



PARTNERS IN FAITH FORMATION: **Youth with Autism and Developmental** **Disabilities**



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A LITTLE ABOUT ME...

what shapes my understanding of disability

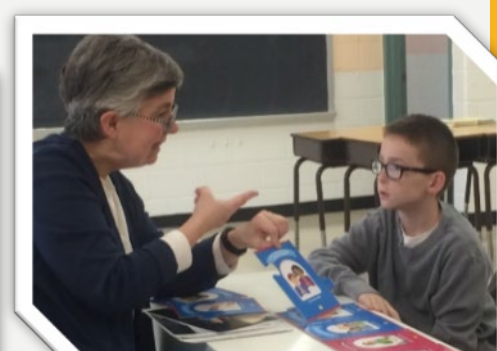


National Catholic
Partnership on Disability
Allianza Nacional Católica
Sobre la Discapacidad



- Early work at Don Guanella Village
- Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Special Education / Catechetical Ministry
- Learned ASL and work with Deaf Catholic Community
- Director of Office for Persons with Disabilities & Deaf Apostolate
- National and International Partnerships

LOYOLA PRESS.
A JESUIT MINISTRY



From inclusion to Belonging & Participation



Mission: The active engagement of youth with disabilities in faith formation and the Sacraments.

- *To the extent that we are welcomed and loved, included in community and accompanied to look to the future with trust, the true path of life is developed and we experience lasting happiness.*



“...There can be no lack in communities of the words and, above all, the gestures to encounter and welcome people with disabilities” Pope Francis 10.21.17

From inclusion to Belonging & Participation



*Catechesis, in a special way, is called to discover and experiment with coherent forms so that **every person**, with his or her gifts, limits and disabilities, even serious, may encounter Jesus on the way and abandon himself to Him with faith.*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE!

No physical or psychic limit may ever be an obstacle to this encounter, because the face of Christ shines in the intimacy of every person.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES - IDEA

- ✓ The student must meet one of the 13 disability categories defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004 ([IDEA](#)).
- ✓ The student must need special education; that is, the child requires specifically designed instruction to receive educational benefits

13 categories are:

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

www.understood.org

Booklet p.6-10

- Intellectual Disability (ID formally MR)
- Hearing impairment
- Speech/language impairment,
- Visual impairment / Blind
- Emotional disturbance
- Orthopedic impairment
- Autism
- Traumatic brain injury
- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Deafness
- Deaf-blindness
- Multiple disabilities



Individuals with Disabilities

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

**# Receiving Special Ed Services --
Nationally 14.1% / PA 19.1% / NJ 17.2%**

AUTISM

1 in 54 or 1.85 % of the children

ASD- Asperger's Syndrome part of the Spectrum
(1/34 boys; 1/144 girls)

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

Average of 62,000 children a year -TBI

Psychiatric Disability Mental Illness / Behavioral

1 in 5 Children ages 9 to 17

1 in 4 adults (26%)

1 in 17 (6%) Serious Disorder

Theological and Anthropological Perspective

MADE
IN THE
IMAGE
OF
GOD..

Creatures made in God's image



Theological and Anthropological Perspective

"A person with disabilities, in order to build himself or herself up, needs not only to exist but also to belong to a community," he said. "I pray that each person may feel the paternal gaze of God, who affirms their full dignity and the unconditional value of their life."

(Pope Francis, Dec. 3, 2019)

"...when disabled persons are mentally impaired or when their sensory or intellectual capacity is damaged, they are **fully human beings and possess the sacred and inalienable rights that belong to every creature.** Indeed human beings, independently of the conditions in which they live or of what they are able to express, have a unique dignity and special value from the very beginning of their life until the moment of natural death."

(Pope John Paul II, January 5, 2004)

Theological and Anthropological Perspective

- Temptation to a false idolatry of strength, control, comfort and perfectly functioning bodies.
- Idolatry of autonomy and physical perfection can seep into our understanding of human good, happiness and what it means to be Christian.

