

# DIOCESAN EDUCATORS MEET AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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Diocesan Education Institute attendees hear nationally recognized speakers.

Dave Borowski | Catholic Herald  
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An estimated 1,400 Arlington diocesan teachers and administrators gathered at Bishop O’Connell High School in Arlington last Friday for the Diocesan Education Institute. The annual event brings educators together to reconnect with colleagues, hear speakers on topics of interest, and see the latest in educational products and services displayed by exhibitors at booths around the gymnasium and cafeteria.

The keynote speaker for the conference was School Sister of Notre Dame Clare Fitzgerald. Sister Clare is a native Bostonian who grew up in an Irish-American family of six children. She has taught all levels of students from elementary school to college graduate courses. Her talk was on “Catholic education: facing the challenges of our time.” Sister Clare said there are two concerns for Catholic education: maintaining our Catholic identity and living in the present-day culture. She told the audience that they are not just an educational system. “We are a faith-based educational system. If you take that (faith) out we’re just an option in an educational system,” said Sister Clare. She told the audience that they are agents of change. “The only people who can change the world are educators,” said Sister Clare, “because we change minds.”

Daniel Ferris, assistant superintendent of schools, said that there were two objectives for the conference: motivation and professional development — and both were achieved.