



Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry
Directory for Catechesis

CATECHESIS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES:

“In order to be loyal to its calling to be truly pastoral the parish must make sure that it does not exclude any Catholic who wishes to take part in its activities” (The Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities, par. 18).

“They (dioceses) should encourage and support training for all clergy, religious, seminarians and ministers, focusing special attention on those actually serving individuals with disabilities” (The Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities, par. 30).

“If the participation of persons with disabilities and their families is to be real and meaningful, the parish must prepare itself to receive them” (The Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities, par. 19).

THE OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION AND LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY RECOMMENDS:

1. Parishes identify members with disabilities and facilitate their participation in the parish catechetical ministry.
2. The Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry assists parishes, diocesan institutions, and other centers in acquiring catechetical resources and training for ministry with persons with disabilities.

CATECHESIS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

GUIDELINES

Parish catechetical leaders and the Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry will identify, educate, support and provide opportunities for persons with disabilities who will be able to participate fully in the ecclesial community.

Parish catechetical leaders identify persons with disabilities through, e.g.:

- Census
- Parish Registration Process
- Other suitable means

Parish leaders educate parishioners on Christian responsibilities for rights, needs and active participation of persons with disabilities, e.g.:

- Parish groups
- Parent advisory groups
- Instructions for celebration of sacraments
- Specialized curriculums
- Custodial and maintenance crews for providing barrier free accesses

Parishes provide support for persons with disabilities and their families, e.g.:

- Community health services
- Educational services
- Social services
- Adaptations to catechetical processes
- Persons to assist the catechist as needed

Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry will support and educate parish catechetical leaders in their ministries to persons with disabilities, e.g.:

- Hosting meetings/programs at barrier free locations
- Designing inclusive programs
- Identifying special needs on registration forms
- Recruiting persons with disabilities as workshop presenters
- Offering education and in-service opportunities for those who minister to and with people who have disabilities
- Using the Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry Library for training, curricular, and legal advocacy resources
- Networking with other diocesan offices and private and public agencies that serve persons with disabilities
- Utilizing special programs offered at other locations

Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry will provide resources for parishes, e.g.:

- Models of surveys to identify persons with disabilities
- Models of registration forms and planning sheets for use by catechetical leaders
- Copies of current catechetical curriculums recommended by the National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) will be in the Library
- Adapted materials for the recommended standard curriculums will be made available in the Library
- Updated listings of parishes offering special education classes
- Special educational consultants
- Names of individuals who have successfully adapted curriculum to meet special needs
- Regular workshops on the special needs of persons with disabilities
- Other media resources for parish-based workshops
- Days of prayer or retreats for persons with disabilities

EVALUATION:

The parish catechetical leaders and Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry will annually conduct an evaluation of how many persons with disabilities were identified, educated and supported throughout the year in their parish communities.