

**Awakenings Prayer Group**  
*For those with disabilities, their families, friends and caregivers*

**Steps taken to form and implement a like ministry**

**Questions to ask before beginning:**

1. What is the reason for such a ministry in our parish?
2. Would such a ministry in our parish serve our parishioners?
3. What would be the expectations for such a ministry in our parish?
4. What experiences or formation do the facilitators of this ministry need?
5. Where, how often and for how long would the gatherings be?
6. What ages would be served?
7. What effects on our parish community would this ministry have?
8. What effects on the diocese would our ministry have?
9. How will we inform others of this ministry?

**Implementation of Awakenings Prayer Group for Holy Family Parish:**

+Those of us serving in this ministry have been brought together with like interest and desires.

+We began with an interest in bringing together those with special needs, of any kind, to become more a part of our church community.

+Our decision was to introduce those who came to take part in building friendships and trust with the support of each other and the facilitators.

+We understand that within our parish there are persons who do not attend liturgy on a regular basis due to personal constraints of a disability.

+The Awakenings Prayer Group brings these persons together to pray, build trust in God, self, others and church and to offer socialization.

+We have chosen to open our prayer group to all ages at this time, until there may be need for any change.

+We meet once a month in the same setting, which is accommodating to all who attend. Our group meets for one hour.

+We offer hospitality with friendship, acceptance of all as well as simple drinks and snack.

+We hope that the adult or parent of a child with special needs would have trust and courage to face the Sunday community in liturgy with their disability.

### **Expectations of the formed ministry:**

1. An expectation of our parish community would be that of a welcoming and accepting place for all to worship. **That all could come as they are.**

2. Expectations for the diocese would be that this ministry could awaken parishioners to be more welcoming to all its members. Thereby persons with disabilities who have not been part of a worshipping community, due to feelings of not being welcomed before, would then become and take part in a worshipping community.

3. A desire and expectation for this ministry is to help in changing the attitude towards those with disabilities within our parishes. To not only be welcoming and accepting of those with disabilities to join us in membership, but to join in the building of the Kingdom of God through service.

### **Sample Agenda of Awakenings Prayer Group for Holy Family Parish:**

Welcome at the door (some people may need help to enter the building)  
Name Tags and Sign-In Sheet

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Lighting of a Candle

Introduction of all members; later, new members

Open sharing by members on any issue

Share a reading from scripture, or another source, which relates to the experiences of persons living with special needs.

Group response to topic

Snack and Social time

Closing Prayer and Sharing of Intentions

Announcement of next meeting

### **Holy Family Awakenings Prayer Group Facilitators:**

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