

Different Gifts, Same Spirit

Creating a Learning Community Where Everyone Belongs

INTERMEDIATE TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

This lesson shows us that all people have gifts to share, and when individuals of all abilities have the opportunity to share their gifts with others, the entire classroom and the entire parish benefit.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS LESSON

Students will:

- see the giftedness of all people,
- welcome students of all abilities,
- experience a simulation to learn to work together by sharing our gifts to help one another and
- be familiar with 1 Cor. 12:4-11.

PREPARE YOURSELF

Read 1 Cor. 12:4-11, the scriptural basis for this lesson. Find out any special needs or challenges that your students may have by consulting with your catechetical leader. Think about your own experiences with disability.

Listen to the *That Every Ability May Belong Video Training* at www.TEAMBelong.org. Review the *Know Your Disability Etiquette* handout on pages 5-7.



PREPARE MATERIALS

- prayer table
- craft supplies for making greeting cards and bookmarks
- materials for gift wrap simulation exercise (see third activity in the student lesson)
- materials for gift boxes (see prayer service)



TEACHING HINTS

Suggested time line (based on a 75-minute class)

Introduction, Life Experience, Sharing 15 Min.

Faith and Scripture 30 Min.

Activities 20 Min.

Prayer Service 10 Min.



1. Life Experience: Ask students to read the story aloud, or read it to them. Be sure to allow enough time for full answers to the questions at the end of the story.

2. Faith and Scripture: Read the Faith and Scripture section with your class. Ask students about their personal experiences with people with disabilities that they know – in school, on sports teams, in the neighborhood, perhaps at home.

Be sensitive to all answers and remember that children often laugh when they aren't comfortable discussing certain topics.

- Emphasize the inclusive love of Jesus. He saw unique gifts in each person and wanted everyone to belong.
- Share examples from your personal life about how making sure everyone knows they

belong has made a positive difference. Point out that we all have disabilities such as color blindness, forgetfulness, weak eyesight, etc.

- Discuss the Reflecting on Belonging section in the student lesson. Ask children to suggest additional ways they can make everyone feel they belong and make a list of these ideas on the chalkboard.
- Ask the children to read Know Your Disability Etiquette and to draw and color a picture of themselves using good disability etiquette.

3. Activities: Choosing the one or two suggested activities from page three of the student lesson that will be most helpful to your class. (The gift wrap exercise will take the longest

because you will want every child to have a chance to participate.) Hints: The word search could be used as a review for the next class, and the greeting card could be assigned as homework.

4. Prayer Service: Prepare gift boxes for each student or make one large box. Glue mirrors in the bottom of small boxes. Wrap the boxes and the lids separately so that the lids can be lifted off. Display the gift boxes on the prayer table throughout the class.

Make sure to allow enough time for the prayer service so students do not feel rushed or pressured at the end of class.

Teacher: “Let us pray that all of our gifts can reflect the healing love of Jesus in our lives.

Students: (read aloud 1 Cor. 12:4-11)

Teacher: (place one large box in the center of the prayer group or pass out individual gift boxes)

“Inside this box is a special gift.

When you open the box, please take a moment to thank God for the gift

you find inside.”

Students: (open individual boxes or one student is selected to open the large box, students take turns looking inside the large box or look in the individual boxes to see themselves reflected in mirrors inside)

Teacher: “Now we will pray for the gifts we are and can be to others.” (allow time for student prayers)

Students: Students pray individual prayers.

Teacher: Let us pray the Prayer for Awareness together.

God, Creator of all, help us to recognize that each of us has abilities and each of us has limitations. And yet we all have a part to play in bringing about Your Kingdom. You love each of us profoundly. In the spirit of gratitude and solidarity, we ask you to increase our awareness of both the gifts and the needs of those around us. Open our hearts, minds and doors to the gifts of every person. Help us to become truly welcoming communities where everyone belongs and finds a place at Your Table. We ask this in Your name, Amen.

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KNOW YOUR DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

Use the tips below so that you know how to comfortably interact with classmates and parishioners of all abilities.

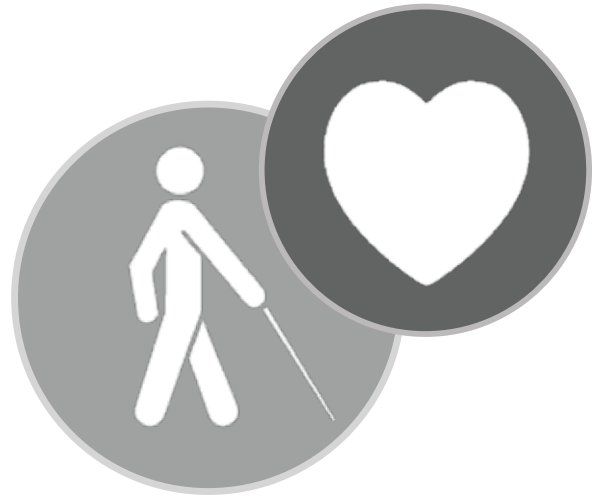
GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What do you say when you meet a person with a disability? How about, “Hello?”
2. A warm smile and friendly conversation are very welcoming.
3. Speak directly to the person with a disability, not only to the family member, companion, interpreter or canine companion.
4. Use people-first language such as “people with disabilities” NOT “the disabled” and “a parishioner who is blind” NOT “a blind parishioner.”
5. Ask the person with the disability HOW you can help. Respect any refusal.
6. Offer accessible seating, large-print bulletins, missalettes, or assistive listening devices. Know where accessible washrooms are.
7. Recognize that each person has gifts and abilities. Ask parishioners with disabilities if they would like to usher, bring up the gifts, proclaim the word, etc. and provide any accommodations needed.
8. Be sensitive to where a person wishes to receive communion – at their seat or at the altar – and make sure they are accommodated.
9. Feel comfortable using words like see, walk, and listen with persons with disabilities.
10. Use accessibility logos in print materials and on signage.



WELCOMING PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE VISION LOSS

1. Identify yourself when you greet the person. Tell the person when you are about to leave.
2. Talk normally, using your customary voice and typical expressions like “See you later.”
3. Offer your arm when assisting, the same way an usher does at a wedding.
4. Give verbal cues such as “We are going through a doorway.” Explain the traffic pattern with clear, calm instructions such as “Go up the center aisle.”



WELCOMING PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFERENCES

1. Speak directly to the person.
2. Offer assistance, but accept a “No, thank you.”
3. Sit down so that you are at eye-level if the conversation will last more than a few minutes.
4. Shake hands or lightly touch a shoulder in the same way you would with others.
5. Keep a person’s wheelchair or walker near the person.

WELCOMING PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

1. Face the person. He/she will appreciate seeing your facial expression and may read your lips. Your face, gestures, and body movements help in understanding.
2. Move closer rather than shout.
3. Speak clearly and slowly. Writing may be necessary. →

WELCOMING PEOPLE WITH SPEECH DIFFERENCES

1. Be patient. Let a person talk at his/her own pace.
2. Remember a person may have communication means other than speech, such as writing.
3. Ask questions that require short answers or a shake of the head. If you cannot understand, rephrase the question.
4. Repeat or paraphrase what was said in order to confirm that you understand.



WELCOMING PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES

1. Greet the person and interact normally.
2. Keep things simple and uncomplicated.
3. Treat people equally regardless of participation level; give prayer books or hymnals to all; allow everyone a chance to speak.