



CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL FOUNDATION

SERVE SUPPORT STRENGTHEN

Your CSAF Dollars at Work
Deaf Ministry

“My name is Beth. I am a deaf person, and I attend the Catholic church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel. I’ve been attending for 30 years and I feel very much connected to this church. It is a church where many deaf members attend. We also have a lot of other people who are hearing but they respect our language, they respect our culture, and I don’t feel like I am treated as a second-class citizen. We are treated equally among all the parishioners and we all have respect for each other. It’s a place where I feel like I can really belong.



Our priest signs the mass himself, so for instance when I chose where I wanted to go to college, I chose Gallaudet University in Washington DC because it is the only college in the US and the world where everything is taught in sign language. This way, I could feel part of the community with the students and with the professors—it’s the same way at my church.

The priest himself is able to sign, the choir signs, the music is signed, so that’s what makes it so unique that we can really participate and be involved using our language and our culture. It’s the most comfortable place to have that sort of conversation with other people and with the priest himself who’s able to sign. It’s not the same thing as having a mass interpreted because in that way, it becomes a three-way communication—I have to look at the altar and the priest, and then I have to look at the interpreter to see what they’re signing—it’s not really the same. For me, it’s much easier to be able to observe the mass in my language.



I really do not mind making the drive every Sunday to come to our church in northeast Minneapolis because I can just relax and understand what’s going on—I don’t have to work hard to try to figure out what the interpreter is saying. I just cannot imagine going to another church where the service is interpreted. This is really an important aspect; it’s so important for the deaf.”