

# Parish Kit

to assist parishes to celebrate  
International Day of People with Disability  
Monday 3 December 2007

This kit contains:

A letter from Bishop Max Davis

Liturgy Notes including:

- Preparation
- Parish Bulletin Notice
- Welcome
- Homily Suggestions
- Prayers of General Intercession

Resources Price List and Order Form

Brochure "One Body in Christ": *may be used as a resource in the parish.*

DVD "One Body in Christ": *a three minute audio visual may be used as a reflection before, during or after Mass.*



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life

Dear Friends in Christ,

The International Day of People with Disability is observed annually on 3 December. In Australia, over many years, the Church has sought to take this day as an opportunity to encourage a truly pastoral view that embraces our total community as the living Body of Christ.

To be authentic this view must include every member of the community acknowledging their call, their gift and their presence. We cannot claim to be truly disciples of Jesus unless we are totally engaged in honouring His presence in each one and in building and nurturing this community to be a living witness of that presence. Clearly this is a revealed truth that is fundamental to our sense of our own real value. Just as clearly this truth should be so evident in our lived experience that others are drawn to know, understand and experience the Father's love that Jesus reveals.

People living with disability, as the International Day of People with Disability reminds us, are no less members of the Body of Christ than anyone else. Obviously there are particular challenges to enabling their full participation in the life of the community. Some of these challenges are visible and many others not so clearly identified. Once we acknowledge these challenges we can work together to ensure that all the gifts that flow

through the Body of Christ can be shared by each member of that Body. It is especially at this time that we are called and challenged to instigate change in our society that sees people with disability as a burden. This is a time to proclaim Jesus' presence that embraces all members. It is a call to be as much a visible sign of contradiction today as was Jesus in his time. We are all made in God's image and we are wonderfully made (Psalm 139).

I invite you to use the enclosed material and DVD to promote and recognise the gifts of people with disability. You may wish to use the material to celebrate International Day of People with Disability. It coincides with the First Sunday of Advent this year, which begins our time of yearning to see the presence of Jesus in our world.

Thank you again for your past willingness to engage in this practical pastoral expression of genuine love for Jesus as seen in every member of His disciples.

Yours sincerely in Jesus,

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✠ Max L Davis  
Bishops' Delegate for Disability Issues  
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life  
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

# **Liturgy Notes**

## **Preparation**

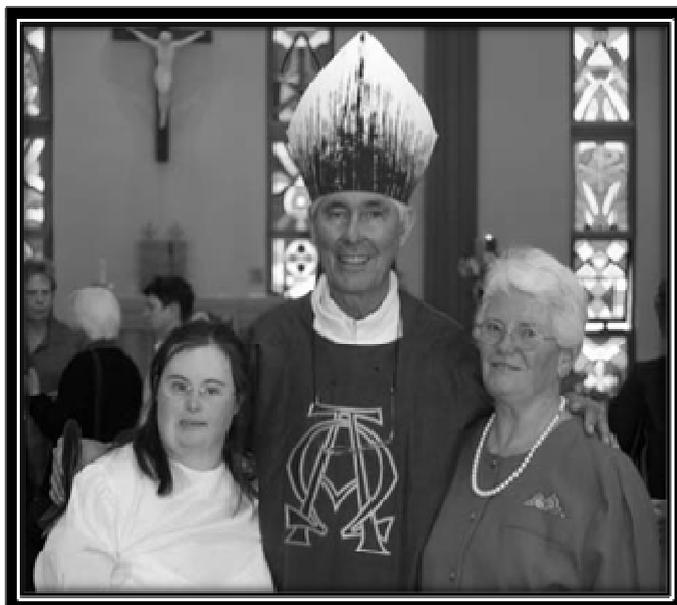
International Day of People with Disability is celebrated annually on 3 December. Recognition and celebration for this day is mostly held between November and December. According to recent figures, one person in five has a disability and parishes may like to highlight the gifts and talents of people with disability, their families and support people. The enclosed brochure provides suggestions and ideas to celebrate and promote full participation of people with disability in your parish community.

