

MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART

17 JUNE 2020



Dear Catechists/helpers,

Thank you for your prayerful support of your parish's Special Religious Education 'Scripture' students, their families and teachers in our local public schools.

SRE Update

- On 11 June, the Department of Education (DoE) announced that SRE/SEE classes may begin again in Term 3 (starts 20 July).
- On 12 June, Chancery and CCD sent Parish Clergy and Catechist Coordinators initial information to assist with the resumption of SRE.
- DoE has asked that we do not contact schools until 'Return of SRE/SEE' requirements and guidelines are finalised and provided to both schools and SRE/SEE providers (TBA).
- CCD will provide Parish Clergy and Catechist Coordinators with further 'Return of SRE' information once this is finalised with the DoE.

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A Beautiful Testimony...

Why am I a catechist?

**By Anne Carruthers, Catechist
Saint Therese's parish, Padstow**

I first became aware of the Catechetical Ministry when I listened to Mary, a parishioner who I did not know at the time, speaking on Catechist Sunday. So, I made a promise to God in Mass that Sunday that I would be a catechist one day.

Years later, while standing in the playground chatting to a friend, after dropping my three children at school, we were approached by a school mum (catechist) at the time. She said, "If you have time to stand here and chat on a Tuesday morning, you have time to come and teach Scripture." She had reminded me of my promise to God; a promise I had forgotten.

I began as a catechist helper; the next year, I was a catechist teaching my own class. Twenty years later, I am still a catechist and teaching at two schools, one Year 3 class and one combined Year 3/4 class.

As a catechist, I not only teach the children; I learn from them too. The children often surprise me with the answers they give, the thoughtfulness and kindness they show me and to each other and their enthusiasm to learn more about Jesus and God.

Being a catechist is about being prepared to give. To give your time to prepare the lesson and to give your time to teach the children. I have found that, in reality, being a catechist is more about receiving. I receive joy and enthusiasm from the children; I have received training and acquired new skills through the CCD, and I have received the blessing of friendship of other catechists. I would never have met these friends if I were not a catechist. These friendships have continued, long after they have left the ministry.

*"The LORD had
his heart set
on you and
chose you ..."*

DEUTERONOMY 7:7



St Peter & St Paul

St Peter & St Paul's Feast Day: 29 June

By Michael Vella, Catechist

Sacred Heart parish, Cabramatta

To begin, both apostles had an shady start in their ministry in following Jesus. To explain, Peter denied his association with Jesus three times after Jesus' arrest, while Paul wanted to destroy the Early Christian Community until he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus. For this reason, it is easy to identify with these people of the Bible, as we are also sinners. Yet they became heroes, great missionaries and we can still encounter their message today and this can dare us to be better persons ourselves.

Furthermore, Mark the Evangelist was associated with Paul and was a disciple of Peter whose teachings is reflected in this Gospel. Paul's letters to the Christian Communities makes up more than 25% of the New Testament. Obviously Paul's close association with Luke, means that he has had a very significant effect on the New Testament. For this reason, we can meet Jesus today in the Word of God, primarily due to the significant contribution of Peter and Paul.

In addition both men had a considerable part to play in welcoming Gentiles (us) into the Church. It can be easily seen, that they were open to the Holy Spirit, who gifted them with wisdom, faith, compassion and strength to convert and then steer the young community of believers. Peter and Paul challenge us today, to be open to the Holy Spirit and allow God to set his seal on our hearts, minds and souls.

After more than thirty years of preaching, teaching and guiding the fledgling church, both men were martyred. They wish for us to encounter Jesus through their words and actions. Are we up to the task?

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

2 TIMOTHY 4:7

CCD Faith Formation via ZOOM

The CCD is hosting an online faith formation series via ZOOM.

Over 100 catechists registered for CCD's third online formation with Fr James McCarthy of Cronulla Parish, 12 June over Zoom, a video conferencing platform. It has been a very successful online series so far with close to 80 attending each time.

"The online talks by CCD for catechists have helped me to delve deeper into Catholicism and build my faith. I found the talks very profound and thought-provoking," said Anne. This is just one of many positive feedbacks received from those that have attended CCD's online formation series.

This initiative was a response to the hunger and desires of catechists wanting to deepen their faith and knowledge of the Catholic faith. Thank you to Anita Lee, FEO, CCD Sydney, for organising this spiritual initiative.

