

NCANews

Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter, 1992

National Catholic AIDS Network ■ Box 422984 ■ San Francisco, CA 94142

Message from the President

Dear Friends of NCAN,

Best wishes of the New Year, and welcome to the first edition of NCANews. It's not pretentious. But we hope it's a help, and that you will contribute to its success by sharing your ideas, questions and experience. As part of NCAN's goal to be an instrument for sharing technical information and theological reflection, the newsletter will try to find space for every aspect of ministry in which its members are involved. As we all struggle to adapt our professional and pastoral services to the needs of an epidemic which is having an ever greater impact on the inner city, on children, on women, and on minority communities, we hope that this newsletter can be one way of maintaining communication among ministers. We hope to publish the newsletter two or three times each year, and invite your reactions to our inaugural attempt.

Sincerely,

Jon Fuller, S.J., M.D.



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Message from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

I am grateful to the NCAN Board of Directors for entrusting me with this leadership position. I am humbled by their confidence and the support of women and men whose contributions to HIV issues have often led and challenged me. I promise them my best efforts to help NCAN develop into an organization that has the respect of the Catholic community as well as our colleagues in the wider HIV/AIDS service-providing community.

I am grateful as I remember the Winter, 1988 meeting of the Lazzaro Board of Directors during which NCAN was born. We struggled to respond to the growing number of people who were calling for support and assistance as Catholic service providers. We saw that the mission of the Lazzaro Center could not contain this expanded vision and saw an opportunity to create a new organization to build on the wonderful, caring work that Jay Pinkerton and Marie Puleo had begun.

I am grateful to see that the original vision took shape and was able to weather some initial storms of doubt and controversy! Early in 1990, the first planning session was held in snowy Boulder and later in that year we conducted our first national conference on a sensitive but vital topic of HIV/AIDS issues for clergy and religious. With the successful production of the Fourth National Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry Conference during the summer of 1991, NCAN is on its way to offer more timely resources to benefit our expanding Network.

I am grateful to you as a service provider, volunteer, teacher, or minister as you take the resources that NCAN offers and enfleshes them for the benefit of those whom you serve. Please invite others to join our Network to expand our effectiveness. I hope that we will have a beneficial association together in the coming months—and that someday we can rejoice and be grateful together to close the doors of NCAN with the epidemic conquered. May the Lord sustain and bless us as we walk together to that happy day!

Sincerely yours,

Rodney J. DeMartini, S.M.

Meet the Members of the Board of Directors of NCAN

Sister Anthony Barczykowski, DC. Chief Executive Officer of Associated Catholic Charities of New Orleans, Sister Anthony has been instrumental in facilitating AIDS education and ministry in Louisiana.

Paul Colloton, OP. A Dominican priest stationed in Denver, Colorado, Paul Colloton is actively involved in AIDS ministry and serves the NCAN Board as its Secretary.

Eileen P. Flynn, PhD. An Associate Professor at St. Peter's College in New Jersey, Eileen Flynn is author of *AIDS, A Catholic Call for Compassion, Teaching about AIDS*, and the forthcoming *Your Living Will: Why, When, and How to Write One*. She is also the editor of the first edition of NCANews.

Jon Fuller, SJ, MD. President of the NCAN Board, Jon Fuller is Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine and Assistant Director of the Clinical AIDS Program at Boston City Hospital. Jon has a strong interest in educating lay and professional providers about HIV/AIDS care, and has authored numerous scientific papers on clinical management of AIDS-related disease.

Ana Garcia, MSW. An expert on pediatric AIDS and minority communities, Ana Garcia has contributed to several books and periodicals in connection with these subjects. She has also lectured widely and has assisted the Surgeon General of the United States in the formulation of pediatric AIDS policy.

David Krashna, Esq. The founding president of the Contra Costa Black Chamber of Commerce and former President of the Black Catholic Pastoral Team of the Diocese of Oakland, CA., David Krashna has played an active role in initiating an AIDS awareness program for racial minorities in the Diocese of Oakland.

Cliff Morrison, RN, FAAN. Currently the Deputy Director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation AIDS Health Services Program at the Institute for Health Policy Studies, University of California, San Francisco, Cliff planned and implemented the first inpatient AIDS unit in the country at San Francisco General Hospital. He has been active in lecturing, writing on the ethics, policy issues, and nursing care of persons with HIV/AIDS. He has been active in planning and coordinating numerous national HIV conferences. Cliff is serving as Director of the 1992 National Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry Conference.

