

# Catechist Newsletter



*Supporting*  
**Parish Catechists**



**CATHOLIC**  
**ARCHDIOCESE**  
OF SYDNEY

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# Message from the Director

## *Happy Easter*

Dear Catechist Coordinators and to all your SRE Catechists and Helpers,

We wish you a happy Easter as we prepare to celebrate our Lord's Passion and the hope and joy that Jesus' resurrection to new life brings.

Thank you for helping to create a time and a space for children to know God loves them and to be present to God, especially when gathered for times of prayer.

Prayer is what makes what we do different from every other class children attend.

Setting up the Prayer Place for each class is so important as is modelling different ways of praying for children to see and hear. As your CCD team demonstrates in SRE training, we can pray by reading out written prayers or reciting important prayers from memory, singing prayers together with actions, or by speaking to God spontaneously in our own words, aloud or in our hearts.

We are most truly ourselves in prayer. Being present to our ever-present God makes all the difference. May we all live lives of thanksgiving – eucharistia in Greek.

And may our loving God, who is closer to us than our very breathing, bless you this day and every day and all those whom you gather together in Jesus' name. He is with us, always. Amen!

**Doug Mawhinney**  
**CCD Director**



## CCD Team News

As introduced to you in our September 2022 SRE Update, Juliette Morched and Rita Piras started in Term 4 as Faith Education Officers (FEOs) along with Van Duy Nguyen, our Multimedia FEO.

We now also welcome Trevor Dal Broi to the CCD Sydney team.

Trevor comes to us from the Diocese of Wagga Wagga where he was the CCD Director for 5 years and served as the Co-ordinator for the Synod on Synodality. Trevor is receiving his initial training as an FEO and has already helped deliver SRE training. Given his previous role, we look forward to Trevor's help with serving the needs of SRE both locally and at the NSW level.

In subsequent newsletters, we will 'spotlight' our team members to introduce them to you more fully.

## Recruitment and Training

### Ongoing Recruitment

Thank you for your efforts with Catechist Sunday recruitment.

To help with ongoing recruitment needs, your CCD FEO can provide advice for your parish to run recruitment campaigns.

The following link contains a recruitment ideas booklet and a recruitment brochure to download and add in your parish details:

[ccd.sydneycatholic.org/catechist-resources/parish-resources](https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/catechist-resources/parish-resources)

Each year, your recruitment efforts enable us to train over 200 new SRE Catechists and we are well on the way to doing so again.

The passion for sharing the Good News of Jesus who gives hope and joy is evident in the volunteers we train. We are grateful to you, our Catechist Coordinators, existing Catechists and Clergy for calling for more volunteers to this important parish outreach to support the choice of Catholic SRE classes by our families in public schools.

## Training Courses

Register for training courses visit the CCD Website Homepage:

[ccd.sydneycatholic.org](https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org)

Coordinators are still able to contact their CCD Faith Education Officers to talk about tailored training times to suit your parish/neighbouring parishes.

## Frequently asked questions about training:

**Q. I am "only" a catechist helper. What training must I do?**

Both Catechists and Catechist Helpers are SRE Teachers and must be trained in Safeguarding, Classroom Management and Using the Curriculum in accordance with Archdiocesan and NSW Department of Education (DoE) requirements.

**Q. I am a qualified teacher. What training must I do?**

Qualified teachers need to undertake initial and ongoing training that is specific to SRE, as do all SRE teachers (Catechist and Helpers), in accordance with Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney's annual assurance to the NSW DoE.

**Q. Why must I complete 'Using the Authorised Curriculum' face-to-face?**

The face-to-face training provides hands-on training in the use of the Teacher's Manual and Activity Book related to the year group you are teaching or assisting.

# Catechist Corner

HELLO MY  
NAME IS...

