CONFRATERNITY OF
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

THIS IS OUR FAITH!
WE ARE PROUD TO PROFESS IT!

Catechist Newsletter

Term One 2002
DIRECTOR’S EASTER MESSAGE: REMEMBERING THE DYING THIEF

“Jesus,” he said “remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

“Indeed, I promise you,” he replied “today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23: 42-43).

For me, the above exchange is one of the most poignant passages in all of Scripture. Here we have two men- one the unnamed “good thief”- the other, Jesus, dying on their respective crosses. While one criminal hurl abuse at Jesus, the good thief pleads for mercy and his plea is answered. Jesus’ compassion is extended to the good thief even in the shadow of death. His promise to the good thief is unconditional and it is eternal. As Karl Rahner (1989) comments so movingly:

Your [Jesus’] eyes are growing dark in the night of death, but they still see the light of eternity. In death, man’s only concern is with himself, for then he is all alone, all by himself. But Your concern is with the souls that are going to enter your Kingdom with You. How merciful is your heart! How strong and courageous it is! (p. 50)*

Unfortunately, we live in a world where we could learn a lot from the humility of the good thief. We also live in a world that could do with more compassion. On the national level, Australians are having to face up to the disturbing question: what kind of a people do we want to be? Historically, Australians have been compassionate people. We have always been prepared to look after the underdog and the downtrodden. In more recent times, though, there has been a hardness that has crept into Australia’s heart. Perhaps this is a by-product of many years of living in an economic rationalist society where nothing is valued more highly than the almighty (but increasingly worthless) dollar!

As we prepare to celebrate Easter in 2002, it is timely for us to remember the good thief. There are three lessons to be taken from this story. The first two of these relate to the good thief:

**Repentance**- The good thief admits his wrongdoing (Lk 23: 40-41). In doing so, he takes responsibility for his actions and shows incredible humility.

**Faith**- The good thief’s words to Jesus characterise a profound faith and trust. The cynic may claim that it is easy to become faithful when confronted with one’s own death! At the same time, though, Jesus acknowledges the faith of the good thief and consoles him.

The third lesson relates to Jesus’ response:

**Generosity**- In Jesus’ response, we learn of the abounding love and compassion of our God. The power of Jesus’ Word to the good thief is truly striking. Our God is always waiting to offer us forgiveness.

So, what does all this mean for the classroom? As we prepare for Easter, the story of the good thief should remind us of the following:

The need to teach our children how to conduct an examination of conscience. For some, this may sound a little old-fashioned. Nonetheless, a daily examination of conscience has always been (and will always be) integral to the Christian life. In teaching children how to conduct an examination of conscience, we should ask them to think of the good things they have done during the day as well as the areas where they have failed to love their brothers and sisters as they should.

In teaching children to examine their consciences, we need to remind them to always be open to God’s love in their lives. Through faith, the good thief received this love in abundance during his final agonising hours on the cross.

Finally, the story of the good thief should remind our students of the power of God’s love to overcome all evil. Unfortunately, we seem to be living in a world that has largely forgotten this self-evident truth of our faith. Ironically, many people who witnessed the exchange between Jesus and the good thief also failed to perceive the presence of God on Calvary. Yet, as Gerard Manly Hopkins put it so beautifully:

On the cross thy Godhead made no sign to men Here thy very manhood steals from human ken: Both are my confession, both are my belief, And I pray the prayer of the dying thief.

As Easter 2002 approaches, may our prayer, too, be that of the dying thief!

PETER J. IVERS
DIRECTOR


KEY DATES FOR 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Catechist Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Nominations for Papal Blessings / Cardinal Freeman medals due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Archdiocesan Catechist Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>Annual Catechist Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5</td>
<td>Parish statistical returns due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Nominations for Catechist Sunday 2003 awards due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Archdiocesan Catechist Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Life Membership Function</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JESUS

Judaism is the tradition from which came our Christian Lord- Jesus of Nazareth. It is the rich monotheistic tradition into which he was born; the tradition that nurtured and formed him as a child of faith, as a man of compassion, and as a spiritual being. We need to understand Jesus within this rich Judaic tradition. The name Jesus in Hebrew means “God saves” (CCC #430). At the annunciation, the angel Gabriel gave him the name Jesus, which expresses both his identity and his mission (Lk 1: 31).

For Christians, the story of Jesus is central to the belief and practice of our faith. As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) comments, though, there is a genuine concern that “Catholics today spend too much time talking about the church and not enough [talking] about Jesus” (The Catholic Weekly, Oct. 21 2001, p.1).

Yet through baptism, Christians are called and sent on this mission to love in the name of JESUS. The baptismal robe is a reminder that the newly-baptised have “put on Christ” as a gift from God (CCC #1227). The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live by it, but also profess it. The disciple must confidently bear witness to it and spread it to others (CCC #1816).

