



October 2026 Mental Health Ministry Toolkit

October provides a special opportunity for Catholic communities to make mental health ministry more visible and intentional. Throughout the month, parishes can create opportunities for prayer, education, compassionate listening, accompaniment, connection to appropriate resources, and the development of ongoing mental health ministry.

CMHM offers this toolkit to help Catholic leaders move from awareness to accompaniment and from accompaniment to action. You do not have to organize a large event. Choose one or two actions that fit your parish and begin there.

Pope's Prayer Intention October 2026: For Mental Health Ministry

Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

Official resource:

[Pope's Prayer Intentions for 2026](#)

This intention makes October a particularly meaningful time for Catholic communities to pray not only for individuals and families affected by mental illness, but also for the growth of mental health ministry throughout the Church.



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OCTOBER 2026: AT A GLANCE

October 10 — World Mental Health Day: A global opportunity to bring greater awareness to mental health and encourage compassionate support.

- **Parish idea:** Include a mental-health intention in the Prayers of the Faithful and share a short message in the bulletin or on social media.

October 10-18 — National Catholic Mental Health Novena

- The USCCB encourages Catholics throughout the United States to pray the Nationwide Novena for Mental Health during these nine days. The novena begins on World Mental Health Day and concludes on the feast of St. Luke, patron of health care.
- **Resource:**
[USCCB Mental Health Campaign](#)

October 11 — Mental Health Sunday

In 2026, Mental Health Sunday falls on October 11, the Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The USCCB encourages parishes to pray for people experiencing mental health challenges, include mental-health petitions at Mass, offer a blessing for caregivers and those involved in mental-health care, provide resources in the narthex or vestibule, promote the novena, and consider launching or strengthening a Catholic mental health initiative.

- **Resource:**
[USCCB Mental Health Sunday](#)
- **2026 Planning Resource:**
[USCCB Mental Health Sunday Engagement Resource](#)



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A SIMPLE PARISH PLAN

Before Sunday

- Announce Mental Health Sunday in the bulletin
- Share the October prayer intention
- Promote the Mental Health Novena
- Prepare a small resource table
- Gather local professional referral information
- Invite your parish mental health ministry team to participate

During Mass

- A Prayer of the Faithful intention
- A brief announcement
- A blessing for caregivers and mental-health professionals
- A brief reflection on accompaniment, hope, and dignity

After Mass

Create a welcoming resource table with:

- USCCB mental-health resources
- Novena information
- CMHM resources
- Local counseling resources
- Crisis resources
- Grief resources
- Information about your parish ministry
- Information about starting a Catholic mental health ministry

VIRTUAL GATHERINGS:

October 20 — CMHM Webinar: Mental Health Ministry versus Mental Health Treatment



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This is an especially helpful topic for parish leaders who are beginning to understand the complementary roles of pastoral accompaniment and professional mental health care.

Click [HERE](#) for the link to share

October 22 — CMHM Global Rosary for Mental Health Ministry

Click [HERE](#) for more information and registration

FIVE WAYS YOUR PARISH CAN PARTICIPATE THIS MONTH

1. PRAY You don't need a program to begin.

Consider:

- Adding a mental-health petition to the Prayer of the Faithful
- Praying the Nationwide Mental Health Novena
- Praying the Rosary for mental health intentions
- Offering a Holy Hour for healing and hope
- Praying for caregivers and families
- Praying for mental-health professionals
- Praying for people experiencing mental illness
- Praying for those grieving the loss of a loved one
- Praying for those affected by suicide loss
- Praying for the establishment of mental health ministry throughout the Church

2. LEARN Invite parish leaders, volunteers, clergy and interested parishioners to spend some time learning about Catholic mental health ministry. The [CMHM Learning Center](#) provides courses designed to give volunteers, ministry coordinators, and clergy skills and confidence to participate in Catholic mental health ministry.



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3. ACCOMPANY Mental health ministry begins with presence.

Sometimes the most important ministry is:

- Listening
- Welcoming
- Praying
- Accompanying
- Connecting
- Following up

4. CONNECT Catholic mental health ministry is not mental health treatment.

Additional CMHM guidance:

<https://www.catholicmhm.org/start-a-ministry>

5. BUILD October can be the month when your parish begins asking: “Could God be calling us to a mental health ministry?”

CMHM recommends a thoughtful process for beginning a parish ministry, including:

1. Seek the support of the pastor or bishop.
2. Create a ministry team.
3. Assess the needs of your parish.
4. Increase your mental health and ministry knowledge.
5. Develop an annual ministry plan.
6. Connect with other Catholic mental health ministers.

Guidelines:

<https://www.catholicmhm.org/cmhm-guidelines-book>

CMHM SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA INFORMATION

You are invited to join in the mission of healing and hope as a Digital Missionary this October! We would love for you to join us. Follow us, Like, Share and Comment!



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1. [YOUTUBE](#)
2. [FACEBOOK](#)
3. [INSTAGRAM](#)
4. [LINKEDIN](#)

Consider using the following hashtags: #MentalHealthMinistry #CatholicMentalHealth #CMHM

A FINAL INVITATION FROM CMHM

The mission of Catholic mental health ministry is not simply to raise awareness for a month. It is to help our parishes become communities where people experiencing mental health challenges—and the people who love and accompany them—know that they are seen, welcomed, valued, and not alone.

If your parish is ready to take the next step, CMHM is here to accompany you.

Learn More

- **CMHM**
<https://www.catholicmhm.org>
- **Start a Parish Mental Health Ministry**
<https://catholicmhm.org/start-a-parish-ministry>
- **Learning Center**
<https://www.catholicmhm.org/learning-center>
- **Guidelines for Implementation**
<https://www.catholicmhm.org/cmhm-guidelines-book>
- **USCCB National Catholic Mental Health Campaign**
<https://www.usccb.org/mental-health>
- **USCCB Mental Health Sunday**
<https://www.usccb.org/mental-health-sunday>
- **Pope's Prayer Intentions**
<https://www.popesprayer.va/>
- **Vatican — Luminous Mysteries**
https://www.vatican.va/special/rosary/documents/misteri_luminosi_en.html



Together, we can help make mental health ministry an integral part of Catholic parish and community life.

