



Considerations for a Mass for People with Special Needs

A Mass for People with Special Needs is always a learning experience for all involved. By discovering what needs parishioners have, the parish will be able to meet those needs in the future. People who thought they could no longer attend Mass may learn that, with a little assistance, they can still be active members of the parish community.

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Mass for
People
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Needs



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Why hold a Mass for People with Special Needs?

It can be challenging for members of our society who are disabled or have other special needs to participate in liturgies due to physical and social barriers – or even family member anxiety.

Celebrating a Mass for People with Special Needs can be the first of many steps toward integrating these important members of our community into regular weekly or even daily Mass – and more deeply into all of the sacraments and other aspects of parish life. Holding this Mass sends the message that all of God's children are welcome under the parish roof and that every person is an integral part of the parish family.

"No family is ever really prepared for the birth of a disabled child. When such a child does come into the world, families often need strong support from their faith community. Family members need to know that others stand with them – at least in spirit – as they help their children along this path."

(Pastoral Statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities)

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An Invitation

If you have special needs and cannot ordinarily attend Mass, or, if you would like to bring a relative or friend with special needs to this Mass, please know that you are invited and encouraged to join!

Please let the parish office or organizing Knights of Columbus council know of any special needs you or your guest may have to ensure participation as fully as possible in the Mass and any related activities.

Also, please advise the parish office of any special talents or interests you or your companion may have, such as singing in the choir or serving as a reader, altar server or Eucharistic minister.

Aspects of the Mass

This Mass is intended to be a joyful opportunity to re-engage and discover a new relationship with one's faith. It must be made explicitly clear that those in attendance are not just welcome but also wholeheartedly encouraged to attend Mass at the parish every Sunday.

This liturgy is all about participation. People with special needs are invited to perform the functions of the Mass in as many roles as possible, including serving as readers, ushers, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers and choir members.

If possible, the sacrament of reconciliation can be offered as well. And, at the discretion of your pastor, the sacraments of initiation (baptism, first Communion and confirmation) may also be offered.

Following the service, a social event may be held to celebrate!

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