For example, during Lent announce that there will be a “Lenten Stations of the Cross – For Those Touched by the Pain of Addiction or Loss.”

- Retreats

Holding a retreat is not new to most but holding one that specifically centers on topics about addiction and recovery may be new. Recovery Retreats can be an opportunity for parishes to address a number of topics ranging from a focus on prevention to a focus on support for one’s journey of recovery.

### Community Education

- *Public Areas*

As noted above, education about what addiction and recovery struggles really involve is a key starting point. Community members need to understand addiction in order to create a culture of acceptance and support. Once addiction is understood as a chronic disease, not a personal failing, stigma and shame can be replaced by compassion and hope. Written information can help get the word out. To expand this educational component to the broader community, use the “wall” space you have – both physical and electronic.

- Physical space:

- ~ Vestibule
- ~ Parish Office
- ~ School library
- ~ A waiting area in a school office
- ~ Parish hall
- ~ Bulletin Boards/Message Boards

- Electronic “wall” space:

- ~ Parish website
- ~ Facebook page
- ~ Instagram
- ~ E-Newsletters
- ~ Emails

- Physical documents:

- ~ Sunday Bulletins
- ~ Parish Newsletters

Free written materials, including posters and other handouts, may be obtained from a variety of sources. (For more information and where to obtain materials, please see the Appendix and your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.)

- *Information Sessions/Workshops*

Parish education should begin with the recognition that an addiction is more a medical and psychological condition than a moral condition. It can be treated and arrested. But recovery is a lifelong process that involves the whole person. So, it is not just about addressing the person's physical and psychological needs, but, most importantly for parishes, it's about the person's spiritual needs as well.

To provide information seminars or workshops, there are substance abuse and addiction education programs available through local organizations that will work with you and your parish. You can partner with your local public health office, hospitals, community health centers or nonprofit organizations to host educational events at your parish site. The providers of these educational programs can help develop topic presentations in ways suitable for the general public or the specific audience you wish to address.

Remember, it's not to teach everyone how to treat addictions, but to help everyone learn to identify someone who might need encouragement and support to get professional help – someone like themselves or a family member, for example. The educational providers can help the community increase their understanding of such topics including, but not limited to:

- Chemical dependency/addiction as disease;
- Dynamics of chemical abuse in families;
- Pain management;
- The process of recovery;
- The spirituality of recovery;
- Family communication;
- Identifying potential dangers and family prevention;
- Good Samaritan Laws;
- Alcohol as a drug; and
- Helping the alcoholic or addict who does not want help.

Ultimately, it is about developing an understanding in order to raise awareness of what's happening in the community and to convey a message of acceptance, support and encouragement for those experiencing such struggles individually or as a family.

Educational workshops can be presented on one or more topics in a one-day workshop, or they can be presented as a series of topics presented over the course of weeks. See a sample flyer for a “Family Education Workshop” series in the Appendix.

There is a lot of information available, but for assistance in facilitating educational sessions/workshops, contact your local Catholic Charities, or one of the resource persons or organizations found in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

- *Events*

- Community Information Fairs

Consider inviting representatives of local programs and services for addiction and recovery to your parish and provide tables for them to exhibit their information brochures.

- Concerts or Musical Events

Bring youth and young adults into the conversation by hosting a concert or musical event to benefit your addiction and recovery ministry or a local non-profit organization that serves individuals and families fighting addiction. If possible, invite a musician who will perform and openly discuss his or her own personal story of recovery. Be sure to have written information about your ministries and other local recovery services available for everyone who attends.

### One-on-One

As you begin to let the broader community know that your parish is supportive and committed to walking with those struggling with addiction and recovery, you are likely to meet more individuals and families seeking help.

In these one-on-one encounters, your acceptance of them and recognition of their worth is priceless. But we know it’s only one part of the continuum of care and services they need.

So, be prepared to provide information about addiction and recovery resources from which the individual or family may benefit. As noted earlier, in addition to this booklet, CC~ARM’s “*Resource Guide for Parish Communities Walking with God’s Children on the Journey of Recovery*” (*Resource Guide*) adapted for each Diocese is available.

