



# OFFICE WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The archdiocesan Office with Persons with Disabilities fulfills the archdiocese's spirit that "All Are Welcome," most importantly, people with disabilities. The Office with Persons with Disabilities and these ministries are here to serve you as you intentionally welcome and include people of all abilities in the life of the Church in Chicago.

This Office brings together the various ministries of the Archdiocese of Chicago that provide for the participation of individuals with disabilities and their families in all aspects of parish life:

## **Commission on Mental Illness**

The purpose of the Commission on Mental Illness is to educate and resource parishes on the spiritual and supportive needs of persons with serious mental illnesses such as bi-polar disease, major depressive illnesses, schizophrenia, and personality disorders, among others. Since mental illness not only affects the individual with the disease but also family members, the needs of the entire family are addressed. In carrying out its mission of making the Church a more loving, inclusive, and supportive place for people with mental illness and their families, the Commission networks and collaborates with parishes, other diocesan agencies, the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities/Council on Mental Illness, and a variety of public organizations.

## **Faith and Fellowship**

The mission of Faith and Fellowship is to provide opportunities for prayer and faith sharing in a format tailored to the unique needs of people living with a mental illness. Recognizing the isolation they may often experience, Faith and Fellowship strives to offer a welcoming sense of belonging through the formation of communities of faith, and by fostering inclusion in the life and activities of the parish community. Faith and Fellowship groups consist of 10 to 15 adults including approximately equal numbers of members with a mental illness and volunteers from local churches. They meet semi-weekly as partners in prayer and socialization.

## **Misericordia Home**

The mission of Misericordia Home is to support individuals with developmental disabilities in maximizing their level of independence and self-determination within an environment that fosters spirituality, dignity, respect and enhancement of quality of life.

## **Office of the Deaf**

The Catholic Office of the Deaf is under the archdiocese's Department for Human Services. The office is responsible for the pastoral care of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, as well as their families in the Archdiocese of Chicago. This pastoral care of the deaf involves: Sacramental ministry of the Church; Religious education of children; Advocacy; Information & referral; Spiritual guidance; Formation & training in ministerial leadership; Youth activities; Guarantee of communication access to worship and all other activities of the Catholic Church.

### **Spred (Special Religious Development)**

Spred forms small communities of faith in parishes to welcome persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, in order to foster participation in parish assemblies of worship.

### **Pathways.org TEAM W: That Every Ability May Worship**

TEAM W assists parishes to intentionally welcome parishioners of all abilities and their families. Educational materials at [www.TEAM-W.org](http://www.TEAM-W.org), annual TEAM W Awards with grants of up to \$1,000 for access projects, an August TEAM W Month and resources for parish TEAM W ministries are provided to help parishes accommodate disability differences so that parishioners of all abilities and their families feel a sense of welcome and belonging. Visit [www.TEAM-W.org](http://www.TEAM-W.org) for more information and grant applications.

## Office Contacts

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### **Pathways.org TEAM W: That Every Ability May Worship**

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**For more information, visit [archchicago.org](http://archchicago.org).**