

One Body in Christ

Late last year the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life, initiated "One Body in Christ: Welcoming people with disability". It's an information pack that assists parishes in becoming more aware, inclusive and providing better facilities for parishioners with disabilities. We are all part of the one body within the church and as such we have the ability to embrace ALL parishioners.



We are extremely fortunate at St Declan's to have had the opportunity to provide better facilities through the building works of the school and ongoing upgrades in the church: providing a ramp to the meeting room; better car park facilities with the added spaces for disabled parking; the hearing loop in the church; a new sound system; better text projection on screen; large print bulletins; inclusiveness of the parish-based sacramental program for children with special needs and through the various ministries within our parish.

As part of our ongoing reflection we could pray that we are more tolerant of others no matter what circumstance, ability or disability or struggles they may have. We are not to pity but embrace all people and do what Christ himself taught us – "to love one another as I have loved you."

There are two bookmarks: "Jesus said...Be Open" and "Everyone Gifted, made in God's image – beatitudes of acceptance" available for a short time in the church for you to take home; if none are available, the prayers are included below. Let's pray that we become more inclusive, tolerant and aware of all our sisters and brothers in Christ.

If you would like further information regarding "One Body in Christ", please contact me at the parish office.

"What can I do?" "How can I assist someone who has special needs?" "Am I making people feel inferior or small?" "What would Jesus do or say?"

Paulineke

Jesus said...BE OPEN

Holy God,

Open our ears to the deaf and hard of hearing.

Open our communities to be sacred listening places where all are heard.

Open our eyes to those who are blind or have low vision.

Open our communities to be sacred places of new vision and insight.

Open our minds to challenge old attitudes and prejudices.

Open our communities to be sacred places of new attitudes, compassion and understanding of disability.

Open our arms to embrace all in our community.

Open our communities to be truly accessible and welcoming to ensure every opportunity of full participation in the life of our Church community.

Together, then, let us pray in union with Jesus Christ.

I pray that all may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

May all be one, so that the world will believe that you sent me.

Cf John 17:22-23

**Australian Catholic Disability Council
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life**

Everyone Gifted... made in God's image

Beatitudes of acceptance

Blessed are you

who take time to listen to speech that may be slow,
for you help me know that if I persevere,
I can be understood.

Blessed are you

who walk kindly by my side,
for in your friendship I feel good to be myself.

Blessed are you

who never bid me to hurry up;
and, more blessed,
you who do not snatch a task
from my hands and do it for me,
for often I need time rather than help.



Blessed are you

who stand beside me as I enter new
and untried ventures,
for I may surprise myself and you.

Blessed are you

who ask for my help and realise my gifts and abilities,
for you help me to believe in myself.

Blessed are you

who help me with the graciousness of Christ,
because I sometimes need help
for which I cannot ask.

Blessed are you

who, in all ways, assure me
that what makes me an individual
is not my particular difference,
but my God-given strengths and virtues
which nothing can confine.

Blessed are you

for you affirm my values as a gifted person
and your understanding and love
have opened the doors of love for me.