### Open your doors

Finding a supportive community is essential to ongoing recovery. It is a process that must be supported and nurtured through relationships and social networks. Programs like Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous help diminish the isolation suffered by

those with addiction, connect them to others in recovery, and support those receiving treatment.

Consider the following:

- Offer space in one of your parish buildings for weekly recovery programs and/or self-help support group meetings for people with addiction or for their families needing support.
- Emphasize your recovery programs or self-help support group meeting schedules on websites such as New Jersey's 211 or drugabuse.com so people know that your community is supportive and committed to walking with those in recovery.
- Offer help to connect members of the community to available transportation services so they can get to treatment and recovery support service programs.
- Be a resource and connect people to the help they need. Create an easy to access resource center or a "wall" on your Facebook page with information that might include links to:
  - Local AA or NA meetings;
  - Local Al-Anon meetings and Alateen meetings;
  - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator;
  - SAMHSA's National Helpline (800) 662-HELP / 4357 or 1-800-487-4889 (TTY) where they can get free and confidential help in English and Spanish 24/7.
- And always, when offering public or congregational prayer, particularly for the sick, please pray for people who suffer from addiction.

Please remember, this ministry is about addressing a scourge on our communities – healing a spiritual disease. It is not meant to be a fundraising effort. Have faith! Be open to invite others in to use your space as part of your recovery ministry and that which you need will come to you abundantly.

For additional assistance, consider contacting your local Catholic Charities, or one of the resource persons or organizations found in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*."

## Chapter Three

### *Walk with Them*

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."  
(Jeremiah 29:11)

As you continue the work you have begun in Chapters One and Two, consider taking a look at new ministries as well. Consider working with and supporting parishioners who have a deep interest in addressing the addiction crisis to start ministries that enable them to walk as companions with those struggling on a journey of recovery.

While the ministries are described here as if they stand alone, they can also be joined together for a parish ministry that has different active parts. Parishes need not just pick one if they are moved by the Holy Spirit to do more. Here are some ideas for different types of ministries that center on relationships being built between the parish and community members struggling with addiction and recovery.

#### An Addiction and Recovery Ministry

This is a ministry that offers spiritual support directly to individuals whose lives have been affected by the disease of addiction. Please understand it is not about being a counselor. It is about being a much-needed companion and friend who walks with an individual as they journey on their own hard road.

Ministry members help by:

- praying with and for the individual;
- listening with compassion to their concerns (non-judgmentally);
- providing a safe and confidential support network; and
- offering information and referrals to a variety of resources.

Who might they help?

- Anyone who is suffering from an addiction; or
- A family member of a person dealing with addiction.

The ministry should be open to serve anyone who is encountered, whether or not they are a member of the parish and whether or not they are Catholic. It is about being there to walk on the journey to recovery because together those involved can support one another and that is what Jesus calls us to do.

For assistance and guidance on starting an Addiction and Recovery Ministry, contact one of the active ministries listed in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide* or see active ministries listed in other available Diocesan Editions of the *Resource Guide*, which are available through the NJCC website at [www.njcatholic.org/substance-abuse](http://www.njcatholic.org/substance-abuse).

### A Spiritual Recovery Bible Study Group

The goal of a Spiritual Recovery Bible Study Group is to familiarize the participants with Sacred Scripture. It provides an opportunity for participants to witness the emergence of the moral principles of the 12 Step Program throughout Salvation History. Participants will begin to see that

- the human struggle with addiction and any unnatural attachment to a substance, behavior, or thing, which compromises our freedom and distracts us from the important things in our lives, has gone on since the beginning of time.
- how the early founders of the Alcoholics Anonymous developed the 12 Step Program with emphasis on the Sermon on the Mount, 1 Corinthians 13, and the Book of James.
- how the Biblical lessons learned there on the Mount and throughout the Bible provide the guidance and inspiration for a joy filled recovery.

Weekly Recovery Bible Study Groups use either the Life Recovery Bible, the New American Bible, or the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The group should be led by someone who is familiar with both Scripture and the 12 Steps. Resources for conducting a group in English and Spanish are available.

