

## **Placement of Barrier-Free-Access Seating: CCB**

The same Jesus who heard the cry for recognition from the people with disabilities of Judea and Samaria 2000 years ago call us, his followers, to embrace our responsibility to our own disabled sisters and brothers today.

The *church is the door to participation* for individuals with disabilities, most disabilities of a person are not seen by others. We have no proper “barrier free access seating” in any of our three churches.

Throughout the liturgical life of the parish, persons with mobility issues are prevented from processing to receive Holy Communion, Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, receiving Ashes, processions during Advent and Lent Evening Prayer, Baptism liturgy, Foot washing on Holy Thursday, to the altar of Repose, Palm Sunday procession with palms, from Easter fire to their pew, blessing yourself with the Easter Holy Water.

Our church’s liturgical documents are clear that persons with mobility issues are not to be “corralled” in the church. This means multiple parts of the assembly’s seating are to be designated for parishioners with mobility issues. They are to have the same full access in processing into church and forward throughout the liturgical year’s of varying Processionals.

Fully removing some pews throughout the assembly’s seating will give full access for the person in a wheel chair, walker, or cane to exit the row, and process forward, then back around to their seating area; their rightful procession.

The Pew Research organization polling of catholic parishes, report **Hospitality** as the number one (#1) characteristic that make parishes dynamic, engaging, and welcoming. In our new parish of St. Matthew the Evangelist, we need to examine, identify, and create a hospitable barrier-free access seating areas.

Also, for our hearing impaired parishioners, equipment is being research to broadcast the spoken and sung prayers of the liturgy to their devices along with incorporating an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for one of our weekend Masses.