## **Suggested Insert for Parish Bulletins**

The International Day of People with Disability is observed annually on 3 December. In Australia, over many years, the Church has sought to take this day as an opportunity to encourage a truly pastoral view that embraces our total community as the living Body of Christ. We especially pray that we, the Church, can strive to be a people of compassion and relationship, and a sacred place where our gifts are acknowledged, received and celebrated; for then we can truly proclaim that we are 'one Body in Christ'.

# Welcome

The International Day of People with Disability is observed annually on 3 December. In Australia, over many years, the Church has sought to take this day as an opportunity to encourage a truly pastoral view that embraces our total community as the living Body of Christ. Today we are invited to pray for people with disability, their families and the people who support them.



## Homily Suggestions

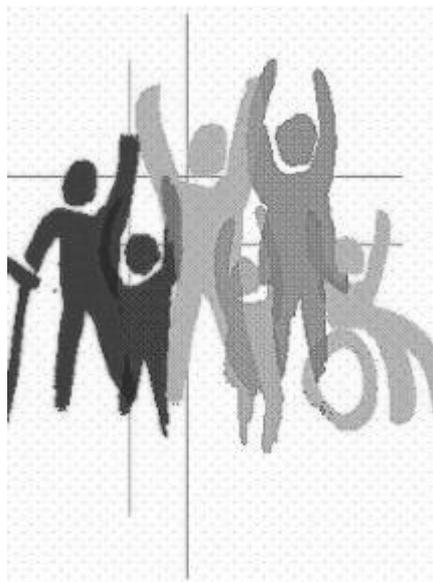
Advent calls us to watch, wait, prepare and be aware of the presence of Christ among us - within us and in the people around us. This yearning to identify Christ is satisfied in many ways but in a particularly meaningful way when we ponder the mystery of the Incarnation. To behold the divinity in the little Christ-child is to break through the barrier of aloneness and separation that was never God's desire for us from the moment of creation. This is the form chosen by God through which we can be aware of Christ in each other and in ourselves. It challenges us to accept ourselves and each other as we are, 'warts and all'. It is with this common understanding and acceptance of our limitations and our great need for God in our lives that we can be 'One Body in Christ' and even identify that He makes obvious our limitations so that we can already experience what salvation means.

As the Body of Christ, we are called to the vision expressed in the reading from Isaiah. We are called to establish truth and justice where all people enjoy full participation.

We are challenged to live in the 'light'. To throw off the darkness of the night – to take off the clothes of exclusion and fear, and appear as lights of welcome in the darkness of exclusion.

There are many urgent situations that need to be addressed as part of our duty to be awake and ready. How are we, as a parish, encouraging and promoting the full participation of people with disability and their families in our faith community?

The question is not "How can we help people with disability?" The much more important question is, "How can we allow people with disability to give their spiritual gifts to us and call us to conversion, call us to wholeness, call us to love?" *Henri Nouwen*



## **Prayers of General Intercession**

Priest: In Advent Time, we watch, we hope and we pray for the coming of the Lord.

1. That Pope Benedict may be granted abundant graces to guide your Holy Church in truth and in love; so that people of all abilities may be lovingly supported in living out their Christian calling to serve the community.

We pray to the Lord.

2. That we may be gratefully aware of the gifts and contributions people with disability share with our Church and the wider community.

We pray to the Lord.

3. That all people with disability, their families and support workers, will know God's tender love expressed through the support of a welcoming community.

We pray to the Lord.

4. That babies and their families will be given the necessary supports and opportunities for growth and development before, during and after birth.

We pray to the Lord.

5. For all who are ill, especially .....; we pray that God will ease their pain and bless them and those who care for them.

We pray to the Lord.

