

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISH ENGAGEMENT

# Mental Health Sunday



## Mental Health Sunday 2026

The National Catholic Mental Health Campaign has designated that the Sunday that falls within the Novena for Mental Health timeframe (October 10 -18) as Mental Health Sunday. In 2026, that Sunday is October 11, 2026, the Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

**In preparation for Mental Health Sunday, Catholic communities and dioceses/eparchies may consider the following:**

- Use the NCMHC as an impetus to promote existing local mental health initiatives/programs, or to launch a resource around mental health and wellness from a spiritual/pastoral perspective. This can also be an occasion for connecting to other national Catholic efforts in this area, such as the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers.
- Invite Catholics to get the conversation going within the local community; the materials available from the USCCB (novena, videos, and resources) are designed to engage deeper dialogue on this issue.
- Promote the annual novena from October 10 to 18 through parish, diocesan, or eparchial communications (bulletins, website, emails, texts, social media channels, etc.), linking directly to the USCCB site at [usccb.org/mentalhealth](http://usccb.org/mentalhealth).
- Since each day of the novena corresponds to a particular ministry or population (i.e., young people, families, racial justice, etc.), consider highlighting the connection between local efforts around those focus areas and mental health – or use it as an impetus to reinvigorate those areas in the community.
- In advance of Mental Health Sunday, invite people to bring their particular intentions/petitions about how mental health issues are impacting them personally to the parish community. These can be collected online or in-person to the church (i.e., through a book of prayers, or anonymous cards dropped off).

## About the Campaign

The National Catholic Mental Health Campaign (NCMHC) is a year-round initiative wherein the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) promotes in a nationwide effort to encourage all people of good will to respond to the ongoing mental health crisis across the country.

- The message of the NCMHC is simple: Everyone who needs help should receive help.
- The three primary goals are: (1) to raise awareness of the mental health crisis, (2) to combat stigma surrounding the topic of mental health, and (3) to advocate for all those impacted by the crisis.

Within the NCMHC, the U.S. bishops engage in a concerted effort to raise awareness of the issue beginning on World Mental Health Day (October 10) and continuing to the Catholic feast of Saint Luke, patron of health care (October 18).

The USCCB recommends each parish promote a national novena between those dates. The daily texts can be found at [usccb.org/mentalhealth](http://usccb.org/mentalhealth).



## **Suggested Bulletin and Pulpit Announcement/ Sample Copy Text for Diocesan Resources**

The mental health crisis is a profound challenge to the Church and to society. Catholics can respond with generosity, hope, and compassion to everyone who needs help. The USCCB invites all people of good will to pray for mental health and wellness with a special nationwide novena beginning on World Mental Health Day (October 10), continuing to the feast of Saint Luke, patron of health care (October 18). See [usccb.org/mentalhealth](http://usccb.org/mentalhealth) for more.

### **During the Liturgy for the Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Integrate mental health matters into the homily around the [readings for Sunday, October 11, 2026](#). The First Reading reflects on the saving power of the Lord who “wipes away the tears from every face,” while the Second Reading proclaims how “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.”

- Offer a special prayer or blessing for all those struggling with mental health issues. Consider an appropriate selection from the Book of Blessings.
- Include mental health issues during the Prayer of the Faithful at all Masses. A sample version, which may be adapted for local use, is included here:

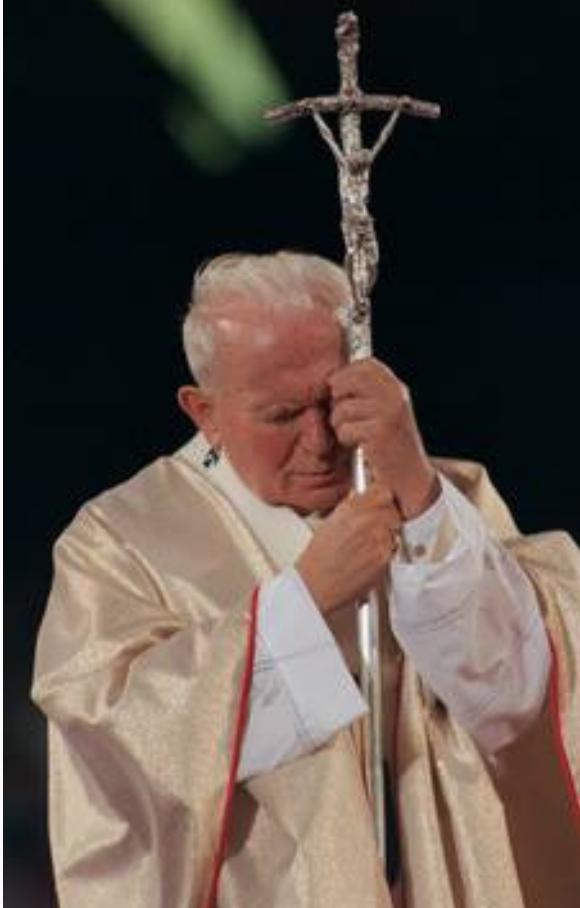
For all the individuals who are impacted by issues of mental health, especially within our local community, that God may bless them with his grace and consolation, and that Catholics everywhere will accompany and support women and men who experience mental health challenges and promote mental and spiritual wellness. We pray to the Lord.

- Offer a blessing and commissioning of those who accompany women and men who struggle with mental illness or mental health concerns, inclusive of people in the local Catholic community who may be part of or are starting a mental health ministry. The Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers suggests the [Rite of Commissioning for a Mental Health Ministry Team](#), available through its website.
- In the narthex/vestibule of the church after all Masses, have local and national mental health resources available for parishioners and visitors to take. Consider also having staff and personnel on hand to answer questions about the Church’s engagement with mental health.

**Whoever  
suffers from  
mental illness  
‘always’ bears  
God's image  
and likeness.**

**POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II**

CNS photo/Michael Okoniewski



United States  
Conference of  
Catholic Bishops

[usccb.org/mentalhealth](http://usccb.org/mentalhealth)

© 2026 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops,  
Washington, DC. All rights reserved. This resource may  
be reproduced free of charge in printed form, for non-  
commercial purposes, and in publications not for sale.