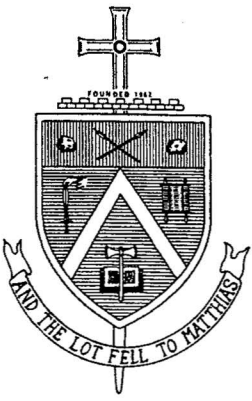


# The Catholic Community of Saint Matthias

Reverend Douglas J. Haefner  
Pastor

February 2, 2006



Dear Parishioners and All Parish Leaders & Ministries,

*"When we open our hearts and our community to the gifts each person brings, we are all strengthened."*

*Joseph Cardinal Bernadin*

These powerful words of the late Cardinal Bernadin capture the heart and spirit of a Catholic Community that embraces as its mission the theme: *"All Are Welcome"*. These words also serve as a prelude to the promulgation of the Accessibility Guidelines For The Full Inclusion Of Persons With Disabilities prepared by the Ministry with People with Disabilities. These guidelines are to be used in every area of ministry and in the review and maintenance of our parish facilities and property. Essential to implementing these guidelines is that we open not only our doors but our hearts and minds to challenge and expand our ways of thinking and acting as disciples of Jesus Christ practicing the Kingdom of God. As Cardinal Bernadin wrote: "Our God excludes no one. God is a power of inclusion."

We look to the day when not only our world but our local faith communities are able to break down the barriers that prevent all God's people from inclusion and accessibility in all that we do as Catholic people.

My special thanks to Carol Norland for all her time, effort and heartfelt dedication to this document and for all Carol has done to help us become more aware of our ministry with people with disabilities. Let me also express my gratitude to the Ministry with People with Disabilities for its continued work in calling us to a greater awareness to the needs of persons with disabilities.

I ask you to implement these guidelines immediately as we continue to witness the principles of justice and inclusion mandated by the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas J. Haefner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

(Rev.) Douglas J. Haefner  
Pastor