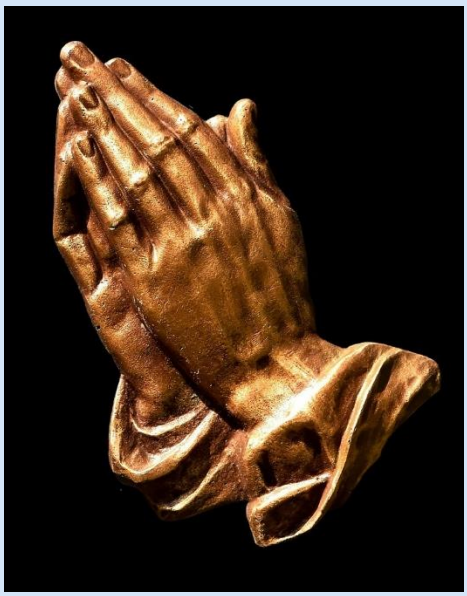
CATHCA

CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

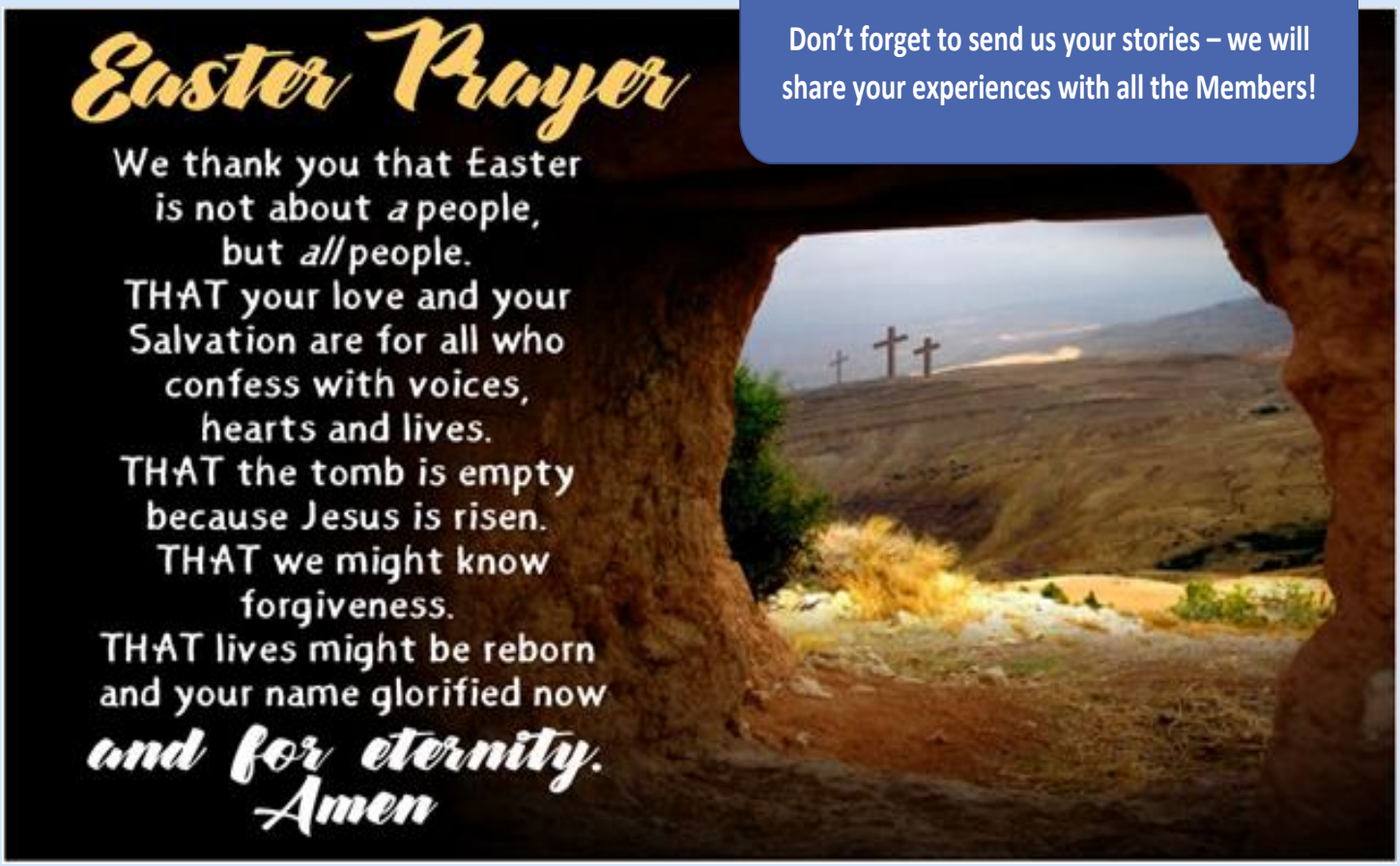
MARCH 2024

In this Issue –



CATHCA Members!!!

