

## Inclusion for Physical and Mental Disabilities

**From USCCB:** “Every person is created in the image and likeness of God and has an inherent dignity. Each member of the Body of Christ is unique, and therefore, families and parish communities are as well. We all have gifts and challenges, come in different shapes and sizes, and have varying needs. It is through this realization we come into community, centered on Christ, to accompany each other on our pilgrim journey”.

The initial focus for this ministry has been special needs children and their families. The working team of parents and professionals is referred to as the “Kindred Kids” team – kids who are allied, connected, affiliated, sharing similar and special needs. We have implemented a Calming Room for use during weekend Mass times. This room is not intended as a “cry room”.

The room reserved for Kindred Kids is Room #1 below the parish offices. The locks have been changed to allow access to the downstairs during weekend Mass times. The room has a cushioned floor, filtered lights, cushioned counter tops, and some calming tools and supports. The Mass is streamed to that room for parents who need to avail themselves of this space during Mass times.

We are just beginning to work on an expanded parish-wide child care that includes special needs children. Child care that accommodates special needs children is one of the limiting factors for parents and families to become fully engaged in the many adult faith formation and community events made available to all parishioners. Our next working meeting will be Nov. 7 at 6:30 pm in Rooms 4 & 5 below the parish offices. All interested persons with special needs children or those with experience providing child care including special needs are welcome to attend and contribute at this session.

We will begin after January 1, 2020 to plan an all-inclusive Mass for this spring. Watch for what this will include and how you may be able to help.

Continue to watch this space for status and upcoming opportunities. If you have questions or feedback please send your comments or questions to Al Brehl at [albrehl@ee.net](mailto:albrehl@ee.net) or call Al at 614-570-4884.