

SPICE

special people in catholic education



St. Catharine Parish

Spring 2011 Issue X

SPICE: A Positive Influence throughout the Diocese

Addressing new Diocesan teachers in 1986, Lucia McQuaide, then the assistant superintendent of Columbus Catholic schools, reminded the audience that: intervention is NOT saying it again - louder!" In that one memorable sentence, she reminded the audience that addressing the needs of all students in a classroom requires more than lip-service to Catholic Social Teaching: "Each person has a right to life and what is needed for human decency... including education" and especially for the Catholic parish, "People have a right to participate in the cultural life of society."

Recognizing that our Catholic school children have a right to education and participation in parish and school life requires more than words. It requires vision and the willingness to re-imagine and re-establish how a school is structured. For over a decade, SPICE has enabled St.

Catharine Parish to do just that. SPICE has provided thoughtful and planned support to the parish and parish leaders in evaluating facilities, identifying staffing needs, purchasing equipment and materials and providing not only staff development but community awareness.



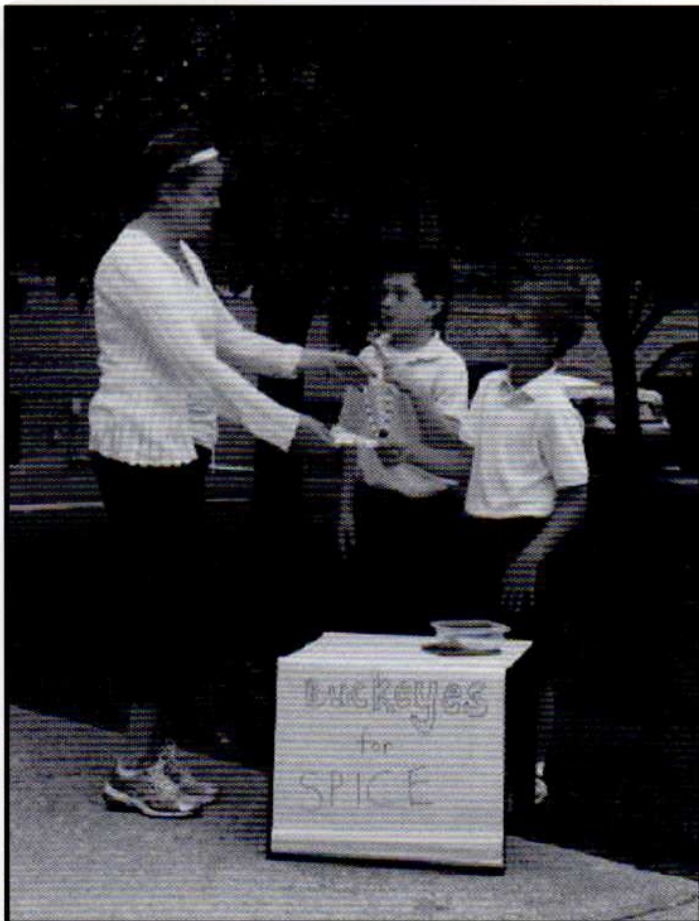
Pictured above is the author of this article, Barbara Recchie, Asst. Principal and Academic Dean and Maria Zeman, Spanish Teacher and Notre Dame Associate at Bishop Hartley High School.

Planning and budgeting through the lens of inclusion has given the parish and parish school the tools to address the individual learning needs of its children, many of whom could not previously be served. As importantly, St. Catharine SPICE has served as a successful role model for other Catholic communities around the Diocese who have hopes of addressing the inclusion needs of their parishioners. While each parish will establish a plan to tackle its own individual goals, SPICE has offered itself, not only as a template, but as a source for professional support. In addition, SPICE has created a network of communities through the Diocese who share St. Catharine's passion for creating a parish where, in St. Benedict's words, "All are welcome." Third grade teacher Renee Scurlock also notes that all the children benefit from inclusion: "My students learn tolerance, patience, humor and how to work with others without judgment. They also learn that each of us has both strengths and weaknesses."

Close to home, St. Catharine SPICE has been an inspiration and support to Bishop Hartley, its feeder high school, in the establishment of the Notre Dame Program, the office which oversees the academic progress of students with special needs and provides professional support to the teaching staff. Bob Grove, veteran science teacher, has commented that, with accommodations, his students are not only more successful, but begin to find "a joy in learning where before they only found a wall of frustration." He also noted that many of the accommodations he makes for his Notre Dame students actually benefit all the students academically.

As parish elementary schools across the Diocese, inspired by St. Catharine SPICE, increasingly formalize their inclusion programs, the feeder schools, too, have begun the process of reassessing their building needs, financial expenditures and personnel decisions. SPICE's influence can be traced far and wide.

As SPICE closes in on celebrating its second decade, the parish should take satisfaction, not only in its accomplishments here in our church and school, but in SPICE's leadership across the Diocese. St. Catharine Parish knows that inclusion education is not "saying it again louder," but rather, as the Holy See wrote in 2008, one that: "...embraces all children and youth... provid(ing) everyone with the tools to contribute a creative participation in community... to live with others, to discover one's nature and inherent dignity as spiritual creatures."



SPICE grows in many ways...

Our youngest supporters, Angelo Evans and Francis Sarko are selling a Buckeye necklace to second grade teacher, Mary Underwood. These fine lads made and sold necklaces from the Buckeye tree in the front lawn of St. Catharine School. They donated the proceeds from their sales to St. Catharine SPICE. This Buckeye tree, planted in memory of Walter H. Plank (Mary Underwood's Dad), continues to give back in many ways!



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ANNUAL ST. PATRICK DINNER BENEFITS SPICE

Go Irish!! Just 10 years young, Our St. Patrick Party is certainly not getting old! This year was another full house with plenty of great people, great food, and great entertainment! What a great night for SPICE, St. Catharine Parish, and everyone who attended! A "Hundred Thousand Thank You's" go out to Jim and Peggy Mackessy for Chairing the event, to Chef Gary O'Allwein and his team of Leprechauns for all the delicious food and to the Committee Chairs and people who helped make this event another great night. "Cead Mile Failte".

