



Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to bring you our latest monthly newsletter, and what a joyous month it has been! The air is still thick with excitement and hope following the historic election of our new Pope, especially one who hails from the United States. It fills us with immense pride to share that His Holiness attended Villanova University, an institution that also counts our esteemed Bishop Michael Burbidge and other dedicated members of Porto Charities among its alumni. While their paths may not have directly intersected on campus, we are profoundly confident that, just as our Bishop and members have tirelessly championed and enriched the lives of individuals with disabilities, the new Pope will likewise illuminate the path forward, leading the charge in advocating for the full inclusion of people with disabilities within our vibrant Catholic Church.

Our hearts are still aglow from the resounding success of our recent Gala! We are delighted to announce that our dedicated Gala website is now live. We invite you to revisit the magic of the event through a rich collection of photos, media coverage, and inspiring videos featuring our awardees, and other memorable highlights.

We have two important opportunities for you to share your valuable insights. First, we encourage you to participate in a crucial survey from the Diocese regarding the potential creation of a vocational school. Additionally, Porto Charities is planning a summer webinar on Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), and your feedback on our survey will help us tailor this session to best meet your needs and interests.

Finally, a quick reminder that there are still a few spots remaining for our highly anticipated Introduction to Special Education course – don't miss this chance to deepen your understanding and skills. And before we conclude, we extend a heartfelt shoutout and immense gratitude to the incredible 8th-grade students of St. Mark School for their inspiring initiative in hosting a fundraiser for our cause during their Night of the Arts. We are very touched by all the love and support we constantly receive.

Sincerely,
Porto Charities

I want to Support Porto Charities!

Gala Raises a Record-breaking \$420,000!



If you want to re-live all the fun that we enjoyed at the best Gala in the Diocese of Arlington, check out our post-gala webpage that includes [links to every Award video](#) that was presented during the evening, as well as a [link to all the professional photos](#) so you can download your favorite ones!

Check out the [Catholic Herald's](#) coverage of the event, and listen to [The Walk Humbly Podcast](#) where Bishop Burbidge had a lot of great things to say about the Gala!

Gala Website

Porto Charities Invited to Participate at National Convening



Over 90 inclusion advocates and experts from around the country gathered at the newly established Herrmann Center for Innovative Catholic Education at St. Louis University.

Porto Charities was proud to be invited to be a part of this group that included representatives from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), the FIRE Foundation, ONE Classroom, as well as experts from higher education, diocesan school offices, and dedicated principals and teachers at inclusive Catholic schools.

Our very own Carmen Chiappetta represented Porto Charities at this convening, and this is what she had to say about the experience: "It was truly humbling to see the great work being done by our colleagues in other states and to have the opportunity to share what we have learned in the Diocese of Arlington. Through a series of guided conversations, the group came together to create a shared vision and a national agenda for the inclusion of students with disabilities in our Catholic schools that will address challenges and opportunities and mobilize resources. The group also developed goals and priorities at

opportunities and mobilize resources. The group also developed goals and priorities at the national, regional and local levels. Many thanks to the Herrmann Center and all who participated."

The Diocese of Arlington Needs Your Feedback!

Bishop Burbidge has opened a feasibility study for the possible creation of a **Diocesan Vocational Technical School**. If implemented, this program will integrate Catholic values with career, technical, and vocational training, preparing students for meaningful careers while deepening their faith. Students will gain hands-on experience while fostering a Christ-centered approach to their vocation.

A survey is being conducted to learn the needs and interests of the members of the diocese. Please respond using one of the links, even if you do not have children you would wish to enroll.

For the **parent** survey, go to bit.ly/4jd49wg or [click here](#).

For the **student** survey, go to bit.ly/45gYS3c, or [click here](#).

The survey is open until June 8th. All responses will remain anonymous.

Thank you to St. Mark Catholic School for your generosity!





