

# Special Religious Education Program



## What We Can Learn From the Sunflower

*Like the sunflower that follows every movement of the sun, so I turn toward you to follow you, my God.*

These lyrics written by the well know musician Carey Landry, clearly articulates for us the spiritual symbolism of the sunflower.

Recently, I have come to appreciate the beauty of this flower. Only when I took the time to study and ponder the details of the flower did I begin to understand why God may have created it. All of nature expresses the love and compassion God has for us.

The human heart is much like the sunflower in that it is always seeking the light

of the Son just as the sunflower continuously moves towards the light of the sun.

It is the sun's light that energizes and helps the plant to grow. The sunflower moves always toward the sun which gives it life. Its roots soak up the energy from the sun strengthening the stalk which supports the heavy weight of the flower.

When we seek always the light provided by the SON, we, too, can stand tall and shine brightly in the world.

Our faces will radiate the joy that only the Son can give. The heart depends on the light of the Son.

If you take the time to observe flower gardens

around your area, you will notice that the sunflower stands out. It is tall, bright, and beautiful. In its simplicity it attracts the human eye.

When we turn our faces toward God and rest in His light and grace, we will be able to stand tall, bloom, and bring beauty into the world. No darkness or storm can beat us down when we have the light of the SON of God.

It is not hard to see why the sunflower is a symbol of happiness, strength, faith, and fidelity. Thank you God for sunflowers! They remind us of our daily need for your love and grace. *Lord, let us turn daily toward your light.*

### Inside this issue:

Opening Sessions	2
Upcoming Events	2
Staff Meeting	3
Board and Committee Members	4
Fundraising Committee	4
Our Webmaster	5
Why I Come to Special Religious Education	5
Join Us at Our Fall Auction	6

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- We presently have an enrollment of 140 in the Special Religious Education Program.
- New Catechists 2015-2016: Diane Ross, Sarah Schantz, Sr. Angelica Rebello SCC., Colleen Schraenkler, Cathy Chirico, and Sandy McKee
- The program is growing in number and in enthusiasm. All participants are eager to gather for our weekly sessions.

## Sunflower Quotes

*Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows. It's what the sunflowers do.*



*Helen Keller*

*Many flowers open to the sun but only one follows it constantly. Heart, be thou the sunflower, not only open to receive God's blessings, but constant in looking to Him.*

*Jean Paul Richter*

*Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.*



*James M. Barrie*

# Eucharistic Celebration



Members of the *Friends of Jesus* group began the 2015-2016 year of Faith Formation with the celebration of Eucharist. Fr. Joseph Christy reminded us that we grow in our faith when we rely upon the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Christopher O'Leary served as lector and read from Ephesians 1:17-21 which spoke of Jesus inviting us to "Come and follow in His Way." Anderson Stenard led us in the Intercessory Prayer.

This celebration was a beautiful way to begin this year's theme, *Find God: Follow-*

*ing Jesus.* Each participant was given a cross with visual reminders of the things we can do to insure that we are following in the ways of Jesus.



This enthusiastic group will meet on Saturday mornings. They are eager to share their faith with one another. These smiles come from hearts who truly "Rejoice in the Lord, always."



## Upcoming Events

### Annual Fall Auction

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Gym  
November 14th (See p. 6 for more information)

### Thanksgiving Dinner

For Participants and their Families  
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Gym  
November 22nd

Reservations must be made no later than November 13th  
(Limited seating)

Call office to make a reservation 782-0030





# New Faces Among Staff



## Mission Statement

### Special Religious Education Program

*Jesus' ministry on earth was all inclusive. We read in the scriptures how Jesus cured the sick, healed the blind, the crippled, and raised the dead to life. Jesus desired that his mission of all inclusive love be offered to all people.*

*The Watertown Catechetical Board, under the sponsorship of the Catholic Parishes in Watertown, recognizes the importance of the commission by Jesus to bring His love to all people including persons with disabilities.*

*It is our desire to provide for the spiritual well-being of persons with disabilities by sharing with them opportunities for spiritual enrichment, prayer, faith sharing and fellowship.*



Twenty volunteer catechists for the Special Religious Education Faith Community met in September to prepare for the upcoming year. Sister Diane Marie led the group in prayer and reflection on the topic: *Jesus, the Master Teacher*. One of the main points of the presentation was looking at the importance of not only teaching what Jesus taught but, more importantly, putting our focus on how He taught. We looked at ways Jesus interacted with others. Like Jesus, we are called to teach with the same gentleness, compassion, love, and patience that he modeled in the way He treated others. We all agreed that our goal this year would be to model our teaching after Jesus, the Master Teacher.

We welcome to our staff Diane Ross, Sandy McKee, Cathy Chirico, Sister Angelica Rebello SCC, Colleen Schraenkler, and Sarah Schantz. They join Sister Noël Chabanel SSJ, Tammy Miller, Rose VanEpps, Patricia Spaziani, Julie Gould, Patrick Bates, Nancy Keefe, Sister Norma Bryant SSJ, Maureen O'Donnell, Amanda Morgan, David Liscomb, Alice Busler, Laura Johnson, and Anita Henry.

We are truly blessed to have each one of these catechists. They are enthusiastic about ministering with our people with disabilities. It does not take long to experience the richness of ministering to these beloved members of God's family. The participants come to us each week with a desire to talk about and learn more about Jesus. They are all very much aware of the love that God offers to each of us. Singing praise to the Lord is one of their favorite parts of our weekly sessions.

On Saturday, October 17th, six members of the staff will be traveling to Lake Placid for the Diocesan Celebrate Christ Event. Taking advantage of opportunities for spiritual enrichment will enhance our program and enrich the lives of our participants and catechists.