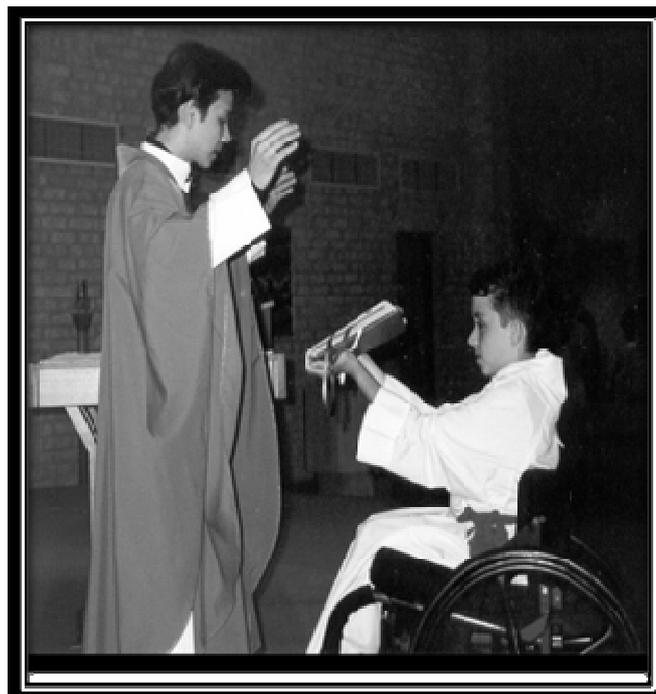
6. That our parish communities will continue Jesus' mission of love for people with disability by offering appropriate support and meaningful relationships.

We pray to the Lord.

Priest: Let us be alert to the Advent of our God and prepare the Lord's way by embracing justice and truth, finding comfort in the Christ who promises peace, and confident that our prayers are heard.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



This parish kit has been produced by the  
Secretariat for Pastoral Life

Please address all enquiries to:

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference  
Disability Projects Officer  
Secretariat for Pastoral Life  
GPO Box 368  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

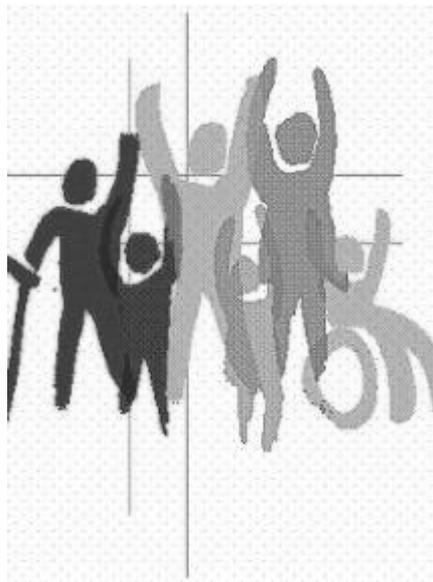
T 02 6201 9868

F 02 6247 6083

E [disability@catholic.org.au](mailto:disability@catholic.org.au)

[www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bc/famlife](http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bc/famlife)

*You are the body of Christ,*



*and each of you is part of it*

(1 Corinthians 27)

## PRODUCT LIST

Item		Price *
I Have a Story	Colour Booklet	2.00
I Have a Story	Large Print Booklet	3.00
I Have a Story	Braille Book	30.00
I Have a Story	Audio Cassette	10.00
Celebrating Our Gifts	Prayer Card	0.20
Celebrating As One	Prayer Card	0.20
One Body in Christ	Prayer Card	0.20
One Body in Christ	Pamphlet	0.50
One Body in Christ	Music DVD (3 minutes)	1.00
One Body in Christ	Music CD (7 tracks)	5.00*
We Have a Story	Full Colour Book	25.00*

\* The price of items marked with an asterisk include Goods and Services Tax (GST). Members of the Catholic GST Religious Group may deduct the GST component of the purchase price. All other items are free of GST. Bulk discounts are also available on items marked with an asterisk.

Prices do not include postage.

