



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 2022

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Pope Francis wrote of our need not only to care for people with disabilities but also “to ensure their ‘active participation in the civil and ecclesial community’” (*Fratelli Tutti*, no. 98).

People with disabilities in Belarus face challenges of social isolation, especially if they rely on wheelchairs. If they lack close relatives, friends, or guardians to help them, they can find it difficult to access services, information, and accessible transportation. As a result, they often lack the opportunity to build relationships, work in groups, and meet their social and spiritual needs. These challenges become even greater in times of disruption, such as the political unrest and protests surrounding the national elections in Belarus in 2020 and continuing into 2021.

The Tabita program — an initiative begun in June 2018 that is run by Caritas Belarus and supported through funding from the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe — assists people with disabilities by bringing them together to socialize, share their experiences, and pray in an environment where volunteers, as well as a volunteer coordinator and a part-time social worker, are available to assess and assist participants with their physical, social, psychological, and spiritual needs.

When you support the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, you help programs like Tabita break down the walls of isolation separating people with disabilities from the community and from each other.

Please be generous to the collection because your support helps the Church in Belarus alleviate the loneliness and isolation facing people with disabilities. Consider giving at Mass or through your parish online giving platform. #iGiveCatholicTogether also accepts funds for the collection.

For more information about the collection and who it supports, visit www.usccb.org/ceec. Thank you for your help to restore the Church and build the future in Central and Eastern Europe.

In the Lord’s Peace,

Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmo, DD
Bishop of Charleston