You can attend all sessions or choose your preference. RSVP is essential. To RSVP, contact Anita Lee: anita.lee@ccsydney.catholic.edu.au

Upon registration, each participant will receive a ZOOM ID to enter the webinar. Due to screen capacity, there will be limited places.

"Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him."

ISAIAH 30:18

CATECHIST on-line SERIES by CCD Sydney



Everyday Saints
by Fr Dan McCaughan

June 25 | Thursday | Zoom Time 10.30am -11.30am
RSVP to Anita Lee by the 22nd of June e: anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

CATECHIST on-line SERIES by CCD Sydney



The real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.
by Fr Geoff Plant

29 June | Monday | Zoom Time 10.30am -11.30am
RSVP to Anita Lee e: anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

CATECHIST on-line SERIES by CCD Sydney



The Way of Beauty:
An Encounter with God through Creation, Art, and Wonder
by Fr Steven Bohagiar

July 3 | Friday | Zoom Time 10.30am -11.30am
RSVP to Anita Lee by the 1st of July e: anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

CATECHIST on-line SERIES by CCD Sydney



Disciples making Disciples:
The Mission of a Catechist
by Fr Daniel Aug

July 10 | Friday | Zoom Time 10.30am -11.30am
RSVP to Anita Lee by the 6th of July e: anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

CCD Online Training: Level One

A reminder to all newly joined catechists/helpers in 2019/2020

Level One Accreditation Course.

Catechists/helpers are encouraged to take advantage of this time of social distancing to complete training that is available online.

CCD's online training modules consists of videos and readings followed by questions to check understanding. Catechists/helpers can work at their own pace. Progress is automatically saved if a break is needed. Level One online modules available are:

- Child Protection
- The SRE Teacher in the Parish and School
- Development of the Child and Adolescent
- Introduction to the Bible
- Classroom Skills- Questioning
- Classroom Skills - Behaviour Management

To enrol into our CCD online training, please contact:
office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

CCD ZOOM Webinars

Level 3 course dates via ZOOM (Open to those who have completed Level 2)

Wednesday 1 July Unit 3.4 (RSVP 23 June)

Wednesday 8 July Unit 3.5 (RSVP 30 June)

ALL COURSES COMMENCE 9:45am and FINISH 1pm.

CCD ZOOM Webinar Review:

"Your course was well organised and a great learning experience."

For expressions of interest and registration for ZOOM Webinars, contact CCD Office at: office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

Please note: RSVP is essential ensuring work books are mailed on time.

"I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."

EPHESIANS 3:16-17

The Prayer Place



By Denise and Rachael Humphreys

What will you teach when you return to SRE lessons? Try to remember that you cannot do everything. The more you try to condense into one lesson, the less the students will remember.

One of the most important parts of your SRE lesson is the Prayer Place. The photo (above) shows Rachael's Kindergarten Prayer Place. We have this set up at home during the SRE 'pause' with the children's Bible open at a page to match the Sunday liturgy. We keep the names of the SRE students in the container on the Prayer Place and each day we pray for one student. This name is placed on the praying hands.

The Prayer Place is introduced in Kindergarten, Lesson 1. Students are taught it consists of a cloth, a Cross, a candle and a Bible. The 'To Remember' for this lesson is Jesus is with us in our Prayer Place. Each new lesson then begins with the instruction to set up the prayer place and to ask students to name each item as it is set out. By doing this, week after week, the students are always taught about the death and resurrection of Jesus and introduced to liturgy. They also become aware that Jesus is with them when they pray.

These are some responses I have heard when visiting classes:

- Cross/crucifix reminds us that Jesus died.
- Candle reminds us that Jesus rose from the dead and is the light of the world.
- Bible reminds us that stories about God/Jesus are found in the Bible.
- Cloth shows us the liturgical colour:
 - Purple is preparing for a feast.
 - White is celebrating the feast.
 - Green is the feast is growing inside us.

We have a responsibility not only to teach our students about faith, but also to provide opportunities for them to experience a living faith through participation in prayer and liturgy. Since the law of prayer is the law of faith, the methods by which we pray and worship will affect and reflect the depth or otherwise of our understanding of God.

Prayer is:

- the raising of the mind and heart to God.
- being open to a relationship with God.
- our response to God's invitation to this relationship of love and communion.
- placing one's life, as a whole person, before God, aware of one's own needs and those of others and the world.
- providing a diversity of experiences, which might include vocal, meditative, contemplative.

