

Margaret O'Neil Grant Information Sheet

Introduction

The Margaret O'Neil Grant supports parishes in cultivating a culture of accessibility, inclusion, and belonging that enables the full participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the Church.

Purpose of the Parish Grants

Through the Margaret O'Neil Grant, the Office for Persons with Disabilities seeks to empower parishes to foster a culture of belonging, where individuals with disabilities are fully welcomed as baptized members of the Body of Christ. This grant supports parish efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities can participate meaningfully in all aspects of parish life and share their God-given gifts. By creating more accessible and inclusive communities, parishes will strengthen opportunities for individuals with disabilities to contribute to the Church's mission, evangelize through their witness, and experience a true sense of belonging within their faith community.

Who Should Apply

Catholic parishes within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia that have an appointed parish advocate are eligible to apply. Advocates must be approved by the Pastor and registered in the Office for Persons with Disabilities database. Grant applicants must have approval from the Pastor. *For more information on the parish advocate program, visit opdarchphilly.org/parish-advocates.*

What Parish Projects May Include

Expenses related to the funding priorities include but are not limited to:

- Parish projects that remove barriers to participation in worship, faith formation, and community life.
- Trainings for staff, volunteers and parish community that include teaming with individuals with disabilities and their families, creating support teams, utilizing available resources/individuals
- Adaptive content/materials, accommodation materials, training for staff, inclusion facilitator/advocate
- Architectural/physical changes
- Braille/large print materials, faith formation items, transportation, etc.
- Materials to support chronic illness, chronic pain, and/or cancer ministries.
- Other disability access and inclusion initiatives.

How can I find the needs of my parish?

Speaking with individuals with disabilities and their families/caregivers is the best way to find what the needs are in your parish. Listening sessions with various groups of individuals and surveys are highly encouraged.

We understand that some parishes may be new to providing accessibility supports and therefore, we encourage you to utilize the resources on our [accessibility checklists](#) page to help you discover the unique needs within your parish.

Funding Amounts

A total of \$3,000 in grant funding is available.

Required Participation

Selected parishes must:

- Submit grant agreement and necessary documentation in a timely manner upon selection
- Have a parish representative attend the Archdiocesan Mass Honoring the Gifts of Persons with Disabilities on March 7, 2027
- Engage in periodic check-in conversations and progress updates
- Participate in potential interviews
- Submit a final financial accountability document

Grant Timeline

October 3, 2026 – Application Open

January 24, 2027 – Application Deadline

January 25-February 18, 2027 – Application Review Period

February 19, 2027 – Funding Decision

March 7, 2027 – Grant(s) Disbursed at the Mass Honoring the Gifts of Persons with Disabilities

Questions and Support

Please send questions about grant eligibility and applications to namorales@archphila.org.