For more information and assistance on starting a Spirituality Recovery Bible Study Group, contact one of the active ministries, parishes or organizations listed in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

### A Congregation Assistance Program

Parishes have a tremendous potential to help people with alcohol and drug problems since they may well be sitting in the parish's pews and many might look to their parishes in time of need. In addition, parishes are in the unique position to address the spiritual dimension of addiction and recovery – which we have come to know not just as a physical and psychological disorder, but truly a spiritual disease.

A Congregation Assistance Program (CAP) is a structured prevention and early intervention ministry in which selected individuals, referred to as the Core Team, are trained to be resources to fellow parishioners regarding alcohol and other drug abuse and to promote healthy lifestyles. The core team's goal is to be a spiritual support and a source of practical resources in assisting individuals and families with drug and alcohol problems.

The heart of this program is the “core team,” which is recruited by the clergy and/or their representative and is *trained*. During the training, core team members will learn basic information on addiction, family aspects of addiction, primary prevention approaches, formal and informal intervention methods, and resources for referral. Following the initial training, core teams develop action plans for their parish communities and receive on-going support from their diocesan as well as county representatives.

The core team can be helpful to a parish community in at least three ways:

- Education: making literature available on what addiction involves as well as on prevention and treatment for all age groups.
- Outreach: making the parish community aware that help is available.
- Referral: helping people to connect with appropriate resources.

CAP can be a bridge back into the parish community for persons in recovery from addiction. It can enable them to become active in the life of the parish, to share their stories with other members, and to find a place to serve. It can also be a bridge into recovery. The love, concern and openness of the core team members can encourage members who are still active in addiction, or their family members, to seek the help they need.

For more information and assistance on starting a CAP, contact one of the active ministries, parishes or organizations listed in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

### Spiritual Companionship Program

A Spiritual Companion is someone who practices what Pope Francis calls the “art of accompaniment,” journeying with others as they seek an encounter with the living Spirit of God. The companion will need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing, but rather an openness of heart which makes possible the type of closeness from which genuine spiritual encounter can occur.

A Spiritual Companion will assist an individual in learning to listen to promptings of the Holy Spirit, so that they might begin to discern the path of love and wellness that God has intended for them and make decisions toward that end. In essence, a Spiritual Companion is a cross between a spiritual director (one who helps another person be attentive to the Lord’s personal communication to that person) and a recovery coach (one who provides a form of strength-based support for people with addictions or in recovery from addictive behaviors).

Spiritual Companions accompany someone by first recognizing that person’s unique human dignity; giving confidence to the individual; being in a grounded relationship; and

helping reverse feelings of abandonment and isolation. When accompanying someone, the Spiritual Companion is actively involved in

- being present for the person;
- praying for the person;
- praying with the person; and
- connecting with the person in relationship.

A good Spiritual Companion isn't someone who is perfect or saintly. Rather, a good Spiritual Companion needs to be a person with the following qualities:

- Honesty – being honest with oneself and with the other;
- Compassion and Empathy – an understanding of the suffering of others;
- Common Sense – wisdom to realize significant movements and insights as the person goes through his or her journey;
- Discernment – recognition that confidentiality is crucial to the mutual respect, trust and integrity of the relationship; and
- The Ability to Listen – not just hearing, but being fully mindful of the other and focused on the other.

A Spiritual Companion will need to be willing to become well versed in the nature of addiction as a spiritual disease, which has devastating psychological and physiological ramifications to the person suffering. A Spiritual Companion will need to understand the nature of addiction from a Spiritual perspective as well as from the psychological and physiological perspectives. Being able to recommend recovery resource information is also important.

For more information and assistance on starting a Spirituality Companionship ministry, contact one of the parishes with this type of ministry, or an organization that provides the training for such a ministry listed in your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

## CONCLUSION

Whatever your parish pursues and develops from the ideas presented in this booklet or from the inspiration you receive from the Holy Spirit, please commit to making them a permanent part of your parish life.

Remember: addressing the scourge of addiction and supporting recovery is *not* a sprint, but a very long marathon.

