

# Different Gifts, But the Same Spirit

## DIRECTORS GUIDE

### Introduction

The Director of Religious Education at a large suburban parish tells of a lesson she learned about inclusion one Sunday afternoon. Her parish had a food drive at Thanksgiving time. On the Sunday after Thanksgiving, signs were posted and announcements were made inviting anyone who wanted to help pack food to meet in the parish hall at 2 p.m. Shortly after 2 p.m., as the DRE was helping to organize a small group of volunteers, in walked three young men who happened to have disabilities. They all lived near the church and attended Mass there every weekend. Wrongly assuming the men were food recipients only, the DRE rushed up to tell them to go home and wait for the food to be delivered.

Puzzled, they pointed to the sign that read, "Everyone welcome to help pack food boxes," and one man asked, "It says 'everyone.' Didn't you mean us? Can we help?"

When she told this story at a recent DRE meeting, she remarked, "This experience has made me look at giving and receiving very differently!"



Sometimes the people we perceive to be the neediest can be the most gifted of all!"

### Before You Distribute These Materials

Look over all the lesson plans and student pages and decide how your parish will use these materials. Some parishes may choose to present the material in conjunction with Inclusion Sunday, as a preparation for the day or on the day itself.

Notice that the family lesson is printed so that a mailing label can be attached. Decide how to best distribute the lesson to families in your school or parish program.

This series of inclusive lesson plans, developed by the Pathways Awareness Foundation in partnership with the Archdiocese of Chicago, is provided to help your parish or school teach families and students in grade four through high school the gifts received when people of all abilities are welcomed into the life of the parish.



and high school students to those catechists/teachers. Provide copies of the family lesson plan to all the catechists/teachers. Give catechists/ teachers time to read the teacher guide and look over the student pages for their grade level.

4. Explain how you would like catechists/teachers to use these lessons, or have them help you decide when and how they should be used.



## Helpful Resources

- **Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors**, 20-minute video/DVD featuring Joseph Cardinal Bernardin and Fr. Henri Nouwen \$20\*\*  
\*\*Free to principals, DREs and youth ministers who schedule a free presentation.

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[www.inclusioninworship.org](http://www.inclusioninworship.org)

- **Courage Song**, Available as a CD single or as part of the “Starting Small” collection of songs by the late Bob Blue - \$10

[www.bobblue.org](http://www.bobblue.org)

- **Welcome One, Welcome All: Inclusive Education Resource Binder** - \$35

The Institute for Pastoral Initiatives  
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- **Opening Doors to People with Disabilities**, Volume I: Pastoral Manual and Volume II: The Resource Guide  
Two binder set – \$25

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