



JUBILEE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Jubilee of People with Disabilities is dedicated to recognising and celebrating the dignity, value, and unique contributions of individuals with disabilities in the community.

PRAYER

Loving God, author of all gifts;

We praise and thank you for all the gifts you have entrusted to us.

Pour out your Spirit upon us so that, true to our baptismal promises, we may form faith communities that recognise and promote the gifts in all people so that we may all share in the mission of Jesus.

Inspire us to be a Church that is welcoming and accepting, and which sees everyone as an expression of Christ.

May our faith communities nurture and commission all members to live our particular gifts as a reflection and imitation of Jesus' life.

Give us the courage to be the light of welcome in the darkness of exclusion, a voice of gentleness in the wilderness of the unheard and an outstretched hand of love to those longing for community. Amen.

(From the [Australian Catholic Bishops Conference](#))

TEACHING

From [Pope Francis' Message for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021):

“As we celebrate your International Day, I would like to speak directly to all of you who live with any condition of disability, to tell you that the Church loves you and needs each of you for the fulfilment of her mission at the service of the Gospel.



“The Gospel is also for you! Its message is addressed to everyone; it is a word of consolation and, at the same time, a summons to conversion. The Second Vatican Council, in speaking of the universal call to holiness, teaches that “all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity... In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ... They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor” (*Lumen Gentium*, 40).

“The Gospels show that whenever persons with disabilities met Jesus, their lives changed profoundly, and they became his witnesses. Such was the case, for example, of the man blind from birth who, after being healed by Jesus, boldly declared to everyone that Jesus was a prophet (cf. *Jn* 9:17). Many others joyfully proclaimed what the Lord had done for them.

“I know that some of you live in situations that are not easy. I would like to speak personally to each of you, and I ask that, if necessary, your family members or those closest to you read my words to you, or convey my appeal. I ask you to pray. The Lord listens attentively to the prayers of those who trust in him. No one should say: “I don’t know how to pray”, because, as the Apostle says, “the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings” (*Rom* 8:26). In the Gospels, Jesus always listens to those who turn to him, however haltingly, even with a small sign (cf. *Lk* 8:44) or a cry for help (cf. *Mk* 10:47). Prayer is a mission, a mission accessible to everyone, and I would like to entrust that mission in a particular way to you. There is no one so frail that he or she cannot pray, worship the Lord, give glory to his holy Name and intercede for the salvation of the world. In the sight of the Almighty, we come to realize that we are all equal.”

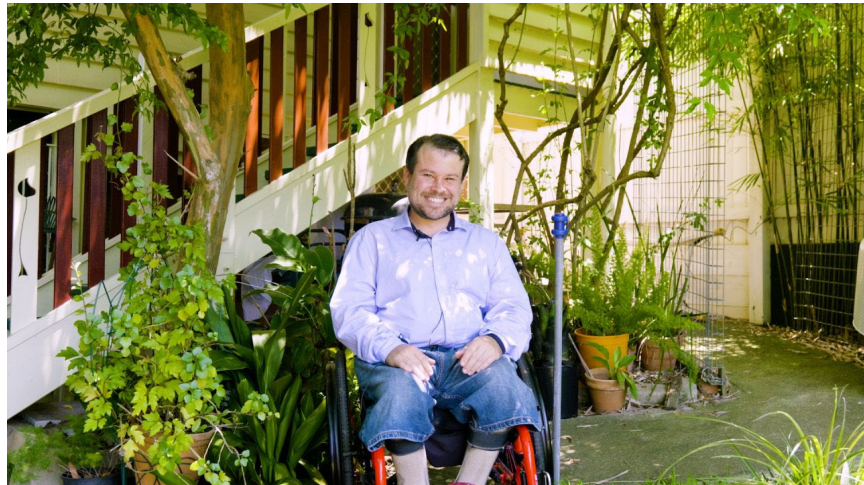


Servant of God Eileen O'Connor (Image: [Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney](#)). Eileen was born in 1892 and died in 1921 at the age of 28. She suffered from tuberculosis of the spine, spinal curvature, stunted growth, periods of blindness, long periods of paralysis and extreme nerve pain, amidst other ailments. Despite this, Eileen offered her suffering up to God and dedicated her life to His mission, founding the Our Lady's Nurses of the Poor—known as the “Brown Nurses”—alongside Fr Edward McGrath MSC. She was declared a Servant of God in 2018.



TESTIMONY

“My name is Samuel Hodge. I am a person with a disability called Spina Bifida and I am committed to living out God’s mission, which to me means loving one another unconditionally. In the year of 2024, the theme for the International Day of People with Disability, is: ‘Amplifying the



leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future’. This theme reminds us of our call to support, uplift, and embrace all people, ensuring that our communities reflect true inclusion and compassion.

“Let us commit to living out our call to inclusivity and love. May we see and honour the unique gifts in every person and work towards a world where everyone is valued and embraced. May our actions mirror God’s unconditional love, nurturing a sense of genuine belonging for all.”

- Samuel Hodge (From the [Archdiocese of Brisbane](#))

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

For the Church, that it may continue to grow in inclusivity, embracing the gifts of all, especially those with disabilities.

We pray to the Lord.

For individuals with disabilities, their families and their carers, that they may experience the love, support, and recognition they deserve within our faith community.

We pray to the Lord.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Key Documents – Disability Projects Office \(Australian Catholic Bishops Conference\)](#)

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