# APPENDIX

➤ BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION

➤ SAMPLES

A. A Homily

B. Bible Verses

C. Flyers

- ❖ Healing Mass flyer
- ❖ Prayer Service flyer
- ❖ Lenten Stations of the Cross flyer
- ❖ Family Education Workshops flyer

➤ ARTICLES, STATEMENTS AND BOOKS

➤ RESOURCES

A. MORE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

B. DIOCESAN EDITIONS OF THE *RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PARISH COMMUNITIES WALKING WITH GOD'S CHILDREN ON THE JOURNEY OF RECOVERY*

Acknowledgements

CC~ARM - Contributing Members

# BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION

- Addiction is classified as a biopsychosocial-spiritual disease. This means that it impacts the addicted person biologically, psychosocially, socially, and spiritually. It impacts the people who love the addicted person in the same areas.
- People who suffer from addiction are *afflicted*, because the addiction affects the circuits of the brain that makes good choices. Not everyone who uses, or abuses substances is suffering from the disease of addiction. There is substance use, abuse, and addiction and within each of those categories, there are different levels of severity, from mild to moderate to severe.
- Addiction does not manifest itself the exact same way in each person. Each person is unique and brings with him or her a specific history and genetic makeup.
- There are many paths to recovery from addiction. Some of them are more traditional and more commonly known.
- Practicing prudence helps us to discern the things that help and hinder in each situation. As a Church, we can be bearers of faith, hope and love, thus bringing comfort to the *afflicted* and all those who are suffering.

*Used with permission from Nina Marie Corona,  
Founder, We Thirst & AFIRE.*

Visit <https://www.ninamariecorona.com/>

# **SAMPLES**

# A HOMILY

## WE HAVE FAITH IN THE POWER OF JESUS TO HEAL US AND PICK US UP

As we journey through life, there are ups and downs. When we are knocked down, we need a pick-me-up, or as the Italians might say, a “tira-mi-su”. No matter what way you are knocked down, Jesus is there to pick you up.

It is not only sickness that can knock us down. We can be knocked down emotionally and psychologically. We can be knocked down by the hurts others inflict on us and by what they say or do to us. It is not always true to say that “Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me”. Names, words, attitudes also hurt.

On those occasions we also need a pick-me-up, and on those occasions, Jesus is also there to pick us up. To bring the healing of these types of knocks, I would like to recall for you the motto chosen by the Catholic Church for the Jubilee 2000, “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). No matter when you were hurt, remembering that today, yesterday and tomorrow are the same for Jesus, ask him to walk back in time with you to the day when you suffered a particular hurt or ..... (or knew of your affliction).

Close your eyes now and imagine Jesus by your side or in front of you...Make your way through the crowd to Jesus, like the bleeding woman...In your imagination, touch Jesus’ cloak for his healing...(Mark 5:27-28). Feel the love of Jesus healing you...Hear Jesus say to you, “Your faith has restored you to health” ... (Mark 5:34)

Or in your imagination, see Jesus take you by the hand as he took Jairus’ daughter by hand and let Jesus help you up, “I tell you to get up” ... (Mark 5:41). Jesus said about the girl, “She is not dead, only asleep.” (Mark 5:39)

Hear Jesus say to you, “Your wound is not permanent, it is only temporary, I am healing you” ... Let Jesus comfort you after the hurt you received...Let the love of Jesus replace all the damage and hurt and woundedness...Just as the Good Samaritan poured oil and wine on the wounds of the injured with his love...

Touch Jesus’ garments and let your bleeding, your suffering, dry up...Hear Jesus say to you, “You are not dead, only asleep. Get up” ...Tell Jesus about your pain and hurt...Feel the love of Jesus replacing your wounds with his love, healing you and making you whole again.

*Used with permission from Fr. Tommy Lane, S.S.L., S.T.D. and [www.frtommylane.com](http://www.frtommylane.com)  
Visit [www.frtommylane.com](http://www.frtommylane.com) for more uplifting resources.*

# BIBLE VERSES\*

“... love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.” (John 13:34)

“And we have this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.” (1 John 5:14)

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future.’” (Jeremiah 29:11)

“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:13)

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:41)

“For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – comes not from the Father but from the world.” (John 2:16)

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

“No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

“... and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.” (James 5:15-16)

“Not only that, but we even boast of our affliction, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5)

\*Excerpts from the Books of the New American Bible (NAB), <https://bible.usccb.org/bible>.

