

# Open Hearts

# Open Minds

## Access and Inclusion in Worship Newsletter

### Call for Pathways Foundation Open Hearts Awards

Pathways Foundation is now accepting nominations for 2011 Open Hearts Awards and Junior Open Hearts Awards for children. Grants of up to \$1,000 are available to help congregations with the cost of projects that make participation possible for all worshippers. Grants have been used for ramps, accessible washrooms, assistive listening devices and supporting children in religious education programs. Deadline for nominations is August 1, 2011. Visit [www.InclusionInWorship.org](http://www.InclusionInWorship.org) for nomination forms and guidelines.

St. Bernard's parish in Levittown, NY received a 2010 Pathways grant to create two pew cut outs for parishioners who use wheelchairs. The impetus for this project was parishioner Rosalie Travers. When extensive rehab following

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***"... so much had been taken away from me by the stroke but now I feel as though I've gotten part of my life back."***

Rosalie Travers upon her return to lector ministry at St. Bernard Catholic Church, Levittown, NY

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a stroke in 2008 affected her outlook, Rosalie's pastor, Father Gerard Ringenback, invited Rosalie to return to



*Father Charles Mangano, pastor of Curè of Ars parish, Merrick, NY, received a 2010 Open Hearts Award grant to create a pew cut out for wheelchairs. Judith Bilello (not pictured), Matthew Dennis, Tom Becker, and Geppy Stabile assisted with the project.*

her lector ministry at weekday mass. Hesitant and nervous, Rosalie accepted her pastor's invitation. "I was so depressed because I had lost so much of my life. So much had been taken away from me by the stroke. But now I feel as though I've gotten part of my life back. Feeling a part of my parish community again helped my mental rehab," said Rosalie. Parishioners have also benefited from Rosalie's participation. "People are more understanding now and they are aware that many things are possible," said Rosalie.

Judith Bilello, parish advocate for inclusion, and her pastor Father Charles Mangano applied for and received a \$500 grant from Pathways to modify seating at

## **Open Hearts Awards** (Cont'd.)

Curè of Ars church in Merrick, NY. "I met with our pastor to plan an accessible seating area for parishioners who use wheelchairs and scooters. We decided to remove the last pew near an entrance with exterior ramps and automatic doors," said Judith. New plaques indicate that the area and adjacent freestanding chairs are reserved for parishioners who use wheelchairs and their families. Ushers have been trained to assist in the new accessible seating area. Parish leaders will observe how well the new configuration accommodates parishioners to determine if additional accessible seating is needed.

Pathways Foundation would like to support and honor your congregation's efforts to include worshippers of all abilities. We invite you to submit a nomination for an Open Hearts Award or Junior Open Hearts Award by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Inclusion Awareness Days**

Congregations are now marking their calendars and planning their celebrations for Inclusion Awareness Day, the weekend of October 9<sup>th</sup> or on alternate fall dates. The goal is to raise awareness to the gifts received when everyone can participate in worship and ministries.

Father Maina, pastor of St. Catherine Laboure parish, Glenview, IL started an inclusion team and plans are underway for their first Inclusion Awareness Day. "Our 6<sup>th</sup> grade religious education classes filmed a video to nominate the parish for



*Father John Kalomas and parishioners, Inclusion Awareness Day, St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church, Chicago, celebrate the gifts that all parishioners bring to the community.*

a Junior Open Hearts Award. The kids really took an interest in learning about inclusion and how we all can make a difference. Thanks to Pathways for all the resources you provide," said Janice Seipp, parish Inclusion Rep. The children hope to be celebrating a Junior Open Hearts Award grant on Inclusion Awareness Day this year.

Observe Inclusion Awareness Day in your house of faith! Find planning materials at [www.InclusionInWorship.org](http://www.InclusionInWorship.org).

## **Calendar of Events**

### **Monday, August 1, 2011**

Deadline for Open Hearts and Junior Open Hearts Award Nominations

### **October 9, 2011** (or your alternate fall date)

Inclusion Awareness Day weekend

### **ABOUT PATHWAYS FOUNDATION**

Pathways Foundation promotes early detection, early intervention and inclusion for children with motor, communication, feeding and sensory issues. *Open Hearts, Open Minds* provides educational materials and cash grants to promote access and inclusion in worship. Call 1-800-955-2445, write to 150 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60601 or visit [www.InclusionInWorship.org](http://www.InclusionInWorship.org), [www.PathwaysAwareness.org](http://www.PathwaysAwareness.org), [www.PathwaysCenter.org](http://www.PathwaysCenter.org).