THUS *erroneously*
the **ordinary**
vulnerability, frailty,
and dependencies of
our bodies/minds
are not accepted as
part of what it means
**to be a human
being.**



NCPD

NATIONAL CATHOLIC
PARTNERSHIP ON DISABILITY

faith • giftedness • partnership

www.ncpd.org

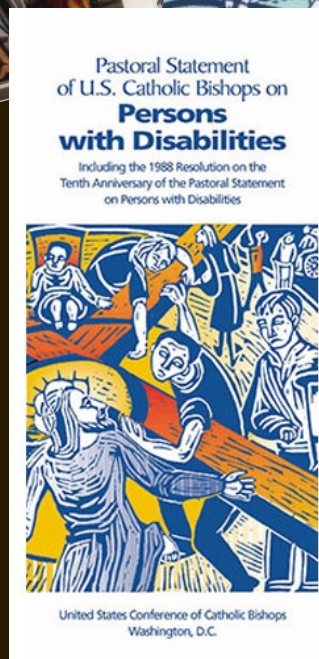
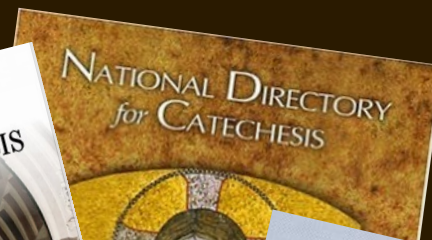
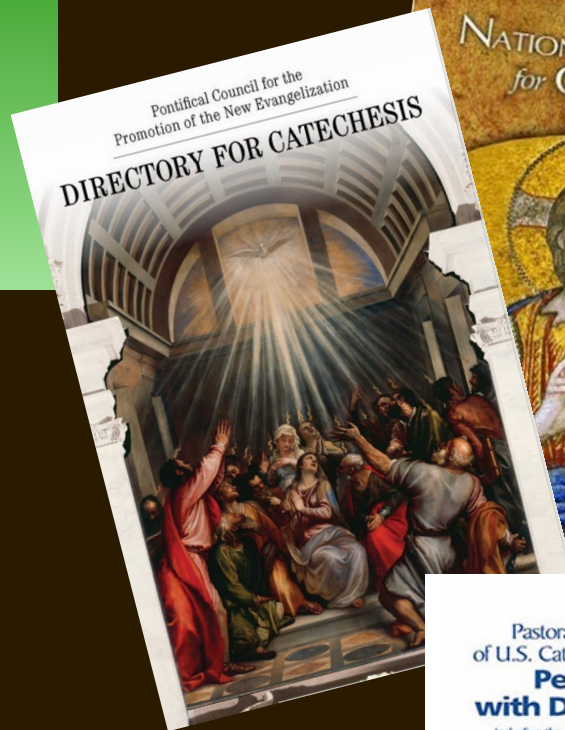
THE CALL OF THE CHURCH

GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION
OF THE SACRAMENTS
WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,
REVISED EDITION 2017

BOOKLET P. 2-5

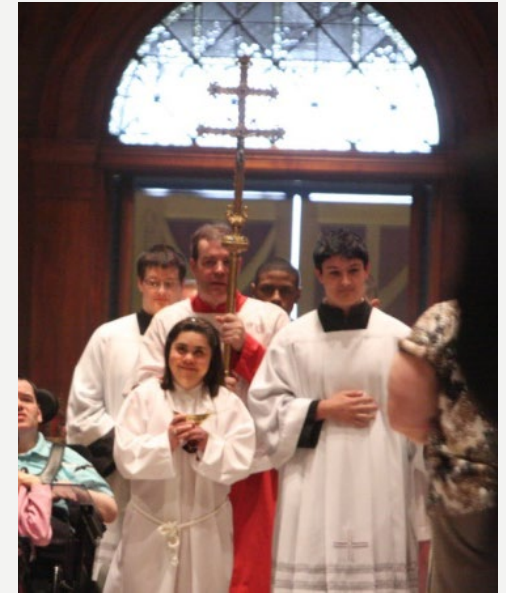
GUIDELINES FOR THE
Celebration of the
Sacraments with
Persons with
Disabilities