“I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.” (John 16:33)

“...turn from evil and do good, seek peace and follow after it.” (1 Peter 3:11)

“Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.” (James 4:10)

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1)

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.” (1 Peter 2:11)

# FLYERS



# HEALING MASS

Come, pray for healing of addiction, mental and physical health issues, & spiritual concerns.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 5 P.M.  
UNIVERSITY CHAPEL**

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Prayer and anointing will be available at the Mass in the Chapel.

After the Mass, in Campus Ministry, there will be opportunities for counseling, further prayer, and reconciliation.

Members of the ITHIRST ministry who serve those suffering from addiction will also be available.

Questions? Contact Campus Ministry (973)761-9478 or Catholic Studies (973) 275-2808

**Announcing:  
A Recovery Mass  
....Grace for the Journey**

*For All on the Journey from Addiction to Recovery*

**Tuesday, September 17, 2019 @ 7:00 PM**

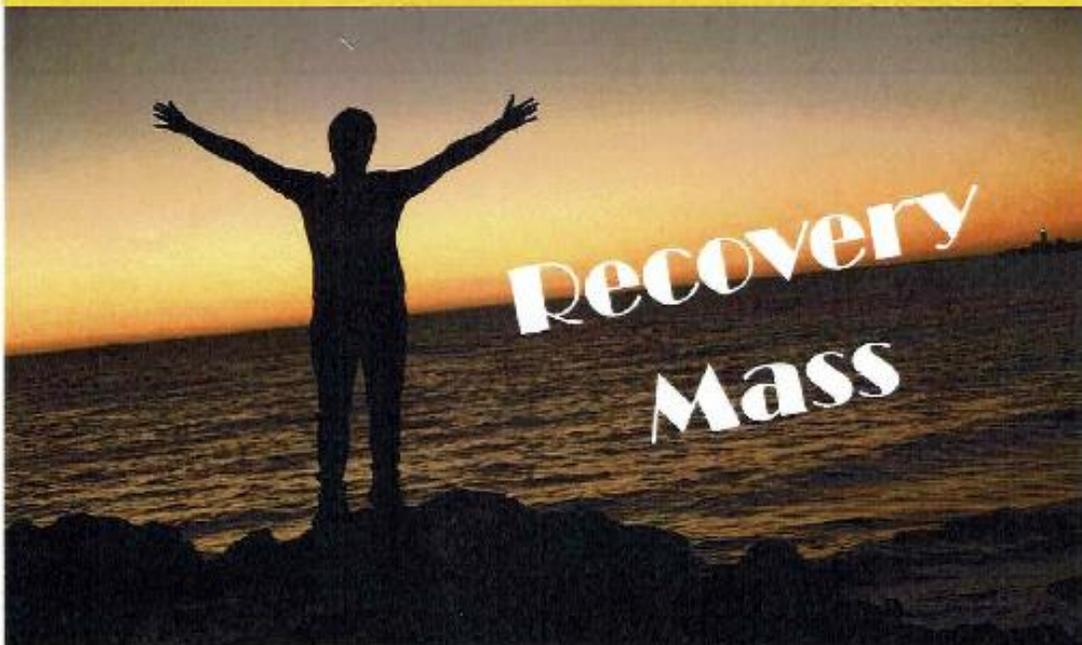
**CELEBRANT: The Very Reverend Robert S. Grodnicki, VF  
Pastor, St. Luke Parish, Toms River**



*Sponsored by The Diocese of Trenton, Dept. of Pastoral Care*

**Co-Cathedral of St. Robert Bellarmine  
61 Georgia Road, Freehold, NJ**

*Light refreshments to follow in Parish Center*



The Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Human Life and Dignity  
and the Catholic Community of St. Helena Parish will host a

