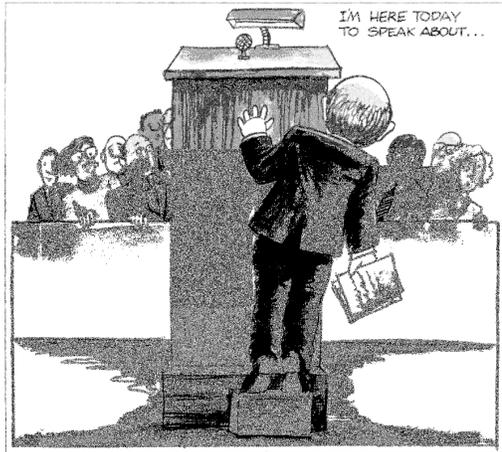


Accessibility = Creativity



*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 their newly relocated parish worship site.
- Clean light fixtures and light bulbs regularly to keep dust from diminishing their output.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with halogen or compact fluorescent bulbs.
- 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 disabled adults with limited attention during Mass.

Created by Marsha Rivas, Diocese of Toledo Equal Access Ministry and used with permission 2010.

For more information on welcoming persons with disabilities in your parish, contact Sharon Urbaniak, Diocesan Disabilities Action Team, Diocese of Buffalo, 716-847-5514 or surbaniak@buffalodiocese.org

