

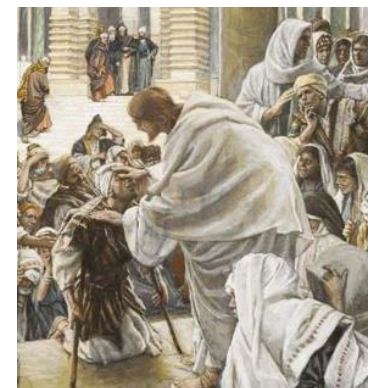


Ministering to Individuals with Disabilities *within* Parish Life

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The Heart of Jesus Mission



Jesus encounters people with disabilities

- Call him here...
- What do you want me to do for you?
- He took him aside in private.
- What is your name?
- Friend, your sins are forgiven.

The Words of Jesus

He is born blind...so that
the works of God might
be made visible
through him. John 9:3



**Individuals with disabilities give glory to God.
Their presence in our community adds to the
beauty and fullness of our community.**

Old Testament

... You shall not insult the deaf, or place a stumbling block before the blind.



Leviticus 19:13





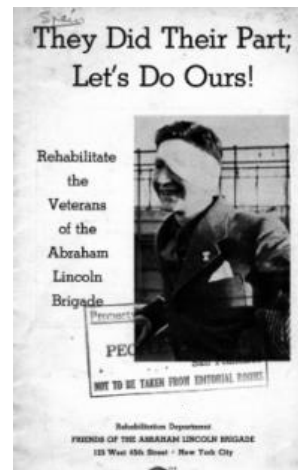
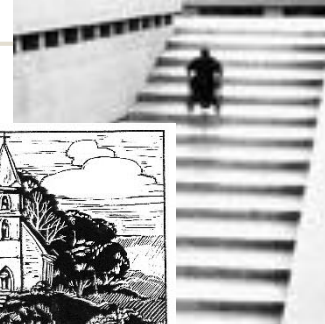
Pope Francis' embrace of Dominic Gondreau

What did I feel? What any father feels when his son is embraced in a fatherly embrace by the Holy Father. Especially my young disabled son. What a blessing! What an affirmation! It was like a gentle kiss from God, saying, paraphrasing what God the Father said at Jesus' baptism:

“Behold, my beloved son, Dominic, whom I love and have blessed much.”

“...spread a culture of encounter, solidarity and hospitality towards persons with disabilities” Pope Francis

Historical Perspective





Cultural Perspective

- **Types of Disabilities**
- **Statistics**
- **Preferred Language**
www.rtcil.org
- **Awareness and Etiquette**

A new definition of disabilities developed by the National Catholic Partnership on Disability asserts that: “disabilities are the normal and anticipated outcome of the risks, strains and stresses of the living process itself.” Mary Jane Owen, NCPD

2000

Individuals with Disabilities

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)

AUTISM

1 in 88 or 1 % of the children

ASD- Asperger's Syndrome part of the Spectrum

Intellectual Disability

Formally called MR.

1.5 %-2.5%

Roughly 1 in 50

Traumatic Brain Injury

Ages 0-4 and 15-19 most at risk

In the fall of 2011, nearly 26,000 school-aged children – Special Ed for TBI

Psychiatric Disability Mental Illness Behavioral Health

1 in 5 Children ages 9 to 17

1 in 4 adults (26%)

1 in 17 (6%) Serious Disorder

Individuals with Disabilities

- Our parents, grandparents, sons and daughters, nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters. **OUR PARISHIONERS**
- Language we use
- Our actions model respect, regard, dignity or are they dismissive?

Rosa's Law and the Language of Bullying

Signed into U.S. law in 2010, Rosa's Law replaces the term *mental retardation* with the phrase *intellectual disability* in federal health, education and labor statutes. The law was named for nine-year-old Rosa Marcellino, whose brother Nick explained the change this way: "What you call people is how you treat them. If we change the words, maybe it will be the start of a new attitude towards people with disabilities."^{*}



Most states have also changed their laws to use more respectful language in statutes and the names of state agencies.

The disability community supports a national campaign called "Spread the word to end the word," which raises the public's awareness about ending use of "the R word." This movement is also part of the battle against bullying, which often begins with demeaning and destructive words.

*From "Remarks by the President at the Signing of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010," <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/10/08/remarks-president-signing-21st-century-communications-and-video-accessib>, accessed 12/7/12.

There are 3 Types of Barriers to Inclusion:

- Structural/Architectural
- Communicative
- **Attitudinal**
 - This is the least expensive barrier, but the hardest to deal with



Ecclesial Perspective

- *Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities, 1978, 1989*
- *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, 1995*
- *Welcome and Justice for People with Disabilities, 1998*
- *National Directory for Catechesis 2005*



By reason of their Baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God and have the same divine calling.

(Guidelines for Celebrating the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities 1995 / Canon 213)



- Pre Natal Diagnosis
- Lilly's Gift www.lilysgift.org
- Be Not Afraid www.benotafraid.net
- Pastoral Presence at time of birth, death and disability

Recognizing that persons with disabilities are persons, because they share in the one redemption of Christ,

... [Pastoral Statement, #11]



■ Baptism

- [9] Parents who receive a prenatal diagnosis of a life-threatening condition should receive the support they need to assure that an infant “in danger of death... is to be baptized without any delay.” [*Canon 867§2*]

■ Funerals

- THOSE TO WHOM ECCLESIASTICAL FUNERALS MUST BE GRANTED OR DENIED

Can. 1183 §1. When it concerns funerals, catechumens must be counted among the Christian faithful.