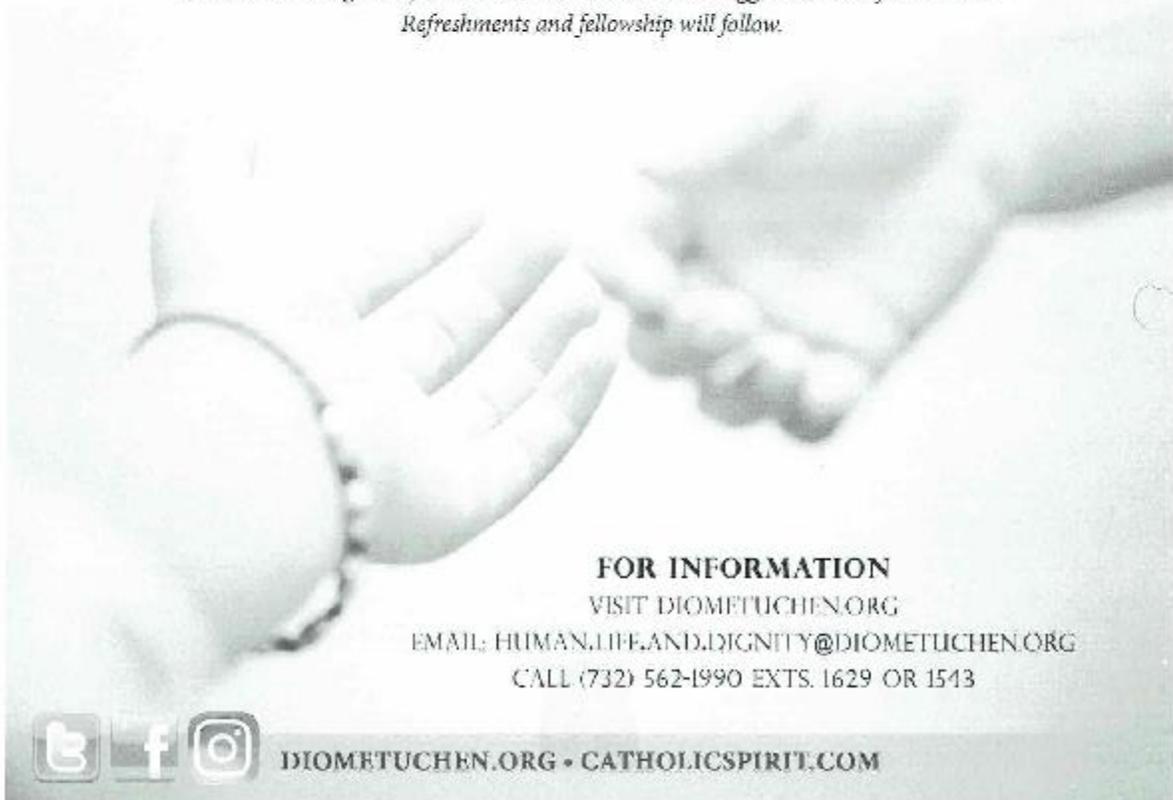
# Prayer Service

**FOR THOSE TOUCHED BY THE PAIN OF ADDICTION OR LOSS**

REV. ANTHONY SIRIANNI, CELEBRANT  
**TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2019 • 7 P.M.**

**St. Helena Parish**  
950 GROVE AVENUE, EDISON, NEW JERSEY 08820

*Any person or family whose life has been touched by the pain of addiction or loss,  
or who seeks the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the struggle to recovery is welcome.  
Refreshments and fellowship will follow.*



## FOR INFORMATION

VISIT [DIOMETUCHEN.ORG](http://DIOMETUCHEN.ORG)

EMAIL: [HUMAN.LIFE.AND.DIGNITY@DIOMETUCHEN.ORG](mailto:HUMAN.LIFE.AND.DIGNITY@DIOMETUCHEN.ORG)

CALL (732) 562-1990 EXTS. 1629 OR 1543



[DIOMETUCHEN.ORG](http://DIOMETUCHEN.ORG) • [CATHOLICSPIRIT.COM](http://CATHOLICSPIRIT.COM)

The Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Human Life and Dignity  
and the Catholic Community of Immaculate Conception Parish, Spotswood, will host a

# *Lenten Stations of the Cross*

**FOR THOSE TOUCHED BY THE PAIN OF ADDICTION OR LOSS**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2019 • 7 P.M.**

**Immaculate Conception Parish**

18 SOUTH STREET, SPOTSWOOD, NJ 08884

*Any person or family whose life has been touched by the pain of addiction or loss,  
or who seeks the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the struggle to recovery is welcome.*

