

## **“Handicapables” Host**

*Handicapables is a support and enrichment program for disabled adults who meet twice a month on Saturdays. One time is for lunch, Mass, and entertainment hosted by one of the Catholic Churches of Santa Clara County. The second monthly meeting is primarily social and could be a field trip. 2008 was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Handicapables in Santa Clara County.*

Parish groups sponsor one Saturday event (10am-2pm) a year:

- Reserve your church and hall,
- Arrange for your parish priest, musicians and other liturgical ministers to celebrate Mass at 11:00 am
- Welcome Handicapables members as they arrive by Outreach vans between 10 and 11 am
- Prepare and serve lunch for about 25 Handicapables members and your group,
- Arrange for entertainment or lead / assist with activities such as bingo.

Individual volunteers are needed to escort members and socialize with them on the Saturdays when the group meets at a parish and on other Saturdays when there is a field trip. Recent examples of field trips have included visits to libraries for special programs, theater, museum visits, and sports events.

Appropriate for individuals such as Confirmation candidates and their sponsors as well as groups such as a Youth Group, Service Club or social/fellowship group. Consider a joint sponsorship by two parish groups such as a school class and a senior's group.

Contact the coordinator for the schedule to volunteer for any part of one or more meetings. The coordinator has many success stories to share to give your group ideas.

For information contact: Elizabeth Lilly, Director, Community and Parish Partnerships, 408-325-5262, [elilly@ccsj.org](mailto:elilly@ccsj.org)

### **Principles of Catholic Social Teaching in Action**

*Respect for Human Dignity....Full Participation in the Life of the Community*

**Homily of Patrick J. McGrath, Bishop of San Jose, on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Handicapables at Cathedral Basilica of Saint Joseph - June 12, 2008**

*The great paradox of the Christian faith is that we find God in things that are broken.*

*We find God in the Scriptures broken open for us through shared faith and study. In that sharing we see our lives reflected in the lives of our ancestors in faith.*

*We find God in the Eucharist, a meal made up of bread broken apart and wine poured out to be shared with hungry people looking for hope and companionship.*

*Most of all, we find God in the broken parts of our lives. In those moments when our mind and our body fail us; in those days when nothing goes right and hope seems lost; and most especially when all we know is suffering and loneliness, God says, here I am.*

*It takes a person of faith, hope, and love to look into that brokenness and see God.*

*Forty years ago, Nadine Calligiuri looked at others who, like her, were handicapped and saw not weakness or brokenness, but the immense power and beauty of God. For she saw the human spirit breaking free of the physical limitations nature placed on it and touching others to bring them joy and hope.*

*All of us are broken in some way, with hearts, bodies, dreams, and lives in need of mending. But what Nadine realized forty years ago was that people who are broken don't need to be fixed; they need to be loved. They don't need hospitals; they need hospitality. They don't need people to pity them; they need people to participate with them in the joys and sorrows of their daily lives. What they need most of all—what all of us need most of all—are friends.*

*Dear friends, the Handicapables program has shown us all the beauty of God because it has shown us what it means to be fully human. It has shown us how to slow down and appreciate the joy of being with others. It has taught us to love the rhythm of life, whether it's sharing in a picnic, being entranced by a play, visiting the library, or drumming together to beat back our depression and our pain.*

*To be a friend is to share all these—"to rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow." To be a friend is to take our very selves, broken and imperfect as we are, and to give ourselves to others. To be a friend is to be like Jesus who said that there is no greater love than this—than to lay down one's life for a friend.*

