

Mentally disturbed need more care

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WASHINGTON ? The Council on Mental Illness of the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities said the recent tragedy in Tucson, Ariz., highlights the lack of adequate U.S. treatment of those with mental problems.

Jared Loughner has been charged in the Jan. 8 shooting spree that left six dead and 14 wounded, including U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, the apparent primary target of the attack.

?It seems evident that Jared Loughner ? had for some time been experiencing a mental illness,? the council said. ?We are saddened by the knowledge that with appropriate treatment this tragic act likely could have been avoided.?

?Mental illness affects one family in five, with approximately 6 percent of the population ? one person in 17 ? experiencing a significant mental illness,? the council said. ?We call on members of the faith community to act both individually and collectively to address the very real needs related to this illness.?

It urged people to educate themselves on the causes and treatment available for those with mental illness and advocate for better services for them. ?Welcome and value people with mental illness and their families into our parish life and help them overcome the isolation they often feel,? it said.

The NCPD, based in Washington, formed its Council on Mental Illness in 2006. It produces a monthly e-mail newsletter and offers other resources on mental illness at its Web site, <http://www.ncpd.org/minetwork>.

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