

CONTINUED...

People

Continued from page 1

intellectual functioning. Developmental disabilities may also be caused by cerebral palsy, epilepsy, neurological impairment or autism.

For people to be defined as having a developmental disability, the problem must manifest itself before age 22, the law says. The disability must be expected to continue indefinitely and constitute a substantial handicap to a person's ability to function normally in society.

Information on developmental disabilities, provided by such agencies as The ARC of Monroe County and The Advocacy Center, notes that not everyone with a developmental disability has mental retardation. For example, people with cerebral palsy may have severe speech problems, but they do not necessarily have mental retardation.

Part of the parish

Many parishes have both reached out to and benefited from people with developmental disabilities.

At St. Ambrose Church, several adults with developmental disabilities meet monthly to discuss such faith issues as respecting life, according to Mary Kay Oberst, the parish's director of faith formation. In fact, at the next meeting, slated for March 15, the participants will bring infant clothing to be collected by the parish and then distributed to outreach centers that work with single mothers, she said.

At Our Mother of Sorrows Church in Greece, several children with developmental disabilities attend religious education classes, according to Claudia Adams, the parish's coordinator for religious and sacramental preparation.

Adams added that parishes should ask parents if their children have any special needs that must be met in the religious education classroom. And she noted that some parishes have contacted her for information on how to gear their sacramental preparation programs and catechetical classes to children with developmental disabilities.

At St. Boniface in Rochester, Father R.

Richard Brickler, pastor, noted a number of people with developmental disabilities have served as lectors and coffee hour workers at the church.

At St. Michael's Church in Penn Yan, Father Peter Deckman, co-pastor, said several residents of community residences operated by Catholic Charities in the area belong to the parish. Like many parish administrators who welcome people with developmental disabilities, he emphasized that his church treats them as it would any other parishioners.

"You make an effort to recognize anybody, but it's a pretty normal situation," he said. "We see them in the streets, the stores. They live here."

Betty Potter heads the eucharistic ministry program at Corpus Christi Church in Rochester with her husband Don. She echoed Father Deckman's comments about integrating people with developmental disabilities into parish life.

For example, she said, every Thursday night, between 15 and 20 people with developmental disabilities who live in community residences operated by Heritage Christian Home, Inc., attend Mass at Corpus Christi. Corpus parishioners long ago grew accustomed to the presence of the residents, she said, adding that they participate in all the rituals of the Mass.

"We don't really bend over backwards," she said. "We just really treat them the way they want to be treated."

On March 5, for example, four residents from the Heritage Christian Home residence on Baird Road in Penfield — Nancy Craig, Betsy Mullaney, Tim Johnson and George Barry — attended the evening Mass along with three staff members from the home, including Ann Beaudoin, the residence manager.

When asked why they like coming to Corpus, Mullaney said, "I like the music, I like the priest."

Beaudoin and Barry added that all four of the residents had participated in last year's "Hike for the Homeless" walkathon that raised money for Dimitri House, a homeless shelter the parish operates.

The parish has installed a ramp for people who use wheelchairs — like the Heritage Christian Home residents — that is dedicated to the memory of Bessie Romagnola's late son, George, who resided at another Heritage residence.

"My son wanted to come here all the time," she said.

What parishes can do

Zyla listed the following steps she can take with parishes that want to welcome

people with developmental disabilities:

- Conduct an accessibility study to determine where the parish needs to be more welcoming. She can then meet with parish leaders to discuss ways the parish can be more accessible, both physically and socially, to people with disabilities.
- Outline a plan to gradually develop a parish environment that includes such people. Such an environment might mean inviting people with developmental disabilities to actively participate in liturgies or groups.
- Educate parishioners and catechists about different disabilities through workshops and presentations.
- Coordinate a retreat for people with developmental disabilities. Zyla said she's planning one for the Horseheads area in June.
- Connect people with disabilities with volunteers in the parish.

What others are doing

The Diocese of Pittsburgh has been training parish volunteers to work with people with developmental disabilities since the mid-1980s, according to Grace Harding, director of her diocese's Department for Persons with Disabilities. Harding said her office had trained 118 "parish advocates," who are recommended by pastors to work with people with developmental disabilities.

Harding advised Catholics to treat a person with a developmental disability the same way they would treat a friend.

"People should simply get to know them by name," she said. "When you begin to call a person by name, you forget the disability."

That's a view shared by Michela Perrone, executive director of the National Apostolate with People with Mental Retardation, based in Washington, D.C. The apostolate is an 800-member organization composed of people with developmental disabilities, their families, and those who minister to and work with them, she said.

She added that the apostolate advises parishes to work with people with developmental disabilities on a person-by-person basis, rather than attempting to lump them all into one category.

"If you have conviction on the part of the leadership of the church and the people of the church, then you can find ways to do it," she said.

Resources available to churches

Catholic parishes interested in learning more about people with developmental disabilities may contact the following individuals, agencies and organizations:

• Lyn Zyla, community awareness coordinator for Catholic Charities Community & Residential Services, 1945 Ridge Road East, Suite 24, Rochester, N.Y., 14622. Phone: 716/339-9800, ext. 251, or TTY: 716/339-9806. E-mail address: CCCRS@frontier.net.

• Teena Spallina, public education coordinator for The Advocacy Center, 277 Alexander St., Suite 500, Rochester, N.Y. 14607. Phone: 716/546-1700, voice or TDD; Spanish line: 546-6757.