St. Mark Catholic School hosted A Night at the Museum, an evening when they transformed their entire Christian Formation Center into a museum. Classrooms became galleries with exhibits, the gym hosted a variety of performances throughout the night, and their Student Leadership Association hosted a café, and all proceeds were donated to Porto Charities! The whole event was run by their 8th grade students as a thank you for the many gifts they have received at their school of education, faith, and true belonging of all children, including those with disabilities!

Thank you so much to the 8th graders and we wish them the best as their embark on their High School journeys!

Only 7 spaces remaining!

INTRO TO SPECIAL EDUCATION AT GMU

**Free to Clergy, Educators,
Employees and Volunteers in the
Diocese of Arlington serving people
with disabilities**

**Register for free for EDSE 501
Introduction to Special Education at
George Mason University during the
summer semester.**



Take advantage of this great opportunity available to all educators, administrators, clergy and volunteers working or volunteering in the Diocese of Arlington who want to serve people with disabilities better. The course is sponsored by Porto Charities and provided by George Mason University virtually and asynchronous.

The Introduction to Special Education course will run through 8/18 and the last day to register is 6/20. Individuals who are interested in registering for the course should fill

out this [inquiry form](#) to receive details on how to register. If you have any questions, please reach out to education@portocharities.org

I'm Interested!

Webinar on ABA this Summer

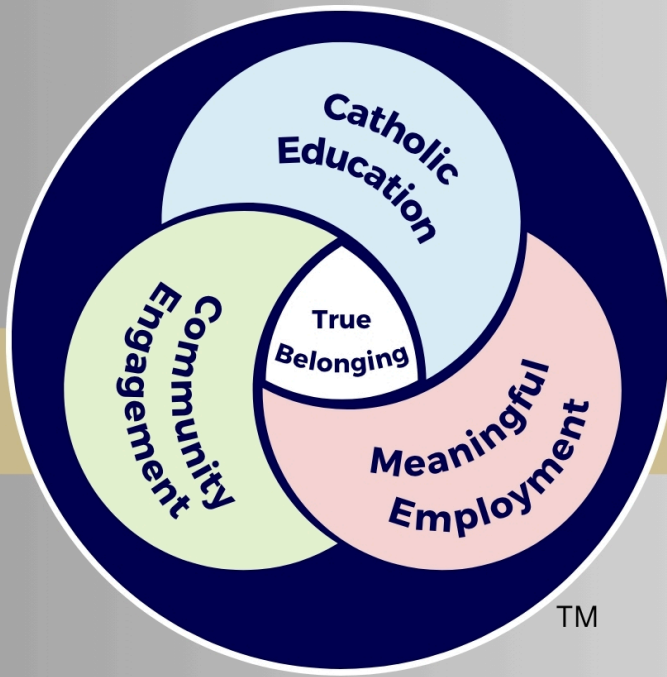
Porto Charities is collaborating with Mr. Joseph Clem BCBA to create a webinar for parents and educators that will explore the relationship between Applied Behavior Analysis(ABA) and our Catholic faith as well as provide practical tips informed by ABA to use at home and in the classroom. **We would like to tailor this webinar to your needs and interests, kindly fill out the survey below.**

Joseph is a Catholic husband and father of four children and a Lifetime Member of Youth Apostles. He has been working with children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities since 2011. Joseph graduated from George Mason University with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Special Education. He became a Board Certified Behavior Analyst in 2016. Joseph has practiced behavior analysis in several special education schools, provided home-based ABA and parent training; consulted with group homes, recreational programs, and taught self-contained classrooms for young adults with disabilities.



Survey on ABA Webinar

Building a Culture of Belonging



Porto Charities is a 501(c)3 organization that builds a culture of belonging for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by increasing their access to Catholic education, meaningful employment, and community engagement in the Diocese of Arlington.



True Belonging means being seen, known and valued.



[Donate Today](#)

[Website](#)



© Porto Charities 2025. All rights reserved.
Our mailing address is:
10660 Page Ave #4446 Fairfax, VA 22038

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage Subscriptions](#)

