

## From our Catechists and Participants...

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"They're so faith-filled...there's a love you feel in seeing God in all of these special people that we welcome each year. You don't get this anywhere else." - Mary Roesinger (St. Pius X)

"It's been awesome. I love the camaraderie. These are nice people who are all here for one reason—God."  
-John Lorton (Participant, St. Monica)

"We are all a family together sharing the faith. It's so joyous, I can't even tell you." - Nicole McConnell (St. Malachy)

"Thank you for letting me have the honor of working with such awesome volunteers/catechists!"  
- Bill Hagenauer (Holy Spirit)



Erin Jeffries, Coordinator of Ministry to  
Persons with Special Needs

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## SPRED Overnight Retreat

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ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

*The Church in Central and Southern Indiana*

*"To respond in love  
to God who loved us first"*



## A Unique Experience...

Each year almost as soon as the retreat is wrapped up, the participants are asking when the next one will be. There are catechists who have helped plan and participate for over fifteen years!

The overwhelming response by both catechists and participants is that the retreat is a unique experience they look forward to- full of joy and love and friendship.

This weekend is designed especially for our adult SPRED friends- individuals who have an intellectual/developmental disability. But what all who come find is a place to grow in their relationship with Jesus, to share their faith, and to enjoy fellowship with each other.

It takes many hands and skills to put on a retreat! Can't come for the whole time? Come for a couple of hours to share a skill or passion you have, to help set up, clean up, or help with a retreat activity.

## FAQs

### ***Do I need to have a medical or special education background to do this?***

Absolutely not. Many of our catechists do have some background, but others do not. All that is required is an openness to getting to know others! Additionally, we have a nurse on staff to oversee distribution of medication and any first aid needs, as well as several nurses who are part of our typical team who can assist if needed.

### ***Will I be providing personal care?***

The short answer is 'no'. By and large the majority of our participants are quite independent, and those participants who require more personal care typically come with their own aide, and/or are assigned to a catechist who is familiar with that individual and his/her needs.

### ***Practically speaking, these are some things you may need to help with...***

- Making sure your friend(s) are awake in the morning
- Helping your friend(s) keep track of the schedule and where to go next
- Helping your friend get to a restroom
- Assisting with activities (e.g. writing or other fine motor skills)
- Assisting a bit at meal time (carrying a plate, helping dish up, cutting if needed)
- Helping your friend unpack and pack, getting their bags to and from their room

## What is expected of a catechist?

- Ideally, a catechist will stay for the duration of the weekend. Additionally, we greatly encourage all catechists/volunteers to come Friday evening before the retreat begins, to meet the rest of the team, and for a briefing on the schedule and groups.
- Become a friend for a person, or small group of individuals with a developmental disability
- Be willing and open to enjoying the activities, meals and conversation
- Assist your special friend(s) in articulating his/her life experiences, and in completing activities as needed.
- Be willing and open to being reflective and enter into the sharing of your experience



*Sr. Cathy Anne Lepore, OSB leads the group in a sing-along.*