

TEN WAYS TO WELCOME ALL ABILITIES IN THE AREA OF COMMUNICATION

1. Make creating belonging for all abilities part of the parish and school mission and vision statements.
2. Use “people first language” when speaking or writing about disabilities. See the *People First Language Handout*.
3. Use access symbols in newspaper advertisements, event announcements and signage to publicize accessible features already in place.
4. Include the words “All are welcome. Please call (insert phone number) so that we can provide accommodations for your participation” in all school and church event announcements.
5. Personally invite individuals with disabilities in your faith community to attend the school or religious education program and to participate in ministries, clubs, and events and arrange any accommodations to make participation possible.
6. Make large print prayer books, missals, Bibles, bulletins and hymnals (such as this 14 point bold type) available.
7. Stream worship services online and publicize the availability in the bulletin and on website.
8. Keep individuals with visual impairments informed by announcing information from the bulletin at the end of the worship service.
9. When new members join your congregation, ask, in a sensitive and dignified way, if any accommodations would enhance their participation in the faith community. Then provide the accommodations.
10. Invite parishioners who cannot regularly attend services to participate through a “ministry of praise.” Communicate and send the parish’s prayer intentions on a regular basis. Express the congregation’s gratitude for their prayer support.