Introduction:
The Archdiocesan Sacramental Policy includes twelve sections of Pastoral Commentary, the last of which contains guidelines for those who have an intellectual disability or other special needs. Familiarity with these guidelines and available resources, will assist parents, teachers, catechists and pastors when supporting a candidate who has special needs.

Guidelines:
The following 5 quotes highlight the key points of the guidelines.
1. The child who is intellectually disabled is a person with an eternal destiny and a priceless dignity. In practice, there should be no hindrance to the full incorporation of the child into the Christian community.
2. It is desirable that the sacraments should be celebrated in the midst of the parish community at the same time and age as other children. However, individual circumstances will sometimes suggest other arrangements.
3. Once parents express a desire for the child to receive the sacraments then the usual norms governing these matters should be replaced or supplemented by consideration of the faith of the family in the love that Christ has for their intellectually disabled member.
4. Every effort should be made to help any child who can appreciate these sacraments to do so. It is sufficient that the child be instructed according to capacity at the time the request is made. The task of catechists is ongoing, and should not occasion delay in admission to the Sacraments.
5. Even if the practice of the faith by the parents is irregular, their child may be admitted to the sacraments where there is the genuine faith support of the extended family or a Catholic institution.

Resources Available:
Refer to the following documents which are contained in the Parish Resource Folder - "Children and the Sacraments - Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance" available from the Liturgical Commission:

- "Children with Disability and Participation in Sacraments" Booklet 3
- Archdiocesan Sacramental Policy - Appendix A "Guidelines for Reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance by those who have an Intellectual Disability".

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