**Experienced or new, here are some tips for the beginning of the year...**

1. Learn the students' names – use name tags, seating arrangements, class roll, etc.
2. Set the class rules and consequences – keep rules few, simple and clear. You could check the school rules and consequences. Most primary schools display these in the classroom. This avoids duplication and reinventing the wheel.
3. In Kindy classes, try the five “L’s” – look at the teacher, lips still, legs crossed (when students sit on the floor), hands on lap, ears listen.
4. Develop a routine or structure with the class, i.e. how they enter the classroom, move from one activity to the next, distribute books, set up the prayer place, etc.
5. Make prayer and the prayer space an integral part of your lesson. Allow time for prayers at the beginning and end of lessons. This is in your Teacher's Manual.
6. Promote classroom discussions rather than lengthy periods of teacher talk. A student's attention span is their age plus or minus one year; i.e., if they are 6 years old, their attention span is about 5 to 7 minutes.
7. Engage your students in the ‘I Wonder’ questions. Allow time for students to ponder over the questions. This will hold their attention and enthusiasm. This is in your Teacher's Manual.
8. Read your Teacher's Manual, whether it is new or familiar to you. You need to be familiar with each lesson and be aware of the lesson's aim, the ‘TO REMEMBER’.
9. Always have a backup plan in case the technology fails.
10. A great teacher will reflect after each lesson. Take the time to think through what worked and what didn't work in your lesson.

## Classroom Rules



**1 I listen and follow instructions**

**2 I allow one person to speak at a time**



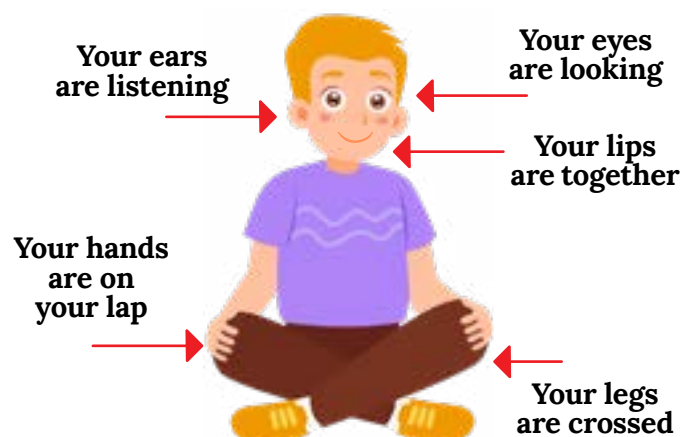
**3 I raise my hand and wait to speak**

**4 I use all equipment safely**



**5 I speak politely and use my manners**

## The 5 L's of Learning



# TEACHING HOLY WEEK LESSONS

**In Holy week, we remember how much Jesus loved us. The students will learn that Jesus died for us on Good Friday and rose to new life on Easter Sunday. This is taught across the years in an age-appropriate manner. The scope and sequence in your Teacher's Manual give you some idea of what is taught in each year level. Part of this is reproduced below:**

## Kindergarten

- Holy Week: the washing of the feet and the Last Supper.
- Easter Sunday: we celebrate Jesus rising to New Life.

## Year 1

- Palm Sunday is the first day in Holy Week.
- Easter Sunday: we celebrate Jesus rising to New Life.

## Year 2

- Holy Week: we remember Jesus' love for us.
- Jesus is the light of the world.
- Easter Sunday: we celebrate Jesus rising to New Life.



## Year 3

- Holy Week: Jesus teaches us how much he loves us.
- Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.

## Year 4

- Holy Week: The Stations of the Cross.
- Rejoice Jesus is Risen.

## Year 5

- In Holy Week, we remember the rejection, suffering, death and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Easter Vigil is the most important liturgy of the Church.

## Year 6

- On Holy Thursday, we remember the Last Supper.
- In Holy Week, the Church remembers that Jesus, in being faithful to his mission, suffered and was crucified.
- Hope in the Risen Lord.

