

SPRED Updates and Information

Office of Faith Formation

March 2021

Struggles and Realities

1. SPRED Chicago Headquarters

- Material was requested in November 2020 from SPRED headquarters – offered to all SPRED Parishes - accepted by two SPRED Parishes (*)
- No guidance or direction has been offered to Dioceses
- All SPRED programs suspended due to COVID-19 and highly vulnerable population
- Several Diocese around the world shared how they are managing SPRED sessions (most are not holding sessions)
- SPRED Chicago Monthly Newsletter sent to SPRED Leaders – primarily inspirational comments (*Leaders in-turn forward to their volunteers and families, as appropriate*)

2. SPRED Arlington Diocese

- **SPRED Parishes**

All Saints – Manassas City

Corpus Christi – South Riding

***Holy Spirit** – Annandale

Nativity – Burke

Our Lady of Angels – Woodbridge

***Our Lady of Hope** – Potomac Falls

Sacred Heart – Manassas

St. Mary's Basilica – Alexandria

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception – Fredericksburg

St. Thomas More - Arlington

- **Parish RE programs** – All SPRED Programs suspended due to difficulties providing school classrooms and sanitized spaces, willing and protected volunteers, protected participants, and willing parents
- **Volunteers** – All SPRED Leaders and Adult Helpers are volunteers – there is no practical way to provide safety and protection

- **Parents** – Concerned about the ability to protect children and adult participants from COVID-19
- **Children** – many are unable to wear masks for any significant length of time, wash hands sufficiently, maintain distance from others, and communicate needs – **the majority are unable to focus/pay attention to online instruction**

3. CDC and Public School Requirements (general education)

- Take each person’s temperature prior to entering building, sanitize all surfaces and areas of physical contact (light switches, tables, doors, etc.), no sharing of supplies or materials (crayons, pencils, books, glue, etc.) place desks 6 ft apart, wear masks at all times, maintain distance from others at all times, no food consumption near others, adults personally fitted with personal protective equipment (PPE)
- **Teaching Children with Disabilities:**
 - **82%** of districts said it is harder to provide hands-on accommodations and instruction
 - **73%** of districts said it is harder to provide instructional accommodations
 - **57%** of districts said it is harder to engage families for help with IEP requirements (parents unable/unwilling to work with children)

4. Return to SPRED Programs

- Vaccinations, available and sanitized spaces, willing volunteers, willing parents, willing and cooperative children!

***Many public schools in Northern Virginia have periodic COVID-19 outbreaks and must close for two weeks; teachers continue to be reluctant to resume fulltime “typical” in-person classroom instruction; hybrid lessons are common (rotating in-person and on-line instruction); substitute teachers are not available; children may be unable to wear masks due to physical difficulties; many children have disabilities that make them highly vulnerable to infections, e.g., Children with Down Syndrome often have lung/heart conditions

***Suggestions include providing thematic instructional “work-packets” that would be utilized with parental guidance (must be able to read, write, follow directions)