

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH — ARCHDIOCESE of CHICAGO — AWARENESS - SERVICES - PREVENTION



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Spring 2018

Gala Inspires Enthusiasm to End Domestic Violence

People interested in helping the Catholic Church respond more compassionately to domestic violence gathered on March 23, 2018 to celebrate another year of successful service by the Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach (ACDVO). A crowd of 273 people enjoyed a beautifully decorated venue at The Diplomat West in Elmhurst, a delicious meal, attractive raffle and silent auction items, and an engaging program.

The event connected supporters and representatives from the 120 parishes in Cook and Lake counties that have had a weekend of preaching about domestic violence. Because ACDVO receives no financial support from the Archdiocese of Chicago, it relies on this benefit as its principal source of funding. The gala raised over \$45,000, which will help support the ministry, as well as enable ACDVO to assist other organizations working on domestic violence. Thanks to all who so generously supported the Gala and ACDVO.

(Thanks to Frank Starshak III for Gala photos)



The Gala Committee worked hard to present a joyful event: Veronica McCoy & Rita Sprudz (St. Thomas) Bibiana Tohme (St. Bernadette), Catherine Hastings (Ascension), Jan Burdulis (St. Pascal), Vivian Swibel (St. Cletus), Fr. Chuck



Parishioners from St. Thomas the Apostle demonstrate pride in their parish: (front) Paula Jones, Helen Irvine, Darlene Walker, Delano Roosevelt, Glenda Hopson, Veronica McCoy, Vince Lane, (back) Ethan Blass, Rita Sprudz, Brother John Aherne.



Fr. Brendan Curran, O.P. celebrates with St. Pius V parishioners: Antonio Guzman, Elia Higareda, Maribel & Karla Cordero, Alma Silva, Vicky Chavez, Graciano Gonzalez



ACDVO Recognizes HOPE Family Services

At the Gala, ACDVO recognized HOPE Family Services (HFS) for its groundbreaking work on domestic violence and for being the impetus for ACDVO. HFS began in St. Pius V parish in 1996 when Dolores Tapia, a pastoral counselor at the parish, together with pastor, Fr. Chuck Dahm, O.P., responded to the needs of Hispanic immigrant families. Although counseling was offered to all family members, most services focused on women victims of domestic violence. When victims asked for help for their children traumatized by the violence, HFS hired a counselor specifically for children.

In 2001, when victims asked for counseling for their husbands, HFS hired a male counselor to work individually with perpetrators and formed a support group that meets weekly with approximately 30 men. The program helps men turn their lives around because it treats them with dignity and helps them understand the reasons for their abusive behavior.

HFS recognized that immigrant families face challenges in raising their children in a strange culture, resulting in many youth dropping out of school and joining gangs. In response, HFS developed a parenting program to help keep families together.

In 2007, HFS began working with couples to help them improve their marriages. Hundreds have participated. It also offers classes in high schools and parish confirmation programs to help youth recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships and prevent domestic violence.

HFS is the largest parish-based domestic violence program in the country. Its services are unique because they are sensitive to Hispanic cultures, include a variety of family services, connect clients to a vibrant community and address clients' spirituality. Congratulations to HOPE Family services for its wonderful work and many thanks for inspiring ACDVO.



HOPE Family Services receives ACDVO recognition: Luis Chavez, Sandra Marines, Maria Cardenas, Fr. Chuck, Dolores Tapia, Magdalena Galvan and Carlos Lopez



Joyce O'Brien, Mary Hassett-Galazkiewicz, Bibian Tohme, Eileen McNichols, Charlene Bermele, Joan Rowan volunteer at the dessert table and indicate their parish poster



The Maddock family with Fr. Chuck: Anne McGuire, Martha Maddock (Mom/Grandmom), Anne Francesca & Andrew Maddock

ACDVO Presents Training Sessions



Seminarians Rave about DV Workshop

On November 15, 2017, ACDVO offered all 190 seminarians at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein a 3-hour workshop on domestic violence. The students were very engaged, responding enthusiastically with many questions and comments.

Afterward, one seminarian commented: "This was the best class I have had since coming to this seminary." Another wrote: "The aspects of economic abuse were never presented to me in the past. It made me realize that I've been a witness to this."