## Tip:

**Plan ahead to cover the Holy Week lessons leading up to the end of Term 1 (last day is Thursday 6 April).**





# RESOURCE SHEET

## Holy Week – Easter

### An eggcellent activity

1. Select eight 'Easter Eggs' (empty Pavlova Magic shells, empty Yowie eggs, or 8 plastic Easter eggs) and number them, from one to eight.
2. Place inside the respective eggs as follows:
  - i) **piece of palm (Palm Sunday)**
  - ii) **piece of bread (preferably Lebanese bread) (Last Supper)**
  - iii) **Cross, made of black cardboard and folded to fit into egg**
  - iv) **large nail (Jesus dying for us)**
  - v) **smooth rock or stone (Tomb)**
  - vi) **nothing (this will be the empty tomb)**
  - vii) **red heart, made of cardboard or material and folded to fit into egg (Jesus' love for us)**
  - viii) **an Easter Egg (New Life)**
3. Discuss the fun of Easter eggs and explain their real meaning - new life.
4. Have eight children come to the front of the class. Each opens an egg as you remind them of the corresponding aspect of Holy Week.
5. Items may be placed in the prayer place or have the children place items back into the eggs. Close the eggs and place them in the prayer place.
6. The final egg, (the Easter Egg) and the gathering of eggs in the prayer place, should remind students to think of Jesus on Easter Sunday when they receive their Easter eggs.



*Look in your Teacher Manual for resources to use. The following resource can be used for Years 1 and 2 and is in Lesson 8 of the Year 1 Teacher Manual.*

# Catechists Pilgrimage 2023

24 Sept to  
11 Oct 2023  
with Fr Michael McLean

## TOUR 1

Holy Land + Rome  
+ Assisi + Florence

18 days

**\$6,325**  
twin share  
(minimum 21 people)

## TOUR 2

Holy Land  
+ Rome

13 days

**\$4,995**  
twin share  
(minimum 21 people)

## TOUR 3

Rome + Assisi  
+ Florence

12 days

**\$3,620**  
twin share  
(minimum 21 people)

Contact the Rome Pilgrimages team today on 1800 753 959 or  
email [pilgrimage@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:pilgrimage@sydneycatholic.org) to join a pilgrimage in 2023



# Save the Date

**Thursday**  
**6 Jul 2023**

## **CHRISTMAS STORY ART WORKSHOP** **FOR YEAR 5 AND 6 CATECHISTS**

**Our Lady of Fatima Parish**  
825 Forest Rd, Peakhurst

**MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON**

**Sunday**  
**19 Nov 2023**  
**2:30pm**

## **ANNUAL ARCHDIOCESAN CATECHIST MASS**

**St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney**  
Celebrant: Bishop Danny Meagher

# Upcoming Events

**Friday**  
**14 Apr 2023**  
**11:00am**

## **Catechist Central Area Mass**

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish**  
6 Kerrinea Rd, Sefton (Parking available on-site)

**Tuesday**  
**11 Jul 2023**  
**10:30am**

## **Catechist Southern Area Mass**

**Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish**  
50 Kiora Rd, Miranda



## **WE ARE MOVING!**

### **Polding Centre is moving to Leichhardt!**

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023, CCD will be relocating to our new office in Leichhardt.

Stay tuned for more information on the move!

# Recent news

## Coordinator & Catechist Gathering

**On 27<sup>th</sup> January, Coordinators and Catechists gathered at Lidcombe for a day of fellowship and training. Bishop Danny Meagher addressed the Catechists, inspiring and encouraging them in their SRE mission.**

The Catechists were then led by Anne-Marie Irwin to participate in a series of workshops that demonstrated how to use concrete materials to make SRE lessons more engaging. The SALT Approach (Scripture and Liturgy Teaching) was taken from Montessorian principles and Sofia Cavalletti's work. The approach embodies Scripture, quiet reflection and hands on materials to tell Bible stories and demonstrate aspects of our faith. Anne-Marie taught the Catechists how to lead the children to ponder deeply as they engage with the Catholic Faith in all its dimensions, applying it to their own lives in age-appropriate ways. This approach compliments the material taught in our 1.5 training, *Classroom Skills and Resources*.



## Seminarian Training

**Welcome to the seminarians from the current third year group at Good Shepherd Seminary who have recently trained to be catechists. Dai Pham, Daniel O'Kelly and Michael Rodgers will be sharing their deep faith with the students at Strathfield Girls, Homebush Boys and Concord High.**

We thank them for their commitment to this wonderful ministry. May the Holy Spirit guide them in their work and formation as future Priests.



