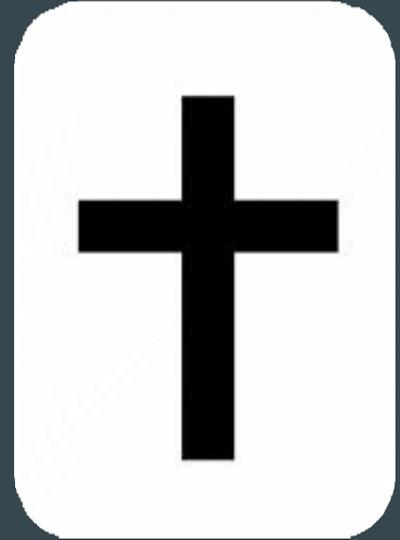


# Disability within the Christian Faith



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# What exactly is a Disability and what is the Christian Faith?

- A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions).
- The Christian faith centers on beliefs regarding the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While it started with a small group of adherents, many historians regard the spread and adoption of Christianity throughout the world as one of the most successful spiritual missions in human history.



# Question #1: Why would God, who Christians believe in, allow people to have Disabilities?

- A disability is not God's punishment, but a result of living in a fallen world. While some disabilities can come through poor choices of our parents or ourselves, such as substance abuse or recklessness, others simply develop from our genetic makeup. Ultimately, we are all disabled in some way or another from the way God created us to be.



## Question #2: How are Disabled People Treated in the Christian Faith?

- Some Christians feel that their faith means they have a duty to care for those with disabilities. As well as this, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has called for the church to become more accepting of those with disabilities.
- Christians with disabilities also report feeling unwelcome when attending church. Many families of children with disabilities in the USA report feeling excluded from Church services because of the attitudes of other members of the congregation.



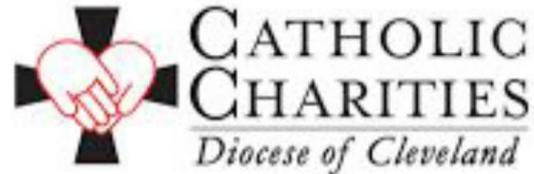
# Question #3: What kind of accessibility does the Christian Church offer to the Disabled?

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government' programs and services.
- The ADA does not apply to religious organizations and entities controlled by religious organizations. Thus, under the act, churches do not have to be handicapped accessible. (However, nonreligious entities that conduct their activities in church facilities may be subject to the act.) Although the ADA does not apply to churches, some churches have adopted the act's accessibility standards for public accommodations.



## Question #4: What Programs does the Christian Church offer the Disabled for Inclusion?

- In 1966, Catholic Charities Disability Services & Ministries formally joined together to offer opportunities and resources to live life to their potential and to participate fully in Church and society. We provide a variety of educational, social and recreational programs, as well as spiritual, pastoral, sacramental and catechetical services for persons of all ages and abilities. Special events are also celebrated throughout the year, such as the annual Walk of Hope in October and the Journey to Bethlehem Mass in December. This is an example of a church outreach program towards the disabled.



# Recap

To conclude, the Christian Church believes that due to the fallen world we live in, there will be disabled people. Some disabled feel unwelcome but the church is doing what they can through outreach programs and different things to make the disabled feel like they belong. Most of all it is our job, whether Christian or not, is to help the disabled feel equal to the rest of the world.

**DISABILITY  
& FAITH**

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