Don't forget to send us your stories – we will share your experiences with all the Members!



CATHCA PROJECTS

Mental Health…

THE CARE OF THE SUFFERER

CATHCA facilitated a very successful workshop on 27 February 2024 to support the Archdiocese of Durban. As part of the Misereor project, the workshop dealt with

Basic Counselling and Guidance Skills for Community Health Workers.

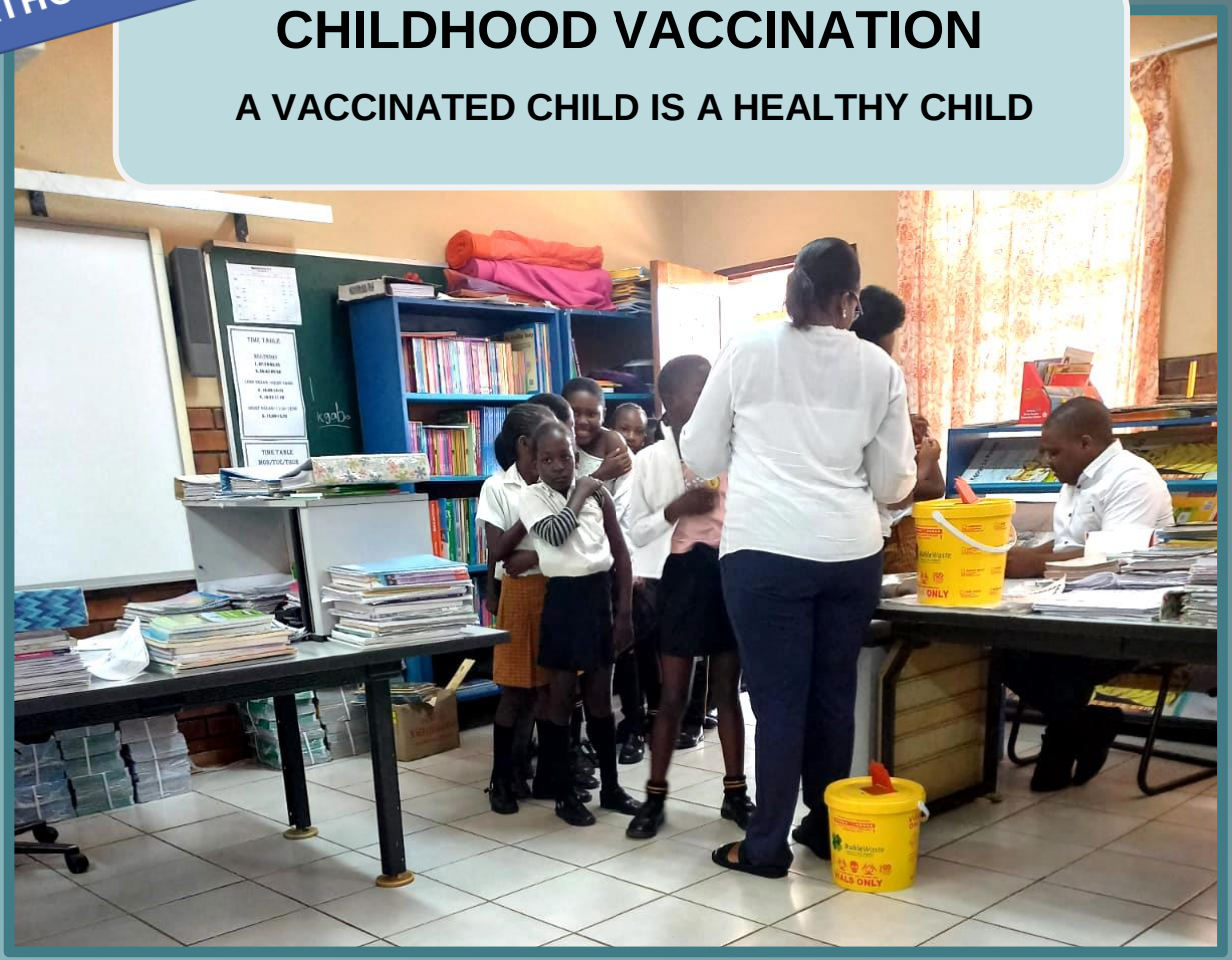
The main aims of the workshop were:

- Gaining insights on spirituality and mental health;
- Exploring adverse events such as trauma, anxiety, stress, depression and grief.
- Learning basic counselling and guidance skills
- Gaining knowledge of spiritual/pastoral care and support for people experiencing mental health disorders.
- Familiarizing attendees with local support groups for people with common mental health conditions.
- Understand referrals of clients to professional mental health and counselling services.

