

Resources Available for Children with Disabilities

"We are a single flock under the care of a single shepherd. There can be no separate Church for persons with disabilities". Persons with disabilities, especially children, are particularly beloved of the Lord and are integral members of the Christian community. They include those with cognitive disabilities, those with developmental disabilities, those with learning disabilities, the emotionally disturbed, persons with physical disabilities, the hard of hearing, the deaf, the visually impaired, the blind and others. All persons with disabilities have the capacity to proclaim the Gospel and to be living witnesses to its truth within the community of faith and offer valuable gifts. Their involvement enriches every aspect of Church life. They are not just the recipients of catechesis—they are also its agents. Bishops have invited qualified persons with disabilities to ordination, to consecrated life, and to full-time, professional service in the Church.

All persons with disabilities of special needs should be welcomed in the Church. Every person, however limited, is capable of growth in holiness. "The love of the Father for the weakest of his children and the continuous presence of Jesus and His Spirit give assurance that every person, however, limited, is capable of growth in holiness." Some persons with disabilities live in isolating conditions that make it difficult for them to participate in catechetical experiences. "Since provision of access to religious functions is a pastoral duty," parishes should make that much more effort to include those who may feel excluded.

National Directory for Catechesis, Paragraph 49, #647-650

Church Documents

- **USCCB Publishing:** "Open Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities" (1978) <http://www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/pastoral>
- **USCCB Publishing** "Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities" (1995) <http://www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/welcome-and-justice>
- **USCCB Publishing:** "Welcome and Justice for Persons of Disabilities"(1998)
- **USCCB Publishing:** *Bienvenida y Justicia para Personas Discapacitadas* "(1998)
- **USCCB Publishing:** "National Directory for Catechesis" (2005)

Adaptive Texts and Programing for Religious Education

- **Loyola Press:** "Finding God" Adaptive Program: <http://www.loyolapress.com/special-needs-adaptive-resources.htm>
 - - Adaptive First Eucharist Preparation Kit:
 - Adaptive Confirmation Preparation Kit
 - PowerPoint:
- <http://loyolapress.com/special-needs-eucharist-learn-more.htm>
- **Harding, Grace. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program:** (Distributed through RCL-Benziger Catalog) in both English and Spanish: To Improve Catholic Religious Education for Children and Adults with Intellectual Disabilities. <http://www.faithability.org/>

- **Sadlier:** “We Believe” Series: Adapted for Special Needs using the “Adaptive Catechesis Index” created by Sadlier in English and Spanish
http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/95641/Rel_Correlations/01B_16_corr_Adaptation_Index_Final.pdf?t=1463418951336
- **Ligouri:** Cronister, Michele, MA. “Handbook for Adaptive Catechesis” 2005
- **Loyola Press:** How to Welcome, Include and Catechize Children with Autism and other Special Needs by Lawrence Sutton, PH.D. 2013
- **Paul H. Brooks Publishing:** Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities: A Guide for Service Providers, Families & Congregations by Erik W. Carter 2007

Online Articles

- “*Baptism Begins a Continuing Catechesis: Special Needs for Communion:*” Parent Participation & Special Needs, On-line Article on Specific Special Need: Celiac Disease.
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/blog/index.cfm?id=175>
- Webb-Mitchell, Brett *Lifelong Faith: Educating Toward Full Inclusion In The Body Of Christ. People With Disabilities Being Full Members Of The Church* This article first appeared in the **Journal of Religion**, “*Disability & Health*” (Volume14:3, 256-268) and is reprinted with permission. A version of this article is included in Chapter 7 of Beyond Accessibility

Weekly News Paper Articles

- **OSV Newsweekly/**
Poust, Mary DeTurrís. “Special Blessings for Special Needs Children”
<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Article/TabId/535/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/14224/Special-blessings-for-special-needs-children.aspx>
- **OSV Newsweekly**
Crow, Gretchen R. “Resources for Lent, parents of children with special needs”
<https://www.osv.com/Article/TabId/493/ArtMID/13569/ArticleID/14218/Resources-for-Lent-parents-of-children-with-special-needs.aspx>
- **OSV Newsweekly**
Poust, Mary DeTurrís. “Don’t make parents fight for the sacraments”
<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/ByIssue/Article/TabId/735/ArtMID/13636/ArticleID/14232/%E2%80%98Don%E2%80%99t-make-parents-fight-for-the-sacraments%E2%80%99.aspx>

Websites

- “National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities” (NCPD) <http://www.ncpd.org/>
- “Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” <http://www.cgsusa.org/>
- “CatholicMom.com” Edition on parents and special needs children listing all kinds of resources and informative links for those who work with or have children who have special needs: <http://catholicmom.com/family/special-needs-parenting/>

- Current Catholic Mom on Special Needs: <http://catholicmom.com/2016/05/20/parenting-special-needs-children/>

Resources from Texas' Diocese

Diocese of Austin, TX. "Prayerbook in Braille"

Diocese of Dallas, TX. Melissa Waldon, Coordinator of Deaf and Disabilities Ministries part of the Pastoral Services Ministries

Webinars

- *List of past Webinars on Special Needs and Mental Illness* <http://www.ncpd.org/webinars>