



Serving the Child with Disabilities

A Greeting from Linda Sgammato

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When we gathered in the desert for our 60th Celebration we shared many things. We came from all over the world, with all of our cultural and regional differences, only to discover once again what unites us... the child.

In the Breakout Session on Children with Disabilities we learned that so many of us feel the call and the deep desire to make certain that every child has the opportunity to experience a relationship with Jesus in the atrium. Some of us gathered for more discussion on the topic and there emerged such a beautiful sense of hope. It became clear that all children who come to us would be welcomed, they too would know that they belonged in the sheepfold.

A catechist told us that in her atrium, there was a person who was just "there" to quietly help the child who may have some challenges, they call her a "Loving Presence." How beautiful is that! What this celebration confirmed for me is that there are so many of you out there who respond to the needs of children with disabilities and reflect the face of the God of Inclusion.

Additionally, what I heard is that we are all searching for ways to meet the needs of children with disabilities in our atria. Once a child with a disability is welcomed into the atrium many practical tasks remain. Yet at the very core what we do, is what we already do in the atrium, we observe the child, we come to know the child, and we journey together.

Thank you to all of you who shared your desire to welcome every child into your atria and into your hearts. In being that "loving presence" we discover the giftedness and sacredness of those very persons whom Jesus, in his earthly ministry, repeatedly touched with his kindness.

One of the fruits of the 60th celebration is this new addition to the CGUSA website. It is in the role of advisor to those of you who work with children with disabilities that I offer my services. We hope to create a place where we can exchange ideas, offer resources and provide support for interested catechists. It is an important work that we are called to do so let us pray for this new endeavor and ask the Good Shepherd to guide us.

Do you have thoughts, needs, specific areas you are interested in learning more about? Please contact me at childrenwithdisabilities@cgsusa.org and we will begin to look at how we can best serve our children with disabilities in the atrium.