CATHCA PROJECTS

CHILDHOOD VACCINATION

A VACCINATED CHILD IS A HEALTHY CHILD



CATHCA is currently implementing a Childhood vaccination project in Mpumalanga Province with the aim of increasing Childhood immunization uptake in the province.

Immunisation is an important and effective health intervention for children. Over the course of history, it has helped keep millions of children protected against infectious and life-threatening diseases.

Vaccines have been so effective that some diseases that were once feared are now either eradicated or easily manageable.

But, for the first time in three decades, we're witnessing the largest sustained backslide in childhood vaccinations.

This is being driven by pandemic disruptions, conflict, displacement and increasing vaccine misinformation. As a result, some 25 million children globally are now missing out on life-saving vaccines every year, placing them at risk from devastating and entirely preventable diseases like measles and polio.

In South Africa, there are some 100,000 zero dose children – young children who have missed lifesaving childhood vaccinations.

In late 2022, South Africa recorded an outbreak of measles that threatens the health of children and adults across the country, particularly those who have missed childhood immunisations.

Now more than ever, ensuring that children are up-to-date with their routine immunisations is crucially important.

In South Africa, every new born baby should receive the free ***Road to Health*** booklet that provides parents and caregivers with crucial health care information for their child and a schedule to help keep track of routine clinic visits for check-ups and immunisation.

If you do not have a ***Road to Health*** booklet for your child, you can collect one at any health facility in South Africa, free of charge.

<u>Know your child's immunization schedule</u>

Vaccines are most effective when they are administered to children at the right age and with the recommended dosage as children are susceptible to certain diseases at certain ages. As an example, polio occurs most frequently in children below the age of 5. Because of this, polio vaccines are given to children of those ages to prevent harm caused by the disease. A child who isn't vaccinated or isn't vaccinated ***on time*** remains unprotected and has increased chances of getting seriously ill.

PARISH MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

CATHCA PROJECTS

CATHOLIC MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY - NOW IN FOUR SACBC DIOCESES

In 2024 CATHCA is expanding its Mental Health Ministry to the Dioceses of Bethlehem and Emalahleni.

In total, four dioceses of the SACBC have now embraced the Ministry as an integral part of its pastoral activities.

In 2023 the Ministry was introduced in the Diocese of Klerksdorp where four parishes joyfully welcomed us, and this year we added another two parishes in the same Diocese.

This year CATHCA introduced the Ministry to the Diocese of Bethlehem where 12 Parishes have embraced the Ministry. In each parish there is a co-ordinator for the Ministry at Parish level and Fr Leuta is the coordinator at Diocesan level.

Parish Mental Health Ministry teams from four parishes of Emalahleni diocese during the implementation workshop

CATHCA conducted a workshop for the teams that came together from the twelve parishes on the **9 March** at St John Paul II Pastoral Centre.

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK – FEBRUARY 11: THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

THE SICK, AND THE WORLD, NEED 'THERAPY' OF LOVE, POPE SAYS IN MESSAGE

Pope Francis issued this message for the 2024 observance of the World Day of the Sick, which was Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

"It is not good that man should be alone" (cf. Gen 2:18). From the beginning, God, who is love, created us for communion and endowed us with an innate capacity to enter into relationship with others. Our lives, reflecting in the image of the Trinity, are meant to attain fulfilment through a network of relationships, friendships and love, both given and received.

