

Caritas St Joseph's

Working in the Diocese of Westminster for forty years, Caritas St Joseph's supports people with intellectual and physical disabilities, their families and friends.

Our aim is to assist parishes to find and reach out to people with intellectual disabilities, and to help them to find a place at the heart of the parish.

Our task is to translate Christ's message of inclusion into practical action so that people with intellectual disabilities can participate fully in the life of the Church.

So one of our practical action is to give support and advice on liturgies for Inclusive Masses.

We hope this Inclusive Mass toolkit will help you to reach those with disabilities in your parish.

Pope Francis said. 'Love and solidarity are what make the world a better place, not a focus on physical perfection and hiding away those who do not fit a commercial ideal'

Toolkit

To celebrate the gifts of all people especially people with learning disabilities.

Make sure the mass is well advertised so that **all** people are aware and can invite any friends and parishioners, ask parish priests in nearby parishes to advertise in their newsletters.

Send personal invites to families that you know in that parish and nearby parishes in that deanery.

Prepare and plan beforehand with your priest and parish leaders, let them know that we would like our friends with disabilities to take on the lead roles where possible, talk

through the theme of the gospel and all the different roles listed below.

Establish how accessible the church is for wheelchair users.

Can you meet somewhere first to prepare for the mass?

Have a small group of volunteers to enable and support people to feel competent and confident in their role.

- **Activity:** Organise a small simple activity to do together to prepare for the mass,

practise the drama, bidding prayers, make a banner, create a symbol on the theme. Refreshments can be offered.

- **Altar servers:** If someone serves in their home parish do they want to serve (bring Alb)
- **Welcome & Greeting at Church entrance:** Get people to give out mass sheets hymn books
- **Processions:** Do you have banners or a symbol something you have made in the activity beforehand that could be bought up in the procession.
- **Music:** Can people join in with the choir or perhaps play an instrument.
- Try to have music that is easy to join in with most people recognise the old favourites for the final hymn can people play and join in percussion. instruments
- **Readings:** Discuss with your priest if the readings can be shortened and simplified is the primary message best given with one reading. You can ask the readers who normally read if they would

be willing to help prepare an adult or child so that they feel confident in what they are reading otherwise one of your volunteers should make sure that they are competent in their role.

- **Bidding Prayers:** Ask if those with disabilities would like to do some short bidding prayers.
- **Signed Interrupter:** Ask if there is a person who can sign the Mass, if you have deaf families attending, you can enquire from nearby parishes.
- **Gospel:** Get the group to act out a gospel drama very simply.
- **Message:** Discern a very simple message from the gospel that will pass along the pews from one person to the other i.e. Jesus says to you today listen to me.
- **Offertory:** Organise people with Intellectual disabilities to bring up the gifts at the offertory.
- **Mass tokens:** With the message of the Gospel, which can be given out at the end of mass as a keepsake.

- **Refreshments:** After mass invite the whole parish to come and join in, often other groups will be willing to help.