§2. The local ordinary can permit children whom the parents intended to baptize but who died before baptism to be given ecclesiastical funerals.

The Parish is the door to participation for persons with disabilities, and it is the responsibility of the pastor and lay leaders to make sure the door is always open. (Pastoral Statement #18)

What are some ways your parish may need to prepare and plan?



To be Effective



If the participation of persons with disabilities and their families is to be real and meaningful, the parish must prepare itself to receive them (1978 Pastoral Statement #19)

Seeking Out

Religious Education/Faith Formation



Every parish should seek out its parishioners with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities, **support them with love and concern, and ensure that they have ready access to a catechetical program suited to their needs and abilities. (NDC 61:B,1, 2nd paragraph)**

What are ways of seeking out?



Reconciliation

According to the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, 1995:

“As long as the individual is capable of having a sense of contrition for having committed sin, even if he or she cannot describe the sin precisely in words, the person may receive sacramental absolution.”

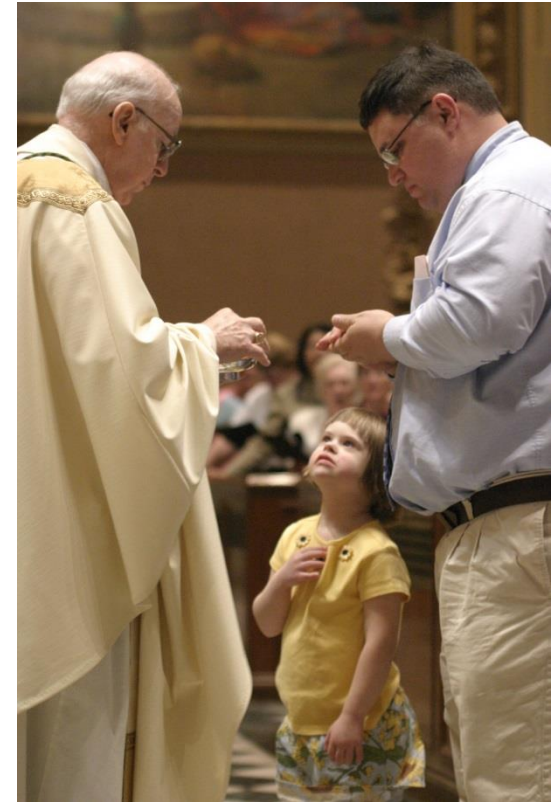
“Those with profound mental disabilities who cannot experience even minimal contrition, may be invited to participate in penitential services with the rest of the community to the extent of their ability.”

#23

Holy Communion

According to the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, 1995:

- “...that the person be able to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food, even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture or reverential silence...Cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the baptized person to receive the sacrament.” #20





Confirmation

According to the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, 1995:

- “Parents....and especially pastors are to see to it that the faithful who have been baptized are properly instructed to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to approach it at the appropriate time.” #15
- “Persons who because of developmental or mental abilities may never attain the use of reason are encouraged directly or, if necessary, through their parents or guardian to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the appropriate time.” #16

Marriage / Holy Orders

- The existence of a physical disability is not considered in itself as disqualifying a person holy orders #30 or marriage #34.



Sunday Liturgy

Practical Ways to be Accommodating

- Establish an attitude of welcome as a goal
- Train ushers/greeters - Disability Etiquette
- Provide an area of respite
- Ask what will make the experience more engaging
- Assist the family in making the Church familiar
- Utilize all the senses as much as possible



Pastoral Implications

- Set goals to create access and inclusion – Sunday Liturgy IS KEY!
- Consider how to respond to the birth of a child with a disability
- Know who the families are
- Awareness and Etiquette
- Befriend Individuals with Disabilities and their Families



To exclude members of the parish from these celebrations of the life of the Church, even by passive omission, is to deny the reality of that community.

(1978 USCCB Pastoral Statement #23)

Resources

- **NCPD** National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities – www.ncpd.org
- **NCOD** National Catholic Office for the Deaf - www.ncod.org
- **NAfIM** National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry - www.nafim.org
- **NICE** Network of Inclusive Catholic Educators – www.ipi.udayton.edu
- **NAMI** National Alliance on Mental Illness - www.nami.org

- ## Local Resources

- Diocesan Disabilities Resources
- Parents/Guardians
- Professionals in your parish and area
- State and Local Associations and Agencies



Pope Benedict XVI

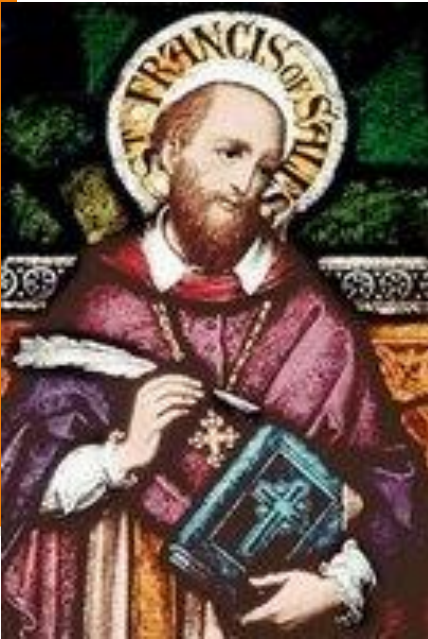


Dear brothers and sisters ,
the church needs your
contributions, to answer fully
and faithfully to the Lord's
will... **Humanity needs
your gifts, which are
prophecies of the
Kingdom of God.**

March 19, 2007

How do we begin...

how do we continue



*It is to those who have the most
need of us that we ought to
show our love more especially.*

St. Francis De Sales