

## ***What is SPRED?***

***SPRED*** means...

***SP***ecial ***R***eligious ***E***ducation for the ***D***evelopmentally disabled.

Fr. James McCarthy developed the method 'Vivre' (meaning Life) to assist his developmentally disabled brother in understanding the teachings of Jesus.

Through this method, catechists first focus on a lesson topic like 'Belonging'. Through our session we first focus on the feeling of belonging as individuals in our daily lives. Drawing from personal experiences helps our developmentally disabled 'Friends' to associate with feelings of belonging. We then transition into the Biblical by explaining how Jesus taught us to belong, as a community at mass or as a group of friends sharing a meal at the last supper. The catechists and Friends can then transition into the feeling of belonging to a Parish Community, celebrating the mass together and the receiving of Holy Communion.

## ***My Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:***

*"...I want to touch your hearts and spirits to become more aware that developmentally disabled people, regardless of age, need nourishment for their spiritual lives as well as opportunities to give glory to God."*

*"these people have a right to live in and to be welcomed into all areas of life. Especially they have the right to be baptized and welcomed into the liturgical life of God's people."*

*"a welcoming attitude searches for ways to assure a place for everyone."*

*Pastoral Guidelines developed by  
Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*



### **St. Patricia SPRED Program**

9050 South 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Hickory Hills, Illinois 60457  
Phone (708) 598-5222  
[www.stpatriciaparish.com](http://www.stpatriciaparish.com)

A COMMUNITY OF  
FRIENDS WELCOMING  
PARISHIONERS WITH  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES

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*St. Patricia  
**SPRED**  
Program*

# **‘LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME’**

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Too often persons with disabilities are excluded from our worship community. Using the method Vivre, each of our developmentally disabled ‘Friends’ journey in faith through a one-on-one relationship with an adult volunteer catechist.

Through these relationships of friendship, our Friends with mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, severe epilepsy and other cognitive disabilities discover a community where they are able to receive and celebrate the sacraments and enter into the worship experience with knowledge and confidence of the full Celebration of the Mass.



## **SMALL FAITH COMMUNITY**

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St. Patricia is host to two SPRED groups. Our program has been growing in this Parish since 1995. Each group serves our Parish ‘Friends’ ages 22 and older. Our ‘Friends’ reside both in group homes or in their family homes.

Each group consists of a three person core team that attend five one time training sessions at the SPRED Center in Bridgeport, six adult catechists that attend one training session and six special needs ‘Friends’.

SPRED is not like CCD. We are a small group of 15 that gather to share stories from personal life experiences, become more aware of God in daily life, grow through Jesus’ example in friendship, and share food and drink.

## **VOLUNTEER**

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It is so easy to volunteer! We are a ministry of huge rewards and little commitment. Each SPRED group meets 2 Tuesday’s a month from September to April. We have a total of 12 sessions during that time period. Sessions begin at 6:30 pm and end at 9:30 pm.

We are currently in need of core team members as well as adult catechists.

## **DO YOU FEEL A NUDGE?**

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If the thought enters your mind that this may be the ministry for you...it very well may be. The Father may be calling you...giving you the nudge you are waiting for.

## **FUNDING**

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St. Patricia SPRED program receives no funding from the Archdiocese or the Parish. There is no tuition or class fees as most our ‘Friends’ are wards of the state. That is why we depend on private donations from parishioners and proceeds from our annual Mothers Day Carnation Sale to keep our program alive.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

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For more information on the organization of SPRED, please log on to: [www.spred.org](http://www.spred.org) or our Parish website at [www.stpatriciaparish.com](http://www.stpatriciaparish.com)

For more information on becoming a volunteer or being placed on our ‘Friends’ waiting list, please contact the rectory at: (708) 598-5222. They will place you in contact with the Parish Chairperson for SPRED.

