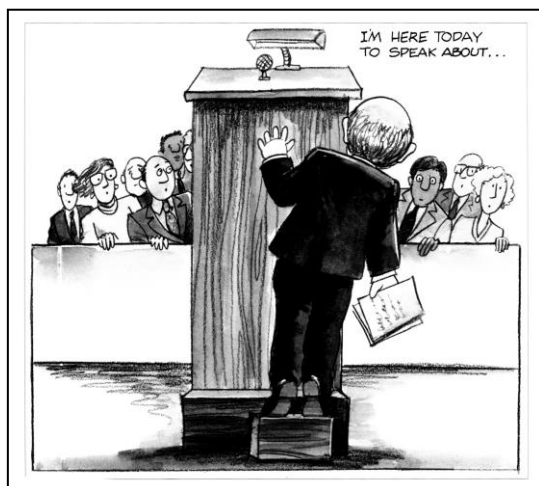


Accessibility through Creativity



*From Barriers to Bridges,
National Organization on
Disability, 1996*

When you think of accessibility, do you first see dollar signs? Are ramps and elevators the fix-all solution to accessibility?

NO!!! Accessibility is much more than ramps and elevators. Accessibility is a new way of thinking and sometimes involves little or no cost.

Here are some examples of low cost ways to make your parish accessible to all people:

- Install handrails wherever there is a change in floor level.
- Position greeters to open heavy doors for those who can't.
- Install a doorbell at the parish office door to alert staff when a visitor needs assistance entering.
- Use the photocopier to enlarge print on worship aids.
- Equip a lector who can't step up to the ambo with a portable microphone.
- Apply slip-resistant tread to steps.
- Furnish worship space with chairs that can be easily rearranged / removed to suit the changing needs of congregations.
- Relocate a small Christian community meeting to the home of a member who doesn't drive.
- Offer a ride to an elderly parishioner to Sunday mass and Lenten fish fry's.
- Clean light fixtures and light bulbs regularly to keep dust from diminishing their output.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with halogen or compact fluorescent bulbs to improve lighting.
- Replace doorknobs with levers.
- Relocate a religious education class to a first floor room.
- Install a paper cup dispenser near a difficult-to-reach drinking fountain.
- Reserve seating close to the altar for those with hearing impairments.
- Post signs to indicate accessible entrances, parking, and restrooms.
- Offer a concurrent para-liturgy for children and adults with limited attention during Mass.

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Equal Access Ministries