

# The Light is ON for You

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## The Light is On for *Everyone* ***Next Steps for Pastors & Parish Leaders***

### Religious education programs

- On religious education and registration forms, ask parents or caregivers if any accommodations are needed for their child.
- Consider incorporating adaptive tools and materials into your existing programs. Visual aids used in these programs benefit all children.
- Children with different styles of learning are more comfortable with the reception of the Sacrament if they have met with the Confessor several times beforehand.

### Bulletin announcements

- When announcing times for Lenten reconciliation services and confession times, add information to contact parish office if they or their child will need accommodations for the reception of the Sacrament.
- Contact the Department of Special Needs Ministries if an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter will be needed for the parish communal reconciliation service.

### Confession space

- If the Church has traditional confessionals, why not designate a room for persons who may use a wheelchair, walker, or cane? Traditional confessionals are challenging for people who use mobility aids.
- Provide copies of adapted prayers, including the *Act of Contrition*, both in the confessional and pews. Copies are available through the Department of Special Needs Ministries.
- Make available several copies of any additional materials in large print.

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## Outreach

- Consider offering Confession during hospital and nursing home visits.
- Encourage families with children living with severe disabilities to join the rest of the parish during Lenten services. He or she can participate with the parish community.
- Children or adults who communicate mainly with gestures are welcomed to use a communication device during Confession. Prior to the celebration of the Sacrament, confessors may need advice, from the family or caregiver and instruction on how the device works.
- Share your own experiences as a priest or parish staff working with a person with special needs on the parish website, social media (The Light is On #GetCloser), and bulletins.

**Material and tools are available at the Department of Special Needs Ministries. Contact us with any questions. For additional information, please refer to the USCCB *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* (updated November 2017)**

<http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/policies/upload/Guidelines-for-the-Celebration-of-the-Sacraments-with-Persons-with-Disabilities-Revised-Edition.pdf>

**301-853-4560 or [specialneedsministry@adw.org](mailto:specialneedsministry@adw.org)**



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**ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON**

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRIES

[WWW.ADW.ORG/SPECIALNEEDS](http://WWW.ADW.ORG/SPECIALNEEDS)

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