



Prayer Service for the
International Day of People with Disability, 2021
December 3



Prayer space if in person:

A circle of chairs, a candle and flowers, and a cross and bible at the centre.

An online PowerPoint is also available.

GATHERING

Suggested Music: *We Belong to You* by Trevor Thomson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PmfGGHF6cs>

or *At the Table of Jesus* by Tony Alonso
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFUkhpFo_KY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Leader: *This acknowledgement of country comes to us from Brisbane Catholic Education.*

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years, and their descendants who maintain their spiritual connection and traditions.

We thank them for sharing their cultures, spiritualities and ways of living with the land in this place that we all now call home.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

May we continue to walk gently and respectfully together with each other.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

Leader: We begin our prayer today in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (*make the sign of the cross*).

All: *Amen.*

Leader: On this *International Day of People with Disability*, we come together as people who are made in the image and likeness of our loving God. We welcome all to our prayer, knowing that each of us brings unique gifts to share that reflect the beauty of our creator.

We give thanks for God's holy presence among us, and for the chance to encounter God through each other.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Leader: You are a God who invites us to participate as co-creators. Lord, have mercy.

All: *Lord, have mercy.*

Leader: You are a God who delights in diversity. Christ, have mercy.

All: *Christ, have mercy.*

Leader: You are a God of inclusion and care. Lord, have mercy.

All: *Lord, have mercy.*

Leader: Lord, you bless us with many gifts to build your Kingdom here on earth. Help us to welcome you in the people who come into our lives each day. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: *Amen*

SCRIPTURE

One Body with Many Members (NRSV)

Reader 1:

This wisdom comes to us from 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 12 to 19, and verse 26.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body...if one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Please take a moment to savour the living Word.

LIVING TRADITION

Reader 2:

This wisdom comes to us from Pope Francis in his 2020 address for the *International Day of People with Disability*.

Creating a fully accessible parish requires not only the removal of architectural barriers, but above all, helping parishioners to develop attitudes and acts of solidarity and service towards persons with disabilities and their families. Our aim should be to speak no longer about “them”, but rather about “us”.

PEOPLE OF GOODWILL

Reader 3: Each of us has a role to play in creating communities of grace.

What gift do you bring to share in your faith community?

How are people with disability and their carers made welcome and included?

What is one thing you could do to contribute to helping all people participate more fully in the life of your community?

Please enter your response into the chat or share with others in the prayer.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Adapted from Nancy Eiesland’s *Encountering the Disabled God*, 2007).

Leader: We bring our prayers to God today, knowing that God understands the human condition and our vulnerability, caring for us in our need.

Reader: For the Church: that it follows the call to incarnate the disabled God for our world, challenging any structures and systems that deny the full personhood of people with disability. We pray to the Lord.

All: ***God of mercy, hear our prayer.***

Reader: For governments and all countries in our world: that the dignity of people with disability is protected and respected in laws, and in community and social structures. We pray to the Lord.

All: ***God of mercy, hear our prayer.***

Reader: For First Nation people with disability: that their needs be listened to and addressed, and that action is taken to ensure care and ongoing connection to culture.

We pray to the Lord.

All: ***God of mercy, hear our prayer.***

Reader: For those who suffer from degradation and marginalisation because of their disability, especially through COVID-19: that they find welcoming places of safety and communities of hope where they can renew their lives and spirits.

We pray to the Lord.

All: ***God of mercy, hear our prayer.***

Reader: For people with disability in our local communities: that their voices are heard, their experiences honoured, and their gifts allowed to flourish. We pray to the Lord.
All: *God of mercy, hear our prayer.*

Reader: For all of us here: that we be united as the Body of Christ, as Christ is united with us in the Eucharist. We pray to the Lord.
All: *God of mercy, hear our prayer.*

Reader: Are there any other prayers today?

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are blest, broken, and shared for the world.
May we also be a living sign of your grace in our world today.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: We pray the *Prayer for the International Day of People with Disability, 2021.*

God of all people,
You have made us in your image, delighting in your creation.
Help us to see and receive
each person as a beloved and unique part of your body.

All: *We are all part of the Body of Christ.*

Leader: You desire all people to use their gifts to enrich the world around them.
Help us to celebrate and support
the participation and leadership of people with disability in our communities.

All: *We are all part of the Body of Christ.*

Leader: You give and sustain life, opening ways of thinking and doing that allow all to grow.
Help us to be inclusive in welcoming people with disability as a vital part of “us”.

All: *We are all part of the Body of Christ.*

Leader: We ask this through Christ, our light,
who lives within us and calls us all to fullness of life.

All: *Amen.*

BLESSING

Leader: May God bless us, keep us, and give us peace (*make the sign of the cross*).

All: *Amen.*