Revised Edition



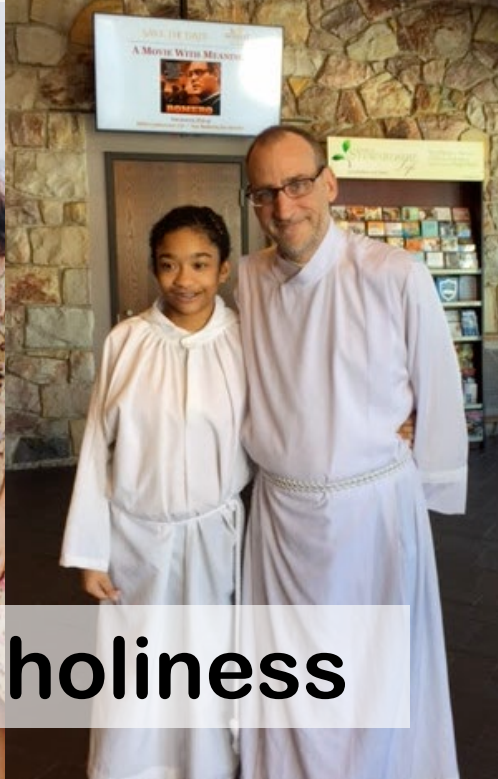
INFORMED BY *the Gospel*

- ***Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities, 1978, 1989***
- ***National Directory for Catechesis 2005***
- ***New Directory for Catechesis 2020***
- ***Revised Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, 2017***



All believers have a right to catechesis; all pastors have the duty to provide it. *Catechesi Tradendae*

www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/upload/Pastoral-Statement-of-U-S-Catholic-Bishops-on-Persons-with-Disabilities.pdf



Universal call to holiness



The grace of the Sacraments

REVISED GUIDELINES

The Church continues to affirm the dignity of every human being, and to grow in knowledge and understanding of the gifts and needs of her member who live with disabilities.



It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together.

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

PS #23

Preface:

Why the need for the Guidelines?

- Pastoral inconsistencies
 - Misunderstand nature of disability
 - Application of Church law
 - Fear, misunderstanding and unfamiliarity
 - Real or perceived limitations of available resources
- People denied (no access to) the sacraments
- Uncertainty on how to respond pastorally



Guidelines For The Celebration of The Sacraments with Persons With Disabilities,

Revised Edition 2017

- **Current Pastoral Issues
addressed among others:**

Baptism: Prenatal diagnosis / welcomed into all stages and rites of the initiation process.

Eucharist: Feeding tubes, gluten intolerance and age-related dementias.

Reconciliation: Non verbal and minimal verbal communication

Confirmation: Intellectual or developmental disabilities

<http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities.cfm>.

**Full accessibility
should be the goal for
every parish, and
these adaptations are
to be an ordinary
part of the liturgical
life of the parish.**



....the goal for every parish.... an ordinary part

General Principals

1. The equal dignity and the universal call to holiness
2. Catholics with disabilities have the right to participate in the sacraments
3. Full access should be the goal of each parish and an **ordinary** part of liturgical life.
4. The local parish is the center of the Christian experience for most Catholics.



General Principals

5. Pastors are responsible to provide evangelization, catechetical formation for parishioners with disabilities...
6. Participation in all levels of pastoral ministry – use their gift
7. Attitudes and a parish culture of inclusion of all God's people
8. Difficult situations may be encountered; and establishment of appropriate policies which respect the rights of individuals to have recourse.