Elaine G. Swenson, RN, MPH. A public health nurse as well as health educator, in Richmond, CA., Elaine Swenson is actively involved in the delivery of nursing and social services to people living with AIDS. She has a background in teaching, consultation, research, and management.

Louis J. Tesconi, Esq. *The founder and President Emeritus of Damien Ministries, a provider of outreach and residential programs for people living with AIDS in Washington, DC and Joliet, IL, Lou Tesconi's work entailed responding to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of persons touched by the AIDS pandemic. A founding member of NCAN, Lou died on November 27, 1991. This first edition of NCANews is dedicated to Lou. The affection, gratitude and appreciation of his colleagues at NCAN and throughout the Catholic Church in North America live on, as does his inspiring legacy.*

NCAN SCAN

Moderator Bishop. Archbishop John Quinn of San Francisco has agreed to serve as NCAN's moderator bishop. Archbishop Quinn will act as NCAN's liaison with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, keeping his fellow bishops advised of the services provided by NCAN and relaying to NCAN requests from the Conference for ministries required by people touched by HIV/AIDS.

Membership in ANIN. NCAN became a member organization of ANIN in July, 1991. The AIDS National Interfaith Network is made up on a broad range of religious denominations. ANIN serves America's AIDS ministries by lobbying, providing educational presentations, and keeping member organizations up to date on various approaches to AIDS ministry. NCAN's work is enhanced by the services provided by ANIN.

Evaluation of Clergy Conference. The conference entitled, "HIV/AIDS: Its Impact on Clergy and Religious," was held in St. Louis, October 9-10, 1990. Tom Rundell, assisted by Dan Gentry, of the University of California at Berkeley, carried out an evaluation of the conference; their fee was covered with funds from the Centers for Disease Control. Their major evaluation tool was a survey questionnaire. Noteworthy comments include the following: "The majority of participants noted the high quality/quantity of vital information; many appreciated the packets/handouts that were given for further study. There was also frequent acknowledgement of the value of sharing/connecting with other religious/clergy to interact in a spirit of openness and compassion." And, "a number of participants noted that 'each session has its own place' and had quality. There was a broad perspective of the issues presented and several noted that 'the presenters were the message.'"

Mark your calendar with the dates of the next conference, March 14-17, 1992.

Foundation News. An anonymous donor has awarded NCAN \$12,500 to support scholarships to next summer's National Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry Conference. Scholarship assistance is available for people from rural areas and underfunded inner-city areas who are involved in AIDS ministry as well as for HIV positive individuals.

NCAN's efforts to secure further foundation funding in order to establish an office and hire a staff are ongoing. If you have any suggestions or want to help with these efforts, please contact NCAN's Executive Director, Rodney DeMartini, at the National Catholic AIDS Network, c/o Box 422984, San Francisco, CA., 94142.

The Lazzaro Awards. The Lazzaro Center, founded and co-directed by Jay Pinkerton, OFM and Marie Puleo, OFM, was the precursor of NCAN. The Lazzaro Center has asked NCAN to take over the administration of the awards program which was instituted as a way to honor Catholic men and women who are contributing to the fight against AIDS. The NCAN Board agreed to do this at its November Board meeting. It is hoped that the next Lazzaro Awards will be presented at the 5th National Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry Conference.

(Continued on p. 7)

Page 5

As you can see, Page 5 has a lot of empty space. Our plan for Page 5 is to turn it over to you, our readers. We intend Page 5 to be a space where specialized areas of ministry can make suggestions and observations, pose questions, maybe even dialogue. Some of the areas which come to mind are Housing, Grant Writing, Pediatric Care, Prison Ministry, AIDS in Rural Areas, etc. You can surely think of others; there is certainly none more important than the one in which you are engaged.

