



Kyla

Gina

Jerry

Tina

Photos by Susan McKinney

A Happy Place at St. Bridget's

What Andrew likes best is to "eat breakfast with my silly teacher there."

Andrew is four. His "silly teacher" is Sister Doreen, who with Sisters Kathleen and Maureen are this year running a financially independent early childhood program at St. Bridget's Church.

Sister Kathleen calls the program a "vehicle of ministry to the people of the inner city."

One day last week 14 pre-schoolers played quietly, building with blocks, sliding down a slide, assembling puzzles and looking at picture books.

And "We're teaching religion hand over fist," Sister Kathleen says.

The program is unique in the inner city in that it is a combination of two programs

left standing after the collapse of the Council of Inner City Parishes last Spring.

Sister Kathleen said that the three nuns at that time had to ask themselves "Am I serving the people of the inner city or am I a teacher?" They decided that they "had to create a vehicle to serve people" and the result is the pre-school program.

The sisters' work, does not, however, stop at the pre-school level. Sister Kathleen notes that central to their program is a "total family thrust." She cites recent examples of family-counseling done and family needs answered because of the contact through the pre-school program.

Sister Kathleen notes that the sisters are exploring avenues for funding the program. Among other sources of income, there is a tuition charge for children enrolled.



Sister Kathleen at the door of the program office.