Guidelines For The Celebration of The Sacraments with Persons With Disabilities,

Revised Edition 2017

GENERAL PRINCIPLES



- 1995 original version, #5

- ...Parish catechetical and sacramental preparation programs may need to be adapted for some parishioners with disabilities.



- 2017 Revision, #5

- ...adapted for some parishioners with disabilities, though, as much as possible, persons with disabilities should be **integrated** into the **ordinary programs**. They should **not** be segregated for **specialized catechesis** unless their disabilities make it impossible for them to participate in the basic catechetical program. **Even in those cases, participation in parish life is encouraged in all ways possible.**

General Principles

1995 ORIGINAL VERSION, #6



- The creation of a fully accessible parish reaches beyond mere physical accommodation to encompass the attitudes of all parishioners toward persons with disabilities. **Pastoral ministers** are encouraged to **develop specific programs** aimed at forming a community of believers known for its joyful inclusion of all of God's people around the table of the Lord.

www.opdarchphilly.org

2017 REVISION, #7

The creation of fully accessible...persons with disabilities. **All members of the faith community** have a role to play in the invitation, welcome, and inclusion of people with disabilities. **Pastoral ministers are encouraged to foster attitudes and a parish culture**, and to develop informational materials, aimed at forming a community of believers known for its joyful inclusion of all of God's people around the table of the Lord.

BAPTISM



- The Church, made present in the local community, has an important role to play in the Baptism of all of its members. **Before and after the celebration of the sacrament, the baptized have the right to the love and help of the community. (10)**
- **Disability, of itself, is never a reason for deferring Baptism. Persons who lack the use of reason are to be baptized provided at least one parent or guardian consents to it. (11)**

BAPTISM

2017 REVISION, #11



- Parents who receive a prenatal diagnosis of a life-threatening condition should receive the support they need to assure that their child will be baptized “without delay.” Indeed, priests, deacons, and other pastoral ministers should provide spiritual and emotional support to families who have received any difficult prenatal diagnosis and **offer on-going support before and after the birth of a child**, with special concern in the event of the death of a child.

SUPPORT MINISTRIES:

- **BE NOT AFRAID (NATIONAL)**
- **LILY’S GIFT (ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA)**

BAPTISM

1995 VERSION, #12

- If the person to be baptized is of catechetical age, the Rite of Christian Initiation may be adapted according to need.



2017 REVISION, #13

- **...Adults and children of catechetical age with disabilities should be welcomed into all stages and rites of the initiation process.**
- If the catechumen is of catechetical age, the rites may be adapted according to need. In these cases, catechesis for persons with disabilities must be **adapted in content and method to their particular situations.**
- **Like others, adults and children of catechetical age with disabilities should normally receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist in a single celebration.**

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) **p. 12 – Examine the barriers and solutions**

- Seek and prepare catechists & volunteers
- Include in Registration Announcements

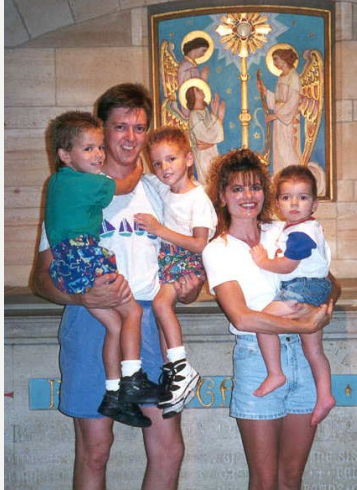
p.12-13

Our Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) provides classes for children of all abilities. Children with developmental, intellectual, sensory, physical or behavioral disabilities are welcome and encouraged to attend weekly (PREP) classes.

PLAN & Budget



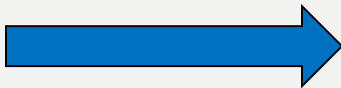
The Parents as a Resource



- Engage the family in dialogue
 - What is it you want for your child?
- Use the Child Information Form
 - Using language that is positive inquire about disabilities, learning needs and accommodations used at home and in school setting.

p. 14-21

- What natural supports or professional supports does the family have in place?