Rejoice in the Lord, for He has done great things for us!





## Watertown Catechetical Board Special Religious Education Committee Members 2015—2016

### Board Members

#### Pastors

Msgr. Robert Aucoin  
Fr. Jonas Tandayu  
Fr. Steve Murray

#### Christian Formation

##### Coordinators

Elizabeth Bamann  
Sr. Bernadette Marie Collins  
SSJ—President  
Sr. Angelica Rebello, SCC  
Helen Guardino-Trimmi

### Parish Representative

Sandi Butler  
Patrick Henry— Vice President  
Katie DeMarse  
Randy Belina

#### Program Coordinator

Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer, SSJ

#### Committee Chairperson

Alice Busler

#### Secretary

Sr. Noël Chabanel Hentz, SSJ

### Committee Members

#### Parish Representatives

##### St. Patrick's

Catherine Deline  
Sarah Schantz—Vice Chair

#### Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Julie Gould  
Alice Busler —Chairperson

##### Holy Family

Patrick Bates  
Kathy Allan

### St. Anthony's

Patricia Spaziani  
Virginia Burdick

#### Interfaith Representatives

Kim West  
Janice Phelps

#### Program Representatives

Therese Burdick  
Francis Scovel

#### Program Coordinator

Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer, SSJ

#### Secretary

Sr. Noël Chabanel Hentz, SSJ

## Fundraising Committee Hard at Work

There are many volunteers who have given of their time, talent, and treasure to support the Religious Education Program for people with disabilities. Three years ago we established a Fundraising Committee who would plan two fundraising events a year. The funds raised from these two events ensure that we can continue to service the one hundred and forty people who are presently enrolled in the program. It is our goal to keep our program meaningful and life-giving for our participants.

As the cost of living continues to rise it becomes more of a challenge for us to continue providing materials and social events for our people. Over the years we have held an annual Thanksgiving dinner for over two hundred people, a Christmas party with gifts for all, and an end of the year celebration with the members of the program and their families. These events are in addition to our regular weekly sessions where we need art and instructional materials. The participants also look forward to the snacks which are provided during the time for fellowship.

Mary Henry, Cathy and Mike Deline, Virginia Burdick, Elaine Grant, Sandy and Steve Petrillose, Sarah Schantz, Alice Busler, Patty Johnson, Katie DeMarse, Patrick Henry, and Jacob Johnson have met several times over the summer to plan our annual Fall Auction. We are grateful to these volunteers who have given endless hours of their time. The success of our program is attributed to all of our volunteers and benefactors who care about the well-being of people with disabilities. Their love and support are making a difference in the lives of many people with disabilities in the Watertown and surround areas.

It is our hope that you will support their efforts by attending our fundraising events this year!!





# Why I Come to the Special Religious Education Program



**Nancy Murphy**

I like Bible study. I want to learn what other people know about God. When I leave to go home I always feel good and happy.



**Therese Burdick**

I want to learn more about Jesus. I like singing. I come every time I can because I like doing the projects. It makes me happy to come to our program. My favorite part is praying for everyone.



**Dana Lee Tubbert**

I think it is a good learning experience. I enjoy praying with other individuals with special needs. Being in the group makes me feel special because they are good caring friends. I leave happy. Tuesday is dress-up Tuesday, the best day of the week.



**Jessica Pryce**

When I come to class on Tuesday I feel happy. I like to sing Church songs. My favorite part is going on trips with my friends. I like my teacher.



**Mary Katherine Lane**

I enjoy learning about the Bible because when I was young I just learned about the catechism. I especially like our retreat days and the Thanksgiving dinner.



**Nalanie Simpson**

I come because I love the people who come here. Being part of the group makes me feel great. It gives me a tingling sensation inside. I love Sr. Diane and all the teachers.

## Special Thanks to our Webmaster



**Website  
specreled.org**

We would like to thank our webmaster, Leon Vaughn for setting up our web page. For the past year and a half Leon has volunteered his time, talent, and treasure to keep our site running and up to date. He tried to teach Sister Diane Marie how to update the information on the site but her computer skills are not quite up to working with a web page. After two trips to her office to train her, Sister surrendered and accepted Leon's offer to keep the site updated himself.

Sister is very grateful for his service. It is her hope that people will begin to use the site to stay informed about what is happening in the Religious Education Program for People with Disabilities. Secondly, she

is hoping that parents who are blessed with children with special needs will consider enrolling their children in the program. Presently, ninety eight percent of the program is adults with disabilities many who started in the program when they were very young. We would welcome any child who would like to learn about Jesus.

Thank you, Leon, for helping us inform others about our Religious Education Program!



**Webmaster  
Leon Vaughn**

# Fall Auction

Benefit for Religious Education for  
People with Disabilities

Watertown Catechetical Board  
**Saturday, November 14, 2015**  
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Gym  
320 West Lynde St.



Brand New Patio Grill



4.5 cu ft. Haier refrigerator slightly used looks brand new.



Featuring: Mel Busler

## Live Auction Items

## Silent Auction Items

**11:00AM** – Doors Open for Early Bird Preview & Ticket Sales  
**Food & Drinks Available for Sale**  
**Children's Auction 6:00PM**  
**6:30PM - Live Auction Begins**



**50 or more Silent Auction  
items, baskets, and  
gift certificates...**



Do you have an item you would like to donate to the auction? Call Mike and Cathy Deline 788-4791 or the WCB office 782-0030.



**Live Auction Items  
Including: furniture, art work,  
small refrigerator, quilt,  
hand woven baskets,  
Nativity Bethlehem Village  
and more...**

**Come, and have some fun!**