The Vice Rector of Formation thanked ACDVO and remarked: "It was the highlight presentation of the year for many seminarians. Your team, including the survivor of domestic violence, was exceptional in speaking directly about domestic violence. You also gave the seminarians concrete guidelines on how to help people in their parishes."

The presentation included ACDVO's Domestic Violence Training PowerPoint, a study of the 2002 USCCB letter on domestic violence against women, "When I Call For Help", pastoral guidelines and a moving testimony from a survivor.



ACDVO gave 190 seminarians from Chicago and other dioceses a 3-hour workshop on domestic violence. With enthusiasm they asked ACDVO to return for more.

ACDVO Offers Educational Trainings

To strengthen parish domestic violence ministries, ACDVO provides training for parish domestic violence ministries and parish staff. Training sessions include information about the prevalence and nature of domestic violence, dynamics that keep victims entrapped, pastoral responses, the Catholic Church's position, prevention efforts and more.

ACDVO has provided 4-hour workshops in 56 parishes and, additionally, 1.5-hour training to seven parish staffs. This coming year, attention will focus on parish staffs because they are often the first point of contact for victims. It is important that staff members create a welcoming environment for victims so they have the confidence to approach the parish, and that they know how to respond compassionately and with the appropriate referral information.



Training for 25 DV ministers from St. John of the Cross, St. Cletus and St. Francis Xavier parishes



In April, Fr. Chuck spoke on creating parish ministries to DV victims at the Texas Conference on Crimes Against Women in Dallas (right) and then met with Dallas Bishop Kelly and Pastoral Center staff (left) as part of ACDVO's efforts to extend its work nationally. The visit resulted in an invitation to provide trainings for Dallas deacons and pastoral ministers in Spring 2019.





Survivor Enlightens and Inspires with Her Story

At the 2018 ACDVO Gala, Denise Murray told her inspiring story about freeing herself from domestic violence. A video of her testimony is on the ACDVO website.

When did you realize you were in an abusive relationship? It took me 19 years of marriage to realize what was happening to me. Domestic violence creeps into your life slowly, insidiously. I made excuses for my husband's behavior and blamed myself.

Why did you stay? There were three reasons. First, **my children**; I thought I was doing what was best for them, keeping the family together. However, when I was out working several jobs, my husband was home abusing them. I had no idea. I thought I was protecting them and they thought they were protecting me.

Second, I stayed because I was **financially strapped**. I did not have the wherewithal to leave and survive on my own. My husband controlled our finances. I had to turn over all my wages and account for every penny I spent. He never disclosed his earnings or expenditures and only partially contributed to our family financially.

Third, I stayed because **I took my sacrament seriously**. My relationship to God was most important to me. I tried Marriage Encounter, counseling and more to save my marriage. I even went to my parish priest, and his exact words were, "I am sorry, but I can't help you." I was broken, devastated. I didn't know where to turn. I feared parishioners would not believe me and quite possibly tip off my abuser to the plan I had to free myself and my children. They did not understand the dynamics of domestic violence. I found a new parish where the pastor responded so differently. "You should not stay; let's focus on saving you and your children," he said. I was greatly relieved.

Then I heard about Fr. Chuck Dahm and his work on domestic violence. I went to hear him at a nearby parish. When he preached, I felt he described my life. He spoke about how the church needs to believe victims and help them free themselves from abuse. I felt Jesus had woken up and calmed the storm threatening the boat. I was going to be OK.

Let us all work together so that our Church might show the compassion of Jesus to all victims of abuse.



ACDVO is on Social Media

Go to: www.facebook.com/domesticviolenceoutreach
www.instagram.com/dvochicago
www.twitter.com/dvochicago

Our website: www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org

Help us grow our followers by liking our pages, encouraging friends to visit, and sharing interesting content with others.



Annual Mass for Victims of Domestic Violence

ACDVO will hold its third annual Mass for victims of domestic violence at 5:15 pm at Holy Name Cathedral on Saturday, September 29, 2018. Everyone is invited. We hope you will attend in order to pray for victims and for an end to violence in the home.



Many thanks to all who support our archdiocesan ministry as well as ministries in their parishes. Your generous contributions are important because we receive no financial assistance from the archdiocese. Your donations help us fight domestic violence by raising awareness, connecting victims to services and promoting prevention. We need your support to be more effective. Contact Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., at 1914 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608, 312-713-7752, cdahm13@gmail.com, www.DomesticViolenceOutreach.org.