

Busybee VA

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A place for culture and the Faith

Busy Bee Childcare Center gives small children a glimpse of their Vietnamese culture and Catholic faith.

Located in a cheery house at the end of a suburban cul-de-sac in Fairfax, Busy Bee Childcare center is run by the Sisters Adorers of the Holy Cross, who immigrated to the United States from Vietnam in 1975 and started a small community in Virginia. Today, the order has 30 sisters working in Virginia, Oregon and California.

For many years, the sisters operated a daycare in conjunction with Holy Martyrs of Vietnam Parish in Arlington. Now, their attention is focused solely on Busy Bee, which they opened in 1995 as a way to financially support their order.

Six sisters work at Busy Bee, taking care of 22 children. The children are separated into two age groups: 2- and 3-year-olds and the 4- and 5-year-olds. Most of the children come from Vietnamese families.

Sister Joanna Hoang works as assistant director of the center. She said the sisters teach

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children about numbers, letters and days of the week, but they also teach aspects of life that can be hard to find in a traditional daycare.

“Because our mission is childhood development, our goal is to have the Vietnamese children learn about the culture of Vietnam in the United States with the Catholic religion and Catholic morals,” Sister Joanna said.

Every week, the sisters teach the children about God with prayers, songs and lessons from the catechism or the Bible.

“We teach a lot about morality and how to be a good person,” Sister Joanna said. “We want to start from the very beginning of their lives and help them to grow with the Faith and make it something they will take at the beginning of their life that will stay with them.”

Even though the students are young, the sisters believe the lessons they teach can stick with them through their childhood.

“They need to know God and they need to know who created them,” said Sister Anna Tuyen, who has been teaching at Busy Bee for the last year. “This teaches them to appreciate and thank God and the people around them.”

The sisters also try to maintain Vietnamese cultural traditions. Last week, children dressed in traditional garb and decorated banners in celebration of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year. While the center also celebrates American holidays like Independence Day or Memorial Day, the sisters feel it is important for the children to be aware of their own cultural background.

“Most of them were born in the United States and they don’t know much about the Vietnamese culture,” Sister Joanna said. “This lets them know a little bit about their identity.”

“Everybody has a culture, a background,” said Sister Anna. “Even though they are American,

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they need to know where they come from too.”

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