*Refreshments and fellowship will follow.*

**FOR INFORMATION**

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EMAIL: [HUMAN.LIFE.AND.DIGNITY@DIOMETUCHEN.ORG](mailto:HUMAN.LIFE.AND.DIGNITY@DIOMETUCHEN.ORG)

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**DIOMETUCHEN.ORG • CATHOLICSPIRIT.COM**

67 Atlantic Ave  
Manasquan, NJ  
  
PO Box 203  
Manasquan, NJ 08736



833-2B-SOBER  
833-227-6237  
  
(24 Hour Addiction  
Helpline)



# Family Education Workshop

**Mondays, Beginning October 1 at 7:00 pm**

Learn new skills to deal with substance use disorder that may be affecting your family or relationship

Week 1:	<b>Introduction</b>	October 1
Week 2:	<b>Understanding Behaviors</b>	October 8
Week 3:	<b>Ambivalence is Normal/ Enabling an Overused Idea</b>	October 15
Week 4:	<b>Communication Goal/ Resilience</b>	October 22
Week 5:	<b>Dealing with Stress/ Managing Your Emotions</b>	October 29
Week 6:	<b>Understanding You Are Not Alone/Shame and Self Compassion</b>	November 5
Week 7:	<b>Communication with Love</b>	November 12
Week 8:	<b>Elements of Positive Communication</b>	November 19
Week 9:	<b>Problem Solving &amp; Family Collaboration</b>	November 26
Week 10:	<b>Reinforcement/ Natural Consequence</b>	December 3
Week 11:	<b>Your Consequence</b>	December 10
Week 12:	<b>Crisis Planning/ Wrap Up</b>	December 17
Week 13:	<b>Narcan Training</b>	December 12

Registration available at [rafts.portalbuzz.com](http://rafts.portalbuzz.com) so we can get an estimate to order enough books for everyone.

RAFTS is a non-profit, non-clinical, peer-based Recovery Community Organization providing support and resources to individuals and families impacted by addiction.

[www.raftsnj.org](http://www.raftsnj.org)

[www.facebook.com/RAFTSNJ](http://www.facebook.com/RAFTSNJ)

# ARTICLES, BOOKS AND MORE\*

## USCCB:

*New Slavery New Freedom, A Pastoral Message on Substance Abuse* (1990)\_(PDF)  
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/upload/New-Slavery-New-Freedom-A-Pastoral-Message-on-Substance-Abuse.pdf>

Other items: <http://www.usccb.org/news/2018/18-153.cfm>

*Substance Abuse and Women*

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/children/substance-abuse-and-women.cfm>

*Letter Endorsing Youth Drug and Mental Health Services*

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/health-care/letter-to-senator-jeffords-from-cardinal-mahoney-endorsing-youth-drug-and-mental-health-services-act.cfm>

*Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography* (PDF) at

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/pornography/index.cfm>  
(this link includes other writings on this topic as well)

*Communities of Hope: Parishes and Substance Abuse. A Practical Guide*

Washington DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, Publication No. 473-2, 1992

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS/GOVERNMENT OFFICES:

*A Practical toolkit for faith and community leaders in the face of the opioid epidemic* (PDF)

<https://www.chsm.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Hope-Healing-A-practical-toolkit-for-faith-and-community-leaders-in-the-face-of-the-opioid-epidemic.pdf>

*The Opioid Epidemic Practical Toolkit*

Download the complete [The Opioid Crisis Practical Toolkit: Helping Faith-based and Community Leaders Bring Hope and Healing](#) - PDF (4th Edition) at

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opioid-epidemic-practical-toolkit-35001-dhhs.pdf>.

\*Please note these resources are available as of the writing of this booklet in 2020 and may or may not be the same resources available as time goes on.

