

## The Role of Faith in Helping Families Cope with Autism

Valley Forge, PA – A national report released in October 2009 in the journal *Pediatrics* reveals that one in every 91 children has an autism spectrum disorder. Nearly everyone knows a family that has been affected by this challenging condition. In *Autism & Alleluias*, author Kathleen Deyer Bolduc demonstrates the role of faith in helping families cope. In her series of slice-of-life vignettes, God's grace glimmers through as her son Joel, an intellectually challenged young adult with autism, teaches those who love him that life requires:

- childlike faith
- humility
- trust
- unconditional love
- forgiveness
- compassion



### From "For Me!" from *Autism & Alleluias*:

During the boring parts of the service (any part without music is boring as far as Joel is concerned), he twists and turns in the pew, stares at the people behind us, waves at the pastor, swings his feet, claps his hands or stomps his feet (he usually saves these last two for times of silent prayer), and at least once during every service says in a loud voice, "I have to go to the bathroom!" Worshiping with Joel is an interesting experience. It's not unlike sitting on the edge of your seat during an action movie, when you're not quite sure what's going to happen next – you only know something is going to happen.

**About the Author:** Kathleen Deyer Bolduc, MA, is a nationally recognized author and speaker in the field of disability ministry. The mother of a young adult son with autism and moderate intellectual disability, she has shared her inspiring story in dozens of articles in national publications, and in *His Name is Joel: Searching for God in a Son's Disability* (1999), and *A Place Called Acceptance: Ministry with Families of Children with Disabilities* (2001). Visit Kathy's website at [www.kathleenbolduc.com](http://www.kathleenbolduc.com).

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