

To foster belonging and welcoming in your own parish consider these best practices:

- Have a parish advocate
- Perform an accessibility audit of your building and parish programs
- Offer a sensory-friendly Mass, an alternative worship space, and sensory spaces or tools
- Inclusive offerings for Mass, events, the website, and bulletins (including sign language, hearing assistive listening devices, large-print missals, etc.)
- Educate parishioners and staff on disabilities in your bulletin or homilies
- Include persons with disabilities, mental health issues, and caregivers in your general intercessions at Mass
- Provide support group resources for caregivers in your parish

For More Information

To learn more about the Deaf & Disability Ministries within the Diocese of Des Moines or to find additional resources, you can visit our website or contact our office.

dmdiocese.org/disabilityministry



Contact Us

Diocese of Des Moines

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The Diocese's Disability Ministry to parishes and families is funded through the Annual Diocesan Appeal. We thank you for your support!

Deaf & Disability Ministry

"No abled vs. disabled. There is just us."

- Dr. Miguel Romero, "Recognizing the Body of Christ: A Theological Engagement on Disability"

Our Mission

The Catholic Diocese of Des Moines works for the inclusion of persons with disabilities along with those who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

We want everyone to be full, conscious and active participants in their faith and to live out their call to holiness.

Working with parishes, families, and community partners for all to live out their baptism in the Christian community.



Our Services

The Office for Disability Ministry serves as a resource providing parishes, schools, individuals and families with tools to make the Catholic faith accessible to all and to advocate for persons with disabilities and the Deaf Community.

● Mass with ASL Interpreters

Sign language at Mass is offered at both St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines and the St. Catherine of Siena Student Center near Drake University.

● Adaptive Sacramental Prep & Faith Formation

We work with parishes, families, and Faith Formation offices to provide adapted sacramental preparation materials and inclusion in faith formation programs.

● Mental Health Ministry

We support parishes in establishing mental health ministries to support and accompany people experiencing mental health issues, mental illness and their caregivers.



● Parish Disability Resources

We educate parishes on person-first language and hospitality, and encourage them to equip parish advocates at a parish to foster belonging.

● Prenatal Diagnosis Support

Receiving a prenatal disability diagnosis may be overwhelming. We offer support and resources in understanding what a diagnosis means and how to plan for the future.

● Caregiver Support

Caregivers also need support! We assist in establishing regular support groups at the parish level.