State of Connecticut

QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET

By Her Excellency M. Jodi Rell, Governor: an

Official Statement

WHEREAS, spirituality is a dimension of the human experience and disability is a natural part of the human experience; and

WHEREAS, spirituality plays a significant role in the lives of many people with disabilities and their families; and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities and their families, people who are elderly, and other socially devalued populations, are highly vulnerable to being treated and spoken of badly; and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities and their families are all too often overwhelmingly wounded by stigma, rejection, social isolation, impoverishment, low self-esteem, lack of respect, a sense of hopelessness and loneliness; and

WHEREAS, faith communities have traditionally been places of welcome and hospitality, proclaiming that all are welcome in God's name; and

WHEREAS, faith communities have been valuable sources of physical, social and psychological support, friendship, acceptance and self-worth, giving meaning and direction to people's lives; and

WHEREAS, faith communities can offer the gift of belonging by providing meaningful opportunities and adaptive help for people with disabilities and their families to be valued participants in the same faith activities, in the same places and at the same time as all members of the faith community; and

WHEREAS, about 9,000 children with developmental issues are referred to the Connecticut Birth To Three system, 48,000 children with disabilities require special education services, 240,000 adults age 16 to 64 have disabilities in Connecticut, 600,000 Connecticut residents over 60 have disabilities, and the number of people 85 and older will increase threefold by 2040, many with age related or acquired disabilities; now

WHEREAS, faith communities are called upon first to recognize and respect the dignity of people with disabilities and their families, the challenges they face, and the meaningful and powerful contributions they make to their families, their communities and faith communities, and the state, and second, to use their time honored role of leadership in shaping public and community attitudes and values about our neighbors and fellow citizens; now

THEREFORE, I, M. Jodi Rell, Governor, do hereby officially proclaim March 16, 2009, as

A DAY OF RESPECT

in the State of Connecticut.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

M. Jodi Rell

Governor