



National Apostolate for
Inclusion Ministry

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*Promoting the Full Inclusion of People with Intellectual/ Developmental
Disabilities in the Life of the Catholic Church*

Getting to Know Your Student: A Parent Interview

By Mary Pat Carter with Marilyn Bishop

A phone call by the catechist to a parent to welcome the child to your class and to the program can be an excellent opportunity to ask some important questions. Below are some possible questions to ask a parent. For the purpose of this exercise assume that your student's name is Jeff.

1. What are your goals (dreams) for Jeff in religion class this year?
What are the main things you want Jeff to learn this year?
2. What does Jeff like to do in his spare time?
3. Does Jeff have any special fears or needs that I need to be aware of?
4. Does Jeff have any food allergies?
5. When Jeff is upset, what does he do and what have you found to be the best way to help him calm down?
6. Would it be all right with you if I talk to Jeff's school teachers to see if they have any helpful hints for me? NOTE: Ask for written permission..
7. Do you have any information on Down syndrome (or whatever the child's disability is) that you think would be helpful for me to know?
8. In your opinion, what do you think is the best way to teach Jeff a new idea?
9. Can Jeff make his needs known? (this is important if the student is non-verbal.)
10. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about Jeff?

You can end the conversation by simply saying that if there are any problems or concerns, you hope the parent will feel free to call you and discuss their concerns.

Another possibility is to have these questions on a form that you give to the parent and then call the parent to discuss the answers on the filled out form.

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