
All of us have a story to share in our lives with God. Most of us have the opportunity to do this within a community of faith. However, there are a few who need friends to help them articulate their story and to walk with them on their journey of faith. SPRED provides that opportunity for people who are developmentally disabled.

WHAT IS SPRED?

SPRED (Special Religious Development) is a program in which persons who are developmentally disabled come together with a spiritual friend/catechist (21 years and older) to share a one-on-one relationship and form with others a small faith community. SPRED fosters and nourishes spiritual and personal growth by helping those with developmental disabilities discover God's action and presence in their lives. SPRED gives parishioners with developmental disabilities an opportunity for celebration and worship and prepares them for the sacraments of initiation and reconciliation. Special liturgies during the course of the year are also celebrated as a community.

SPRED serves age groups from children to adults (6-10 years old, 11-16 years old, 17-21 years old and 22 years and older).

SPRED history extends over a period of 40 years and originated in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Today, SPRED is national and international in scope. SPRED became affiliated with the Arlington Diocese under the Office of Catechetics in 1982. The Diocesan Observation and Training Center is located at Holy Family Parish in Dale City.

The SPRED Program is committed to following and implementing the statement of the Catholic Bishops of the United States in their 1978 pastoral statement on persons with disabilities (revised in 1989):

“Jesus revealed by his actions that service to and with people in need is a privilege and an opportunity as well as a duty...Recognizing that persons with disabilities have a claim to our respect because they are persons, because they share in the one redemption of Christ, and because they contribute to our society by their activity within it, the Church must become an advocate for

and with them...In touching the lives of disabled men, women and children in this way, we come closest to imitating Jesus' own example which should always be before our eyes (Lk. 4-17-19,21).”

SPRED CATECHESIS

A SPRED session is an event that happens at a definite time and place. SPRED friends/catechists are asked to make a weekly commitment and participate in SPRED Diocesan training. In a prepared environment, the community of faith participates in a two-hour session composed of three phases: preparation, catechesis and agape. Catechist preparation sessions alternate with integrated sessions (with those with developmental disabilities). One week the catechists meet to prepare and to deepen their faith lives. The following week they meet with those who are developmentally disabled.

Contact Information

No previous experience in working with persons who are developmentally disabled is required or necessary to participate in this ministry.

“By reason of their baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God, and have the same divine calling.”(U.S. Bishop’s, Guidelines for Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities)

Holy Spirit SPRED

How many:

- 12 Sessions each year.

Where:

- Holy Spirit School
 - Room 14
 - Meeting Room 2
 - Cafeteria

When:

- September - March/April
 - Integrated session (with our friends with disabilities) - Saturday morning 10:00 – 12:00 (preparation and cleanup for catechists ½ hour on both sides)
 - Catechist session - Monday night preceding integrated session in Pastoral Center 7:00 – 8:00 PM.
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SPRED

SPECIAL RELIGIOUS
DEVELOPMENT

**Holy Spirit
SPRED**



Holy Spirit SPRED Contact
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