*Core Competencies for Clergy and Other Pastoral Ministers in Addressing Alcohol and Drug Dependence and the Impact on Family Members, Substance Abuse and the Family: Defining the Role of the Faith Community* (PDF)

Download a copy at <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/competency.pdf>

## **BOOKS:**

The Twelve Steps Meet the Gospel: Reflections on Scripture and Stories of Hope for those in Recovery

By Dick Rice and Trish Vanni

Twenty-Third Publications

<https://www.amazon.com/Twelve-Steps-Meet-Gospel-Reflections/dp/1627852611>

The Twelve Steps and the Sacraments: A Catholic Journey Through Recovery

By Scott Weeman

Founder of Catholic in Recovery

Ave Maria Press

<https://catholicinrecovery.com/>

The Gift of Recovery: 52 Mindful Ways to Live Joyfully Beyond Addiction

By Rebecca E. Williams and Julie S. Kraft

New Harbinger Publications

[www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com)

The Mindfulness Workbook for Addiction: A Guide to Coping with the Grief, Stress and Anger that Trigger Addictive Behaviors

By Rebecca E. Williams and Julie S. Kraft

New Harbinger Publications

[www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com)

The Life Recovery Bible

The Life Recovery Workbook

The Life Recovery Journal

Tyndale Publishers

<https://www.tyndale.com/p/the-life-recovery-bible-nlt/9781414309613>

Unchained: Our Family's Addiction Mess is Our Message

By Nancy McCann Vericker and JP Vericker (A true Story of a Mother and Son)

Clear Faith Publishing

[www.ClearFaithPublishing.com](http://www.ClearFaithPublishing.com)

Breathing Under Water – Spirituality and the Twelve Steps

By Richard Rohr

Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, Ohio

[www.FranciscanMedia.org](http://www.FranciscanMedia.org)

# RESOURCES

## A. MORE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

### NATIONAL/FEDERAL

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)  
National Helpline: 1-800-622-HELP (4357)  
<https://www.samhsa.gov>

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD)  
<https://nasadad.org/federal-resources/>

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)  
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/>

Addiction Guide  
<https://www.addictionguide.com/resources/>

### STATE

State of New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)  
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/hotlines> (hotlines) or  
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/> (home page)

[Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse \(GCADA\)](https://gcada.nj.gov/home/)  
<https://gcada.nj.gov/home/>

### COUNTY

For resources in the counties that lie within your Diocese, see your Diocese's Edition of the *Resource Guide*.

## **B. DIOCESAN EDITIONS OF THE *RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PARISH COMMUNITIES WALKING WITH GOD'S CHILDREN ON THE JOURNEY OF RECOVERY***

In your Diocesan Edition of the *Resource Guide*, you may also find resource persons and organizations that are already involved in walking on the journey of recovery with those in need. For more information about their ministries or services, please contact the person or organization directly.

Copies of all available Diocesan Editions of the *Resource Guide*, can be obtained from the NJCC website at [www.njcatholic.org/substance-abuse](http://www.njcatholic.org/substance-abuse).

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for this endeavor sprang from a discussion that took place at a meeting of the Public Policy Committee (PPC) of the New Jersey Catholic Conference (NJCC). As a member of the PPC for the Diocese of Trenton, I was asked to give a report on the *Symposium on Practical Parish Strategies to Address the Addiction Epidemic in New Jersey*, which was sponsored by the Department of Pastoral Care-Diocese of Trenton, open to all statewide, and held on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Out of that discussion, a proposal was presented to the Bishops of New Jersey requesting their support and authorization for the creation of a committee of representatives from the Dioceses of New Jersey to take the next step. As a result, CC~ARM was created with representatives from dioceses across New Jersey.

As this effort began with the approval of the Bishops, I want to thank them for their vision and support. Indeed, I thank them for the love they have shown in so many ways for our brothers and sisters struggling with addictions and recovery.

I want to acknowledge and thank the committee members for their contributions, their willingness to find time in their already busy schedules for meetings, conference calls, concept development, and the reading, re-reading and editing needed to make this work possible. A special thank you goes to James King of the NJCC for his participation, guidance, support, and willingness to be my sound board.

There have also been many people who have spoken with committee members along the way who have contributed to this work with ideas and feedback. Although I don't know all their names, I thank them as well. I also want to thank Catherine Chmielewski, a parishioner in the Diocese of Metuchen and my sister, who took the time to proof-read the final draft and found every typo as well as every period and semi-colon that was out of place.

I thank all the parish ministries and organizations that have been inspirations for this work and who have already been accompanying those struggling with addition and recovery.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank all the parishes – their pastors, priests, staff and parishioners – who will use this booklet to start and/or continue to be a part of their communities' journey of recovery.

Brenda L. Rascher, MSW, JD  
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