

Respect Life Week: Youth Night Resources

Night Five: Celebrating Special Needs

Opening Prayer: Pray a decade or full rosary from these [Rosaries for Life](#)

Introduction:

Introduce the topic as well as the Church's stance on it. God makes each person special—a unique creation whom He planned from the beginning of time. God does not make mistakes. He made everyone perfect! In our world, it is so important that we learn to respect the dignity of every human person, no matter our differences. Unfortunately, people with disabilities experience a great amount of discrimination, including bullying. When we cannot recognize their dignity as children of God, we need to change our perspective and recognize the incredible lives of those around us. People with disabilities deserve the same love and support as everyone else. God has a special plan for every single person, no matter what our abilities are.

Opening Discussion:

- Where does our dignity come from? How were we created?
- What does that mean for how we should treat those with special needs?
- How can we help people to see how valuable their lives are?
- What gifts does God give us?

Suggested Videos and Discussion Questions:

- Watch the amazing Paralympics video "[We're the Superheroes](#)".
 - How do these Olympians celebrate their special needs or disabilities?
- Watch Lizzie Velasquez' [TEDx](#) talk
 - How does Lizzie define herself? How do you define yourself?
 - What is her message? How is she so joyful?
- This [short video](#) explains the US' maternal and parental leave policy.
 - How can policy support a culture of life? Does it do that right now? What needs to change?
- Listen to [Sofia Sanchez](#) and her family's story
 - What message does Sophia want the world to hear? Why is it important?
- Watch [My Name is Deformed](#)
 - Who is "Deformed"? Why are they called that? How does offering this solution to these children change the lives of the doctors and nurses?
 - What is the significance of a name? What does it mean for these people to be renamed?

Discussion:

- Reinforce the message that, because God makes each one of us and creates us for a reason, he gives us all of the gifts that we will need to fulfill our purpose in this life. If someone is born with a disability or a special need, it must mean that God’s plan for that person will use that special need and create something wonderful out of it! Our worth, our definition, is not found in our physical appearance or “defects”, or even worldly accomplishments or success, but in the love of our Creator.
- How can we celebrate our needs and differences every day? How can we welcome those in our community that might otherwise be excluded?

Activity:

- Brainstorm as a group ways that you can be of assistance to people with special needs or disabilities without being awkward or rude.
 - What is it that they actually need?
 - How can you meet those needs while respecting their dignity?
- If students have access to computers or iPads, have them use the online resources to learn what it is like to have [dyslexia](#) or [ADHD](#). Or, watch [Carly’s Cafe](#) to experience what it can be like to have autism.

Closing Prayer:

- Consider reflecting with a song like [“Christ in Me”](#) or [“I am Yours”](#)
- Closing prayer:
Loving God, you teach us that the power of the Holy Spirit means more than any human

limitation or weakness.

Through surrender to your will, may we bear witness to the truth
that the source of our human dignity is not the outward condition of the body,
but our likeness to the Creator.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.