• The ARC of Monroe County, 1000


Elmwood Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14620. Phone: 716/271-0660.

• **MERGING TWO WORLDS**, a coalition of agencies and organizations is devoted to integrating people with developmental disabilities into the community at large through their congregations. MTW is holding a conference in Rochester, Sept. 21 and 22. Write the Rev. Jean Jenkins, Facilitator, MERGING TWO WORLDS Coalition, 620 Westfall Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14620. Phone: 716/461-8943.

• National Apostolate with People with Mental Retardation, 4516 30th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. Phone: 1-800-736-1280.

— Rob Cullivan

COURIER CLASSIFIEDS

| GENERAL | EMPLOYMENT | SERVICES | SERVICES | SERVICES | SERVICES |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Announcements ADOPTIONS The Catholic Courier does not publish adoption advertising. To obtain a list of agencies that serve birth mothers and adoptive parents, call 716-328-4340. Agencies wishing to be included on this list may send information to the Catholic Courier. THE PROBLEM PREGNANCY Help Center, Inc. is a United Way Donor Choice Agency #2015. Miscellaneous DJ MUSIC FOR parties, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays. Call Joe at DJJames Tunes. 716-473-5411. GIRLS SCOUTS OF Genesee Valley is looking for former adult Girls Scouts to become alumna. Call 716-239-7930. REVEREND MOTHER MAKES HOUSE CALLS! For comic relief, give her a ring at 716-442-4363. SAVE MONEY using grocery coupons you choose! Cut grocery bills in half. 1-800-466-9222 ext. 5733. | Help Wanted - Part Time CHILD CARE: 3-DAYS/ week. Our home, Fairport. 3 children (6, 5 & 1). Experience/references required. 716-987-3263. MERCHANDISE Furniture DINING ROOM SET: dark walnut, 8 chairs, china cabinet, hutch, leaf. Asking \$795. 716-377-4787. Sporting Goods SEARS EXERCISE BIKE with speedometer. Like new \$45. 716-872-4142. Television & Video FOR SALE: EMERSON VCR. Model VCR755. "Play" is excellent, "record" occasionally distorts. \$20. 716-229-5640. Wanted to Buy PLEASE CALL US if you have any old/used Catholic books for sale. We buy individual books and entire libraries. Preserving Christian Publications. 315-942-6338. | Appliance Repair We Make House Calls  SEW & VAC REPAIR CTR. 724 Winton Rd. N. 716-482-6111 Catering PLAN NOW: Barbeques/ events for fundraising, graduation, weddings... Full menu. 716-638-5606. Ceiling Repair TEXTURED/SWIRLED CEILINGS 9' x 12' ceiling only \$59. Water Damage, drywall, plaster repairs. Quality work; reasonable prices. 716-392-5076. Electricians  NOLAN ELECTRIC For All Your Electrical Needs Serving Rochester & Surrounding Areas Licensed & Fully Insured 716-436-8290 | Heating & Air Conditioning Hicks Home Heating <i>Call us for Winter Comfort!</i> Heat & Air Conditioning Specialists • Sales • Service • Installation Family Owned & Operated 424-4848 Masonry  AMERICAN MASONRY & CHIMNEY CHIMNEY SERVICE ALL MASONRY WORK 865-4170 663-7360 Moving & Hauling JIM'S MOVING & PAINTING Low low rates, Call Jim 716-654-7436. Refinish hardwood floors; We seal driveways. Senior citizen discounts. | Moving & Hauling K-D Moving & Storage, Inc.  Experience in office, household moving and deliveries. <i>Big or Small, We do them All!</i> 473-6610/473-4357 23 Arlington St. Rochester NY 14607 NYDOT#9657 Painting & Wallcovering AL MEYVIS, JR. Basement walls repaired/painted. Interior painting. Home Repairs. Small jobs welcome. Certified, free est. 323-2876 or 392-4435. BURG-MASTER PAINTING/PAPERHANGING, texture ceilings, walls, ceilings repaired, rugs shampooed. Insured, powerwashing. Dan Burgmaster, 716-663-0827. PAINTING: NEAT, RELIABLE, experienced, quality work, many satisfied customers. Call John 716-544-0593. | Painting & Wallcovering WALLPAPER SPECIALIST. 19 yrs. exp. Affordable, quality. Call Mark Gay for free estimate. 716-442-3159. Roofing Siding & Gutters ROOFS REPAIRED: WIND DAMAGE Shingles replaced with matching color. Gilbert 716-247-5130. BOWMAN ROOFING & SIDING CO. <i>Established 1912</i> George R. Bowman, Sr. • Roof Repairs • Siding • • Replacement Windows • • Seamless Aluminum Gutters • • Gutter Cleaning • Ice Problems • 671-3270 671-2912  |
| Help Wanted IN-HOME DAYCARE provider needed. Greece Lakefront. Mon.-Thurs. 7-5. Ref. required. 716-225-9511. | Marilyn's Antiques Top cash paid for old wood furniture, clocks, glass and china, sterling, crocks, quilts, etc. One item or complete household. We make house calls. 647-2480 | KLEE & BRICKMAN Certified Public Accountants Call G. Peter Klee or Arthur Brickman 1592 East Main St. Rochester, NY 14609 716-482-2080 | To advertise in the Courier classifieds fill out the coupon and mail to: Catholic Courier, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624 AdCopy: _____ Name: _____ Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____ Phone: _____ Start Date: _____ <i>When we receive your ad, we will call with a price quote.</i> | | |