

Tips for Creating Access and Welcome

- When creating access, don't forget:
 - Sanctuary access
 - Large print and Braille resources
 - Lighting
 - Seating
 - Parking
 - Transportation
- Still more things to remember when creating access:
 - Door pressure
 - Enhanced hearing devices
 - Restrooms
 - Meeting and event locations
- Does the parish have an atmosphere of community and welcome? Are there greeters? Do others also introduce themselves? Provide training.
- Don't be afraid about saying or doing the wrong thing. Be open, welcoming, and sincere. And listen. Anticipate that many people have been hurt and may initially respond in anger.
- Conduct a parish access survey—involve parishioners with disabilities and their families.
- Ask questions in your parish census on what is needed to facilitate participation. There is no need for a person to specify their disability.
- Include people with disabilities in all of parish life. Value their service as parish council members, in other ministries, and in liturgy as Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, musicians, etc.
- Consider ways to include students with disabilities in the parish school and programs of religious education. Consult with colleagues in other parishes, and Diocesan staff members. Utilize secular resources.
- Consider the connection between life issues and disability. Encourage people with disabilities to share their stories of living fully with a disability.
- Challenge the promotion of abortion, assisted suicide, or mercy killings to prevent or “overcome” disabilities. Question people who judge another person's “quality of life.” Help dispel fears of disability.
- Celebrate your successes.
- Have a service to bless your access efforts, such as a newly installed ramp or elevator.
- Advertise your accessibility, using access symbols on notices of events, in the parish bulletin., on the parish website, on the Archdiocesan website.

This is only the beginning...visit www.ncpd.org for

- Free downloadable resources
- Webinar replays and DVDs
- Resources, including large print Sacramentary and lectionary, mental illness video and resource manual, Opening Doors manual...
- Sign up for NCPD's free monthly e-newsletters: NCPD E-NEWS and *Mental Illness Network News*
 - News on upcoming webinars on a range of disability and respect life issues