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

JOHN 7:37-38

The Blessing, Australia

Australia has its very own Blessing Song.

The Blessing Song, based on Numbers 6:22-27, has become a global internet sensation during the COVID lockdown season. Christians in over 45 countries have united across denominational lines to proclaim God's blessing over their land. Australia has recently released their Blessing Song, going viral within a few hours. The Australian version has retained the ecumenical spirit with several Catholics joining the initiative including Bishop Brian Mascord, Rob Galea and Sisters of the Immaculata. The song has become an anthem of hope.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00t7baaVSbE>



*“The Lord bless
you and keep
you; the Lord
make his face
shine on you be
gracious to you;
the Lord turn his
face toward you
and give you
peace.”*

NUMBERS 6:24-26

Prayer Intentions

Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, please continue to pray for:

- Your Catholic SRE students and their families especially during the day/time of your Scripture/SRE class.
- Pope Francis, Archbishop Anthony Fisher and all clergy.
- Godly wisdom for our Prime Minister and State Leaders.
- Protection for all front line staff; doctors, nurses, paramedics, medical receptionists, dentists and teachers.
- A cure to be found quickly for Covid-19.
- Healing of all people suffering with Covid-19 and their loved ones.
- Thanksgiving for all God is doing and will do during this time.

In Loving Memory: Mary Ann Weir

Written by Suzanne Micelli

On 31 May, Mary Ann Weir, beloved catechist and ex-coordinator of Christ the King parish, Bass Hill entered eternal life after a long battle with cancer. Her private funeral was held on 9 June, 2020.

Mary Ann was a catechist for 41 years. She was an inspiration to her catechists and strove to develop a firm bond between them while strengthening their faith. She organised yearly retreats and loved the children she taught. According to her former Parish Priest, Fr Graham, Mary Ann always entrusted her students to the care of St Mary of the Cross.

Current catechist coordinator, Rita Nemer shared:

“There is so much to say about Mary Ann, I don’t know where to start. Her whole life was dedicated to the parish. She was a senior server, assisted with the flowers, cleaned the church for special occasions and organised bus trips. She played a big role in the yearly parish fete, organising the plant and craft stall. Mary Ann spent many weeks planting and preparing for the fete. One year she stood in the rain selling her plants, and another year, she raised \$8000! Before the fete, she organised weekly morning teas where the ladies would gather to knit and prepare for the stall. Everyone loved Mary Ann and would do anything for her. She was an amazing woman!”

On 11 June, catechists past and present gathered at Christ the King parish, Bass Hill for a memorial Mass. Dee, a former catechist and dear friend of Mary Ann, spoke about her warmth and generosity. Mary Ann never had a bad word to say about anyone. Whenever one of the catechists complained about something, she would say, "You are doing it for the Lord.”

Personally, I have my own very fond memories of Mary Ann. As a new and nervous FEO in 2017, Mary Ann invited me to a catechist gathering to meet her team. I told her that it was my birthday that day, but I would love to come. Even though Mary Ann had never met me, she baked me a birthday cake, complete with candles and a happy birthday song. I was so touched and have never forgotten her kindness in making me feel comfortable and welcome.

Mary Ann is survived by husband Graham. They would have been married 53 years this year. They had six children but sadly lost one of their sons, five years ago. They have 18 grandchildren.

Mary Ann was an inspiration to all. The earth has lost one of its most beautiful people, but heaven has gained a saint. She will be dearly missed.

Rest in peace Mary Ann. You will always be in our hearts.



From left to right: Dee Astill, Gail Palmer, Bishop Terry, Mary Ann Weir and husband Graham at the Annual Catechist Mass in 2017.



From left to right: Rita Nemer, Dee Astill, Mary Ann Weir and Margaret Nohra.

Contact Us

CCD Staff continue to work through this difficult time by working remotely. For all queries, staff can be contacted via email. Phone access to staff is still available, however please leave a message if your call is not answered immediately. We will return your call as soon as practical.

CCD Office (Administration)– Contact Laura Argiro/Verna Wing

Email: office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CCDSydney/>

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*"Sing for joy,
O heavens, and
exult, O earth;
break forth,
O mountains,
into singing! For
the Lord has
comforted his
people, and will
have compassion
on his suffering
ones."*

ISAIAH 49:13