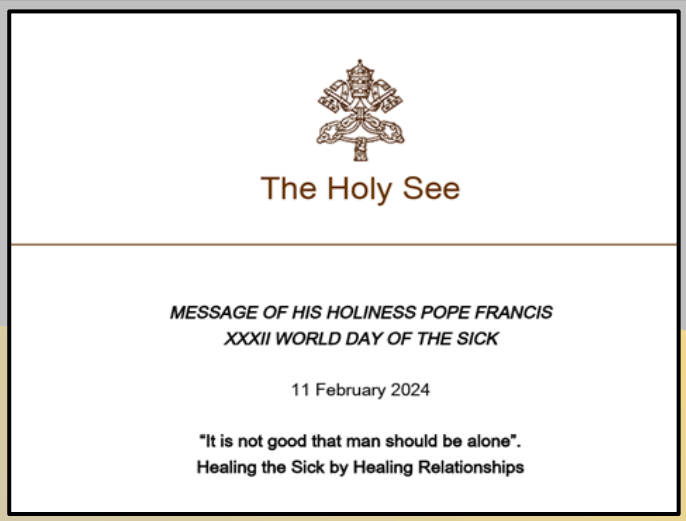
We were created to be together, not alone. Precisely because this project of communion is so deeply rooted in the human heart, we see the experience of abandonment and solitude as something frightening, painful and even inhuman. This is all the more the case at times of vulnerability, uncertainty and insecurity, caused often by the onset of a serious illness. In.this regard, I think of all those who found themselves terribly alone during the Covid-19 pandemic: the patients who could not receive visitors, but also the many nurses, physicians and support personnel overwhelmed by work and enclosed in isolation wards. Naturally, we cannot fail to recall all those persons who had to face the hour of their death alone, assisted by healthcare personnel, but far from their own families.

I share too in the pain, suffering and isolation felt by those who, because of war and its tragic consequences, are left without support and assistance. War is the most terrible of social diseases, and it takes its greatest toll on those who are most vulnerable.

At the same time, it needs to be said that even in countries that enjoy peace and greater resources, old age and sickness are frequently experienced in solitude and, at times, even in abandonment. This grim reality is mainly a consequence of the culture of individualism that exalts productivity at all

costs, cultivates the myth of efficiency, and proves indifferent, even callous, when individuals no longer have the strength needed to keep pace. It then becomes a throwaway culture, in which “persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor or disabled, ‘not yet useful’ – like the unborn, or ‘no longer needed’– like the elderly” (Fratelli Tutti, 18). Sadly, this way of thinking also guides certain political decisions that are not focused on the dignity of the human person and his or her needs, and do not always promote the strategies and resources needed to ensure that every human being enjoys the fundamental right to health and access to healthcare. The abandonment of the vulnerable and their isolation is favoured also by the reduction of healthcare merely to a provision of services, without these being accompanied by a “therapeutic covenant” between physicians, patients and family members.

We do well to listen once more to the words of the Bible: “It is not good for man to be alone!” God spoke those words at the beginning of creation and thus revealed to us the profound meaning of his project for humanity, but at the same time, the mortal wound of sin, which creeps in by generating suspicions, fractures, divisions and consequently isolation. Sin attacks persons and all their relationships: with God, with themselves, with others, with creation. Such isolation causes us to miss the meaning of our lives; it takes away the joy of love and makes us experience an oppressive sense of being alone at all the crucial passages of life.


The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
XXXII WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

11 February 2024

“It is not good that man should be alone”.
Healing the Sick by Healing Relationships

Brothers and sisters, the first form of care needed in any illness is compassionate and loving closeness. To care for the sick thus means above all to care for their relationships, all of them: with God, with others – family members, friends, healthcare workers – , with creation and with themselves. Can this be done? Yes, it can be done and all of us are called to ensure that it happens. Let us look to the icon of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:25-37), to his ability to slow down and draw near to another person, to the tender love with which he cares for the wounds of a suffering brother.

Let us remember this central truth in life: we came into the world because someone welcomed us; we were made for love; and we are called to communion and fraternity. This aspect of our lives is what sustains us, above all at times of illness and vulnerability. It is also the first therapy that we must all adopt in order to heal the diseases of the society in which we live.
To those of you who experience illness, whether temporary or chronic, I would say this: Do not be ashamed of your longing for closeness and tenderness! Do not conceal it, and never think that you are a burden on others. The condition of the sick urges all of us to step back from the hectic pace of our lives in order to rediscover ourselves.

At this time of epochal change, we Christians in particular are called to adopt the compassion-filled gaze of Jesus. Let us care for those who suffer and are alone, perhaps marginalized and cast aside. With the love for one another that Christ the Lord bestows on us in prayer, especially in the Eucharist, let us tend the wounds of solitude and isolation. In this way, we will cooperate in combating the culture of individualism, indifference and waste, and enable the growth of a culture of tenderness and compassion.

The sick, the vulnerable and the poor are at the heart of the Church; they must also be at the heart of our human concern and pastoral attention. May we never forget this! And let us commend ourselves to Mary Most Holy, Health of the Sick, that she may intercede for us and help us to be artisans of closeness and fraternal relationships.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 10 January 2024
FRANCIS

CATHCA PROJECTS

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A Misean Cara project to raise awareness of GBVF while assisting abused women to gain access to services for healing and support.

