

SPRED STANDARDS

Parish Spred Centers supported by the Archdiocesan Spred Center agree to the following standards. Standards make collaboration and planning possible among centers. Standards make visible the means used to welcome and guide persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in parish Spred communities of faith.

1. Availability

Religious services shall be available to the person with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Usually the person with disabilities who enters a SPRED group has membership in a parish or church. By sponsoring a SPRED group, the parish or church makes religious services available. The parish or church indicates its sponsorship by appointing a chairperson.

The work of the chairperson is to locate persons with disabilities in the parish, locate workers to join the group, see to it that the workers (catechists) receive SPRED training and arrange for the use of appropriate space.

Through a chairperson, SPRED services become available to the person with disabilities.

2. Preparation for Catechesis

There shall be a preparation phase to each session with persons with developmental disabilities.

The person with disabilities is welcomed as a guest as soon as he or she arrives. The prepared environment fosters a sense of belonging, well-being and concentration. The activity catechist assumes responsibility for the overall preparation phase.

3. Catechesis with Persons with Disabilities

There shall be a symbolic catechesis appropriate to the age, mentality, and faith development of the group. The leader catechist assumes responsibility for the catechesis given. A prepared environment and the attitude of the adults foster a sense of the sacred, prayerful awareness and an attitude of celebration in a community of faith.

4. Closure

The session shall be brought to a gradual conclusion through the sharing of food. Sharing of food in an atmosphere of the sacred has significance. A well prepared table involving everyone's contribution is a shared gift. Flowers, candles, attractive table coverings, quality tableware, dishes, etc., form the elements that convey respect, trust, and affection. Music expresses and deepens the group's happiness in becoming a community of faith, expresses and deepens the group's happiness in becoming a community of faith. With the coordination of the activity catechist, all members participate in the preparation, sharing of food, and cleaning up. The good-byes are to be respectful and personal.

5. Catechist Preparation Session

Each session with persons with disabilities shall be preceded by a catechist preparation session. An adult community of believers gathers together to renew its own appreciation in faith of the mystery to be celebrated in the session with the total community. United in their experience of faith, through a symbolic method, they form a warm, welcoming community.

Catechist preparation sessions take place on a day or evening other than that for the session with persons with disabilities. The session closes with the sharing of food. Helper catechists (sponsors) make up the majority of the adult group. The helper is primarily a friend of a person with disabilities.

6. Liturgy-Worship

Liturgical experiences with specialized groups shall take place from time to time, but inclusion into assemblies of worship in the local parish or church is to be fostered.

7. Area Coordination

There shall be coordination between centers in a given area. Chairpersons gather annually to share and plan for growth and expansion of SPRED ministry.