- www.opdarchphilly.org Faith Formation

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK

MEDICAL/LEARNING DATA

If any of the following apply to your child, please list his/her name and give details in the appropriate spaces.

Child's Name	Medical Conditions/Allergies	Prescribed Medications	Disability* / Learning Support Services	Individualized Education Program IEP
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Is there other information about your child that should be communicated?

* As defined by *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), the term "child with a disability" means a child: "with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

If there is indication of a disability. Gather further information.

Interview ques. - Describe your child's special education programing or community based services.

Child Information Form could be used.



**BEGIN with
the PERSON
before YOU.**

Relationships
are essential
to the
catechetical
process.



MODELS OF INCLUSION

IN 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)

PLACEMENT IN PREP?



- Persons with disabilities should be integrated into the **ordinary** catechetical programs as much as possible...they should not be segregated for specialized catechesis unless their disability make it impossible to participate in the basic catechetical program.

(2005 NDC 49:B, 4th paragraph)



MODELS OF ENGAGEMENT IN CATECHESIS

In classroom with supports...

catechist aide or peer tutor/adapted materials



Within the typical classroom

with peers



In Learning Support Classroom

with small group learning and adapted curriculum



With Individualized Instruction;

joins with peers for prayer, liturgies & special activities



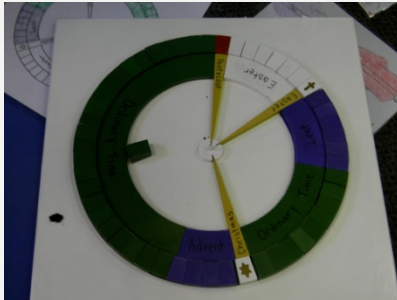
HOW TO: SUPPORTS FOR PREP



- Inclusion facilitator, prepared catechist and volunteer assistants
- Appropriate placement
- Using natural family, program and peer supports
- Therapeutic support staff (TSS) or wrap around
- Purchase and create adaptive materials – learn new approaches.



How to: **Instructional Planning**



- **Child Information Form**
- **Class Procedures**
- **Teaching Strategies**
- **Accommodations**
- **Modifications**
- ***Adaptive* curriculums, books, materials and resources**



RECONCILIATION

Only those who have the use of reason are capable of committing mortal sin. Nevertheless, even young children and persons with **intellectual disabilities** often are conscious of committing acts that are sinful to some degree and may experience a sense of guilt and sorrow.



RECONCILIATION

- 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. (28)
- Those with profound intellectual 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. (28)

RECONCILIATION – THOSE WHO HAVE MINIMAL VERBAL COMMUNICATION (29)



- In the case of individuals who are nonverbal or have minimal verbal communication ability, sorrow for sin is to be accepted even if this repentance is expressed through some gesture rather than verbally.
- Catholics with significant communication disorders may be permitted to make their confessions using the communication system with which they are most fluent.

Previously #24/25

Reconciliation

Those who have minimal verbal communication (29)



- Individuals preparing for the sacrament are to be **taught to be as independent as possible** in the use of their communication system to allow for the norm of **private reception** of the sacrament.
- **Confessors** are encouraged to work with families and individuals to **familiarize themselves with various alternative communication options** to ensure that all who desire to celebrate this sacrament may do so, provided that the seal of confession is properly safeguarded.

RECONCILIATION

Catholics who are deaf (30)

- Catholics who are deaf should have the opportunity to confess to a priest able to communicate with them in sign language, if sign language is their primary means of communication. **They may also confess Through an approved sign language interpreter of their choice.***
- When neither a priest with signing skills nor a sign language interpreter is available, Catholics who are deaf should be permitted to make their confession in writing **or through the use of an appropriate portable electronic communication device** that can be passed back and forth between the penitent and confessor.
- The written **or digital** materials are to be returned to the penitent and properly destroyed or deleted.