Please send your items for Page 5 to:

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c/o Box 422984
San Francisco, CA 94142

"Jesus got tired. He tried to sneak away and people followed him, never really letting him know the luxury of periods of solitude. I worry about that with us, and our efforts at AIDS ministry. My haunting concern is that we are going to get too tired" to minister, that we are going to become fearful that the problem is so immense that we are not adequate to make much of a dent in it. Here is where we as a Church have to make our mark. We cannot be a people of despair and be true to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We must be a people of hope. We live our lives as a bulwark against the kind of fear and despair that HIV/AIDS engenders."

Archbishop John R. Roach
June 30, 1991

Network News

PAGE 6 is intended to be a space devoted to NETWORKING. In particular, it will feature regional notices about religious, educational, social and other initiatives aimed at assisting HIV/AIDS ministers in their work. NCAN was established to serve Catholic ministers, but PAGE 6 also welcomes notices from other religious denominations as well as those which are ecumenical in nature. For future newsletters, please send your notices to Network News, c/o Box 422984, San Francisco, CA 94142.



Are you interested in NETWORKING/SUPPORT on the West Coast? Contact NCAN's Executive Director and WASCAC's Coordinator, Rodney J. DeMartini, SM, at the Western States Catholic AIDS Coalition, 445 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94114-1799; (415) 565-3613.

Are you interested in NETWORKING/SUPPORT in the New York metropolitan area? Contact Jim Gardiner, Atonement Friars, 138 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10014-3845; (212) 255-6731.

Coming Events

HIV/AIDS: Its Impact on Clergy and Religious. March 14-17, 1992, Kenrick Conference Center, St. Louis. A seminar for bishops and men's and women's religious superiors, personnel directors and vocation and formation directors, the conference will discuss the care of infected clergy and religious. Ethical, legal and clinical issues surrounding the development of policies regarding HIV testing of candidates/seminarians will also be addressed.

Fees: \$195 - Conference Fee; Room and Board - to be determined.

For more information, contact:

Rev. Rodney DeMartini, SM
National Catholic AIDS Network
c/o Box 422984
San Francisco, CA 94142

5th National Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry Conference. August 6-11, 1992, Loyola University, Chicago. (NOTE: DATE CHANGE DUE TO DATE/PLACE FOR AIDS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.) For those beginning or presently engaged in HIV/AIDS ministry, the conference provides opportunities for fellowship, relaxation, and renewal. Workshops focus on such subjects as spirituality, prayer, rituals, working with special populations, clients in recovery and clinical updating.

Conference Fee - \$250; Room and Board Fee - \$250.

For more information or to offer suggestions, contact:

Cliff Morrison, RN
National Catholic AIDS Network
c/o Box 422984
San Francisco, CA 94142

NCAN SCAN (continued)

Database Project. Mr. Paul Thane, SJ, a Jesuit novice, is working with NCAN's President, Jon Fuller, SJ, MD, on a database project. Those on NCAN's mailing list received a mailing in November, 1991 and were asked to update the information in NCAN's files. This information will provide the basis for an up to date membership list as well as the material to be included in a directory scheduled for publication in 1992.

Network and NORA. NCAN recently joined Network, a Catholic social justice lobby, based in Washington, DC. Network works in the area of access to health care, an area of vital importance to many of our clients. NCAN has also joined NORA, National Organizations Responding to AIDS. Based in Washington, DC, NORA is affiliated with the AIDS ACTION Council. It is a coalition of organizations working on legislative issues at the federal level. As a member of NORA, NCAN will have access to timely vital issues which we will pass on to you.

Caritas Internationalis. Jon Fuller has been invited to join the International Working Group on HIV/AIDS of Caritas Internationalis. Sr. Anthony Barczykowski, a new member of the NCAN board, served on this same working group for its first four-year term which concluded in 1991. The Working Group was developed under a mandate from the International Federation of Catholic Charities at its General Secretariat in 1987, and meets every 9 to 12 months. The Working Group seeks 1) to stimulate educational programs; 2) to promote church-sponsored activities in response to the epidemic, with particular attention being given to patient care, orphans, international development, prisons, migrants/refugees, drug use, and education for behavior change; 3) to collect and publish materials on AIDS pastoral care, liturgy, and spirituality; 4) to train priests, religious and pastoral workers to respond appropriately to the epidemic, and to continue dialogue with religious superiors and bishops regarding HIV testing of candidates; and 5) to promote the exchange of experience among Churches responding to the epidemic.



