



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Dear Friends in Christ,

At our baptism, we are welcomed and commissioned to spread the Good News, to produce fruit that will last and to use our God-given gifts. We are all called to witness the life of Jesus Christ through our prayer, our offerings and how we share our gifts. It is through the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour that we are challenged and called to be a loving, compassionate and inclusive community; to be truly *One Body in Christ*.

The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, in his recent letter to the Catholic Church in Australia, invites and calls us to a Year of Grace. It will be a time to contemplate the face of Jesus Christ; for it is when we recognise Jesus Christ in ourselves and each other that we are led on a profound and mysterious journey towards understanding the meaning of being *One Body in Christ*.

In the life of our parishes, one of the challenges is to ensure that all people are included in the life of the Church, especially people with disability, their families and friends who support them. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has developed a new resource kit, for parishes and faith communities, to assist in the promotion of the full participation of people with disability. Its release has been timed to coincide with International Day of People with Disability, which takes place on the 3rd of December each year.

The kit, *One Body in Christ: Access, Attitude and Acceptance*, encourages and assists parishes and faith communities to discover and celebrate the beauty and strength of the Body of Christ, by encouraging and promoting the full participation of people with disability in the life of the Church.

Let us confidently strive forward to become faith communities that gladly welcome people with disability and their families, to recognise the presence of Jesus Christ in all, and to empower all to evangelise and tell their Good News.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Terence J Brady
Bishops' Delegate for Disability Issues
Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life
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