The Church teaches that every human life is a precious gift of a loving God, requiring respect and reverence for every person.

CCSEM, parishes, and the Archdiocese of Detroit collaborate in providing sacramental and ministerial assistance to welcome those with disabilities in full communion with the Church.

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*American Sign Language symbol for “I love you.”
What are Catholic parishes in the U.S. doing to serve those with disabilities?

- Parishes with a wheelchair accessible entrance: 96%
- Parishes with a list of resources to refer people with disabilities for professional help: 43%
- Parishes with volunteers who have disabilities: 72%
- Parishes which offer accommodations to allow those with disabilities to participate in parish social events: 93%
- Parishes which adapt their current resources for students with disabilities: 63%


Some Common Disabilities

- Vision loss or Hearing loss
- Physical conditions requiring use of other assistive devices such as a cane or wheelchair
- Chromosomal conditions such as Down syndrome
- Neuro-muscular disorders such as Multiple Sclerosis and Muscular Dystrophy
- Learning disabilities like Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Health impairments such as Diabetes, Respiratory and Cardiac conditions and Arthritis
- Neurological conditions such as Seizure Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Stroke
- Respiratory conditions such as Asthma and Emphysema
- Psychological conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Anxiety disorders, or Depression
- Dementia

Questions to Consider

- Does your parish have a designated advocate for disability issues? Do parishioners know how to contact them?
- Are all areas of your church buildings accessible for people with limited mobility?
- Does your parish have large-print missals, hymnals, and bulletins available for those who have difficulty with vision?
- Are specialized faith-formation and sacramental preparation programs offered for parishioners with disabilities?

- Do you proactively welcome people with disabilities in all aspects of parish life?
- Do people with disabilities serve as lectors, gift bearers, and altar servers at Mass?
- Does your parish offer support to families who receive a serious prenatal diagnosis?
- Does your parish have assistive listening systems available to those who have difficulty hearing?