RECONCILIATION

- **NEW**



...every effort should be made to ensure that penitents who are wheelchair users **have access to both face-to-face and private confessionals**, with due regard for the right of the priest to insist on confession behind a fixed screen.
(31)

EUCCHARIST



The criterion for reception of Holy Communion is the same for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities as for all persons, namely, 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 rather than verbally. (22)

Previously in #20 same language.

EUCCHARIST

95/2017

- Pastors are encouraged to consult with parents, those who take the place of parents, diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, psychologists, religious educators, and other experts in making their judgment. **(22)**
- If it is determined that a parishioner who is disabled is not ready to receive the sacrament, great care is to be taken in explaining the reasons for this decision. **Cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the Catholic to receive the sacrament.** The existence of a disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from receiving Holy Communion. **(22)**



EUCCHARIST

(NEW ISSUES IN THE REVISION)

- Given the paramount significance of the Eucharist in the lives of the faithful, and in light of medical and technological advancements that affect Catholics with disabilities, new questions have arisen regarding the reception of Holy Communion, and circumstances that were once rare have even become relatively common. **Clergy and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to become familiar with the needs of their parishioners. In many instances, simple accommodations can be very helpful, and should be embraced by all at the parish level. (23)**



- New issues addressed:**
 - Feeding tubes (24)**
 - Gluten intolerance (25)**
 - Advanced Alzheimers or other age-related dementias (26)**

EUCHARIST

- **Feeding Tubes (24)**

The norm of receiving through the mouth remains the same for those who otherwise use a feeding tube for sustenance, and Holy Communion is not to be administered through a feeding tube. **For these communicants it will commonly be possible to place one or a few drops of the Precious Blood on the tongue. ...consult with**

- ..the full presence of Christ and his sanctifying grace are found in even the smallest piece of the consecrated host or in a mere drop of the consecrated wine. (24)



EUCHARIST GLUTEN INTOLERANCE (25)

- The following accommodations can be made for those who with Celiac Sprue Disease and other gluten intolerances:
- **The opportunity to receive a small fragment of a regular host.**
- **Options to receive a low-gluten host or to receive under the form of wine alone.**
- **In the event of intolerance to gluten and wine, mustum may also be an option, with the approval of the local ordinary.**
- **Clergy and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must be aware of the possibility of cross contamination in these circumstances**

CONFIRMATION

- Parents, those who care for persons with disabilities, and **shepherds of souls—especially pastors**—are to see to it that the faithful who have been baptized **receive the formation needed for the Sacrament of Confirmation** and approach it at the appropriate time. (16)
- Persons who because of intellectual or developmental disabilities **may never attain the use of reason can receive** the Sacrament of Confirmation and **should be encouraged either directly or, if necessary, through their parents.** It is important that they receive the pastoral guidance needed, along with the welcome and embrace of the whole community of faith. (18)





CONFIRMATION

Revision 2017

- To the degree possible, those with disabilities should be included along with others during the preparation and celebration of the sacrament. **At times, pastoral need may necessitate an accommodated setting and a simpler manner. (18)**
- “When those with disabilities who are already baptized Christians desire to become Catholic, they should participate in the Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church, which normally includes the reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.”(20)

TRANSFORMING THE HEART OF OUR PARISH

Thirsting for Justice

- Inclusion Video



- The impact on families
- The impact on the parish /school
- People with disabilities are not only the recipients of evangelizations they are the agents.

What is the impact inclusion can have/or has had on a family and on your parish community?

Essential Resources

USCCB

Documents:

- [USCCB 1978 Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [1998 Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [2017 Revised Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities](#)

www.opdarchphilly.org

**THIS PP
& MORE**

www.opdarchphilly.org

Faith Formation

Power Point

**Child Information
Form**

**Template for
Announcements**

Lesson Helps

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THANK YOU