## Student Catechists

Welcome to the many student catechists from our Catholic High Schools who have been recently trained to help in our primary schools. These students will assist the adult catechists or in some cases teach the lessons to the students.

Student Catechists from the following Catholic High Schools have been trained: Rosebank College - Five Dock, Domremy College - Five Dock, Christian Brothers - Lewisham, Freeman Catholic College - Bonnyrigg, All Saints College - Liverpool, St Scholastica's College - Glebe, Waverley College, St Patrick's College - Sutherland, De La Salle College - Cronulla.

Doug and Vincent addressed the Term 1 gathering of all Sydney Catholic High School Religious Education Coordinators to promote the benefits of the Student Catechist Program. This included showing a videoed testimony by two Student Catechists and their REC who emphasised the benefits of the program.



"I thought they would be really hard to teach but they absolutely love it."

"Their eyes light up when we come into the classroom."

"It is so much fun teaching them and I really do feel like I am making a difference while spreading the word of the Lord."

"I enjoy it so much I'm actually now considering a career in teaching."

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**Niraj, Olivier & Michael**

St Mary's Cathedral College, Sydney

## Young Catechist Program

CCD has long supported the Pope's World Youth Day initiative as far back as the very first WYD in 1986 when we helped a young SRE Catechist to attend who is now a public school principal.

To highlight the importance of recruiting the next generation of Catechists, with thanks to our Chancellor and Charitable Works committee, CCD is again helping over 18-year-old young Catechists to attend WYD and other young people who are willing to give a year or more of voluntary SRE service following WYD in Portugal this year.

Thirteen young people have been selected with thanks to CCD FEOs Vincent Haber and Juliette Morched who arranged interviews for over 50 applicants. These 13 young people were Commissioned by Bishop Danny on 21<sup>st</sup> March in the Chapel of Our Lady at the Polding Centre.

Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us.

[To read more, visit \*The Catholic Weekly\*](#)





# Contact us

## CCD Director

**Doug Mawhinney**

Email: [office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

## Faith & Special Religious Education Services Officer

**Laura Argiro** (Mon-Thu)

Email: [laura.argiro@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:laura.argiro@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

## Faith Education Officers (FEOs)

### CENTRAL AREA:

**Suzanne Miceli**

Email: [suzanne.miceli@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:suzanne.miceli@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

### EASTERN AREA:

**Rita Piras**

Email: [rita.piras@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:rita.piras@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

### NORTHERN AREA:

**Anita Lee**

Email: [anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:anita.lee@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

### SOUTHERN AREA:

**Denise Humphreys**

Email: [denise.humphreys@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:denise.humphreys@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**Josie D'acciaro**

Email: [josie@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:josie@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

### WESTERN AREA:

**Vincent Haber**

Email: [vincent.haber@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:vincent.haber@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**Juliette Morched**

Email: [juliette.morched@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:juliette.morched@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**Trevor Dal Broi**

Email: [Trevor.DalBroi@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:Trevor.DalBroi@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

### MULTIMEDIA:

**Van Duy Nguyen**

Email: [vanduy.nguyen@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:vanduy.nguyen@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**For all general enquiries, please contact the CCD office:**

**Phone:** 9307 8330

*If the office is unattended, kindly leave a message and your call will be attended to as soon as practical. Alternatively, your Faith Education Officer can be contacted via email.*

**Email:** [office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**Mail:** Level 6, Polding Centre,  
133 Liverpool Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

**For more information visit our website:**

[ccd.sydneycatholic.org](http://ccd.sydneycatholic.org)

**or follow us on social media:**



[CCDSydney](https://www.facebook.com/CCDSydney)



[ccd\\_sydney](https://www.instagram.com/ccd_sydney)

## Mustard Seed Bookshop Café

### BOOK ORDERS:

To purchase **Christ our Light and Life (COLAL) SRE curriculum** or “**The Gratia Series**” **Sacramental Program**.

**For more information visit:**

[ccd.sydneycatholic.org/book-orders](http://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/book-orders)

**Email:** [books@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au](mailto:books@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au)

**Tel:** (02) 9307 8340  
(02) 9307 8350

**Trading Hours:** Monday to Friday  
8:30am to 5:00pm