



Instructor Sandrya Link (above) gives some one-on-one attention to Theresa during a class on life skills.



Elizabeth reacts to the playful behavior of her fellow students.

Photos by
S. John Wilkin
Staff photographer

identified by the fact that as of August 3, Hope Hall had enrolled 58 students — despite a tuition rate of nearly \$3,000.

Diocesan officials acknowledged that their schools and catechetical programs cannot meet the needs of all students. Some students require special-education programs through the public-school districts or through such facilities as the School of the Holy Childhood. And financial and space limitations can prevent expansion of such programs as Mastery in Learning.

Still, parishes, schools and diocesan officials try to be flexible in meeting these students' needs and in emphasizing that all students are part of the community, Britton acknowledged.

"We don't want to categorize them as different and separate," Britton said. "We don't want to keep them invisible from the rest of the community."

"We try to recognize that we are all part of the family of God," Britton continued. "We enrich one another. By being together and accepting one another, we really reflect what Christianity is all about."

for them to blend into regular classes but who do not qualify for special-education programs. These students, she argued, need a special environment — hence separate classes.

She said she is opening Hope Hall in the former Christian Academy at 1612 Buffalo Road, Gates, because the programs at St. Ambrose and St. Charles Borromeo schools could not accommodate all the students on the waiting list — and the diocese did not have the resources to expand the program.

That such a need exists is ev-

Continued from page 12A disagree with the concept of complete mainstreaming.

Betty Pierce, the fourth-grade teacher in St. Ambrose's Mastery in Learning program, pointed out that being kept separate for a time can help some students with special needs.

"The kids need to build up their confidence and learn that they can do it," Pierce said. Thus her students attend gym

and music classes with other students, but initially spend the rest of their days in separate classes. Once they have built up confidence and have learned techniques to help them with school work, these students can be mainstreamed, she said.

Sister Dolce developed the basics of the Mastery in Learning program at St. Joseph's Vil-

la, building from a program that had actually been created for exceptional students. She was then invited to offer the program at Nazareth Academy in 1977, and later introduced it to St. Ambrose and St. Charles Borromeo schools.

Sister Dolce said her program is intended for students whose needs make it difficult

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