A four-day GBV refresher course and workshop was held at the Cathca offices in March. Community Advocates from the five organizations involved in the project attended:

- Kopano Lerato,
- Inkanyezi,
- Holy Cross Home,
- Siyathokoza and
- Batho Ba Lerato

Some of the topics that were covered were:

- P.S.S. and trauma debriefing
- Stakeholder engagement and
- System's strengthening

NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Cancer is a major contributor to global mortality, causing about 1 in every 6 deaths and affecting nearly every household. Globally, there were an estimated 20 million new cases of cancer and 9.7 million deaths from cancer in 2022. The cancer burden will increase by about 77% by 2050, further straining health systems, people and communities.

In the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region alone, more than 788 000 people were diagnosed with cancer in 2023. This number is projected to double to reach 1.57 million cases by 2045, because of population growth and, more importantly, the high prevalence of cancer risk factors in the Region – such as tobacco use, obesity/overweight, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets and air pollution.

Cancer can also develop as a result of some infections, including hepatitis B and C (which affect the liver) or human papillomavirus (HPV, which affects the uterus). These infections are still very much present in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, even though hepatitis B and HPV can be easily prevented through vaccination.

Globally, the most common cancers are breast, lung, colon and rectum, and prostate cancer. In 2020, breast cancer was the most prevalent cancer globally, while lung cancer led to the highest number of deaths.

Cancer is not only catastrophic to individual health and well-being but also a significant challenge for families and societies at large. Cancer has a significant economic cost to the health system, as well as to the wider economy through reduced productivity in the labour market, because it causes the premature death of people still in their productive years. This dramatically hinders sustainable development.

Yet, each of us can make changes to reduce our risk of developing the disease, since most risk factors for cancer are modifiable. Indeed, it has been shown that up to 50% of cancers can be prevented. You should refrain from smoking or using tobacco products, reduce your consumption of high-calorie and processed foods, eat more fruits and vegetables, engage in regular physical activity, and keep up with your recommended vaccinations. These are some of the most effective behaviours to prevent cancer.

When detected and treated at an early stage, cancer can often be cured completely. Although most cancers do not present symptoms in the early stages of the disease, some diagnostic tests (screening techniques) are sensitive enough to detect cancer even when it is invisible. This both reduces the burden of dealing with a late-stage presentation and can support successful treatment.

Mammography (for breast cancer), colonoscopy (colorectal cancer) and Papanicolaou (Pap) smear (cervical cancer) are the most common and effective screening tests. Ask your family doctor for more details about your screening options.

On World Cancer Day 2024, let’s remember that we can make simple lifestyle changes, stay informed about screening, and support each other to fight cancer and build a healthier future for all.

Social Media

Facebook: Our Facebook page is now at 2,690 Likes! It has been reviewed several times and we now have a 5-star rating.

Twitter: Our Twitter handle @cathhealthsa is also trending and most of the information that we tweet is also being retweeted by other organisations - we are gradually getting more followers.

Website: Our website is up and running and our new address is www.cathca.org

WhatsApp: Information is always shared on WhatsApp with Members, who like to network amongst themselves on this platform.

Don't forget to check out our **Website, Instagram, Facebook** page and **Twitter** for updates, news, Member articles, interesting reads and contact details.

Help us to help you spread the wonderful work that you do by sending us articles, photos and information from your projects to jane.sutherland@cathca.org - we will put them on our Website, Facebook page and Twitter.

Stock for Sale / Membership

Members can buy summer golf-shirts (blue or white), caps and hats, navy CATHCA jerseys for themselves or for the caregivers in their organisation, and now these lovely mugs. If you need further information on prices or to place orders, please contact our offices on the following email address info@cathca.org or you can phone us on +27 (011) 880-4022.

CATHCA MEMBERSHIP

Do you want to be part of the Catholic healthcare network in Southern Africa?

Please contact the office for more information on +27 (011) 880-4022 or jane.sutherland@cathca.org

Offices are at:	Postal Address:	Contact information :
Room 7, The Haven St Vincent's School Cnr Tottenham Ave & Jellicoe Ln, Melrose, Johannesburg	CATHCA P O Box 52015 SAXONWOLD 2132	Telephone: +27 011 880-4022 Email: info@cathca.org Website: www.cathca.org

CATHCA

NPO: 006-174
PBO: 9718/679/1416
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