"We know that it is the poorest of families which are hardest hit in the current AIDS pandemic. Some 20,000 children in New York City alone have lost one or both parents to AIDS. By the year 2000, given current trends, the number of AIDS orphans in the City would exceed 100,000, and nearly every family in the South Bronx, Harlem, and Bushwick will have lost several members. A sacramental Church, a Church which embodies the presence of the dealing and compassionate Christ, cannot turn its face, or its hands, or its resources away. Otherwise it is an incredible Church, and no sacrament of Christ."

Rev. Richard P. McBrien
July 1, 1991

What is NCAN?

The National Catholic AIDS Network was incorporated as a not for profit corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. NCAN is a continuing education, consultant and referral organization providing support to Roman Catholic HIV/AIDS service providers and pastoral ministers. NCAN seeks to facilitate the exchange of experience, technical assistance, educational materials, professional referrals, and job opportunities in HIV/AIDS ministry in order that Roman Catholic ministers may effectively respond to the needs of a constantly changing epidemic. Noting current epidemiological trends, NCAN especially wishes to target support for the Church's ministers who are serving emerging HIV/AIDS populations which include women, inner-city poor, rural residents, intravenous drug users, adolescents, and HIV-infected religious and clergy.

What is NCAN's Mission?

According to its Mission Statement, "The National Catholic AIDS Network is a professional membership organization which promotes the sharing of information and support among Roman Catholic HIV/AIDS service providers and pastoral ministers, and which maintains, for that purpose, a data base of current Roman Catholic HIV/AIDS programs, their personnel, and their needs.

NCAN facilitates the exchange of experience, technical assistance, and educational materials; it also provides referrals and posts professional opportunities in HIV ministry in order that its membership may effectively respond to the constantly changing epidemic.

NCAN is committed to theological reflection in the Roman Catholic tradition based upon social analysis, upon the experience of its members, and upon the experience of persons in the community at large who are impacted by HIV.

Point of View

Robert M. Doran, S.J.

Howard was admitted to St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto, three weeks before he died. I visited him there five times. Until the fourth visit, Howard was wrestling with overwhelming fear and panic. By the time of the fourth visit, something had happened which moved him definitively beyond his fear. As I left his room after my fifth visit (which, I am convinced, he knew would be my last), he left me with these words which he wanted me to speak to other persons living with AIDS: "Tell them there is nothing to be afraid of."

Each of the persons with AIDS in whose dying process I have had the privilege to share intimately has left some sort of legacy like this to his brothers and sisters affected by HIV, a legacy somehow committed to me to be passed on to others. In each case the legacy bears a remarkable resemblance to some word or action of Jesus committed to the disciples to be passed on to us. Thus, for example, Howard's last words to me recall John 14.1-6: "Do not let your heart be troubled...."

These experiences only strengthen my conviction that persons living with AIDS are among today's embodiments of the Deutero-Isaian servant of God, mediating and catalyzing through infirmity and suffering the emergence of an entirely new and, until recently, unexpected community in history: a community that transcends the narrow confines of race and color, creed and culture, gender and sexual orientation. Has it ever been more the case that the marginalized are the carriers of the new thing that God is doing in history? I doubt it.

But why did it have to take a terrible virus before we could come to see that we as a church have been so wrong about an entire minority community? And when will we admit our centuries-long mistake and ask forgiveness? Perhaps for us who live with and are served by those living with AIDS, participation in their suffering servanthood lies, at least in part, in our patient waiting for the church's admission of error and oppression, for the change of heart that will enable the church to walk with this particular community of the poor. If so, then another legacy left to us by the many living with AIDS is the example of people who have forgiven the church. If we share in the sexual orientation that makes many of them a minority, we learn from them how to forgive the church's continuing silent conspiracy with death, even as we strive to awaken church leaders to a modicum of good sense, social responsibility, and courage to admit the church's mistakes.

We walk a fine line, but let us never compromise the truth we have been taught by our loved ones living with AIDS.

(Robert M. Doran, SJ, is a Systematic Theologian who is on the faculty of Regis College, Toronto, Ontario.)

NCANews welcomes personal and theological reflections for its Point of View page. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not reflect official NCAN positions. Please send items for Point of View to NCANews, c/o Box 422984, San Francisco, CA 94142.

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