As catechists, teaching from the Joy For Living program ensures that the students in the classroom have a good understanding of who Jesus is. It also gives students an understanding of Jesus’ teachings as well as the significant events in his life. In turn, this should lead them to a deeper understanding of the significance of Church in their lives.

Anita Sicari
Faith Education Officer
Bankstown Area
THIS IS OUR FAITH! WE ARE PROUD TO PROFESS IT!

In the early Church, most candidates who presented for reception of the sacrament of Baptism were adults. Being baptised was a life changing experience. It was consciously chosen by the candidate and entailed no small element of risk. Persecution (and even martyrdom) were distinct possibilities. Candidates knew what they were accepting by being initiated into the Christian community.

In the Church today, infant baptism requires the candidate to take a somewhat different path. An initial decision for a person is made by his/her parents. As the child becomes more mature, he/she must make a conscious decision to be a Christian. Yet, we live in a society that devalues religious belief. In Australian society, professing faith as a Christian is rarely a risky business (unlike in other parts of the world). It is not surprising, then, that it is easy for a person to become confused about the essence of his/her faith unless firm foundations are established.

For this reason, Archbishop Pell often refers to four foundations of our faith when he discusses religious education. These foundations are expressed in the following terms:

1. We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who loves us;
2. We believe in one Redeemer, Jesus Christ, only Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, who died and rose from the dead to save us;
3. We believe in the Catholic Church, the Body of Christ, where we are led in service and worship by the Pope and Bishops; and
4. We believe that Jesus Christ, Our Lord, calls us to repent and believe; that is, to choose faith not doubt, love not hate, good not evil, and eternal life in heaven not hell (Source: To Know, Worship and Love).

Catechists will easily identify the various credal statements of the Church in these four foundations. Archbishop Pell believes that it is essential that a young person should have an understanding of these foundations when he/she leaves school. In this way, a person has a solid preparation for life.

How, then, are these foundations presented in the teaching materials we use in state schools? Here are a few thoughts that may help catechists incorporate these foundations more systematically in their teaching during 2002.

In general

1. The Joy for Living Teachers’ Manuals give an indication of the Church teaching that is to be conveyed to students. Catechists should always take the time to try to understand the teaching that is involved and relate it to the developmental age of the student. In this sense, it is important to remember that students will grow in their understanding of these foundations. For this reason, some material is returned to a number of times throughout the program so that catechists can deepen the understanding of Church teaching that is involved.

2. Catechists should use the To Remember boxes that are found in the Teachers’ Manuals to reinforce their teaching from week to week.

Foundation 1
This foundation is so important to our understanding of the Christian God that it pervades the entire program. At the same time, though, this foundation is particularly evident in Unit One of the Joy for Living program. For example, in this unit, students learn that God gave us the gift of life and gifted each of us with unique talents.

Foundation 2
Given the Christocentric nature of the Joy for Living program, catechists will also find that this foundation is returned to consistently throughout. In particular, Unit Seven (the liturgical supplement) gives catechists an opportunity to reflect on the
reality of Jesus, his significance for us, and to connect this to the liturgical life of the Church. Similarly, the program highlights the teachings of Jesus. Across Kindergarten to Year 6, there is an opportunity for students to continually deepen their knowledge and understanding of Jesus.

Foundation 3
Fundamental to a Catholic understanding of Christianity is a belief in the Church as the Body of Christ. Catechists will find that Unit Four of the Joy for Living program has at its heart a strong emphasis on Church. Teachers of Year 6 classes should be aware that there is a heavy emphasis on Church. For example, at this year level, young people are given an understanding of early Christian communities and learn something of the history of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Foundation 4
This foundation reminds us that Christian life requires the believer to be continually making choices. It is based on the assumption that the Christian life usually consists of a series of small decisions that effectively amount to saying “yes” to our God (in the same way that Mary did). By doing so, a person is continually choosing life in Christ. Throughout the Joy for Living series, students are reminded of the need to make life-giving decisions. Once again, the program at the Upper Primary level has a strong emphasis on this foundation. Decisions are related to the lived experience of students. Throughout the program, catechists will find that Unit 6 emphasises the Sacrament of Penance. In this way, students are reminded that God is always waiting to forgive for the times when they stray from choosing life.

It is impossible in an article of this length to do justice to these four foundations of our faith. For this reason, a focus for CCD-Sydney in 2002 is deepening the understanding of catechists about these foundations of our faith. This will occur in a number of ways:

- Reflection Days will be devoted to considering the implications of our baptismal calling in terms of the four foundations;
- Orientation meetings in all areas will contain a segment devoted to these foundations; and
- Catechist accreditation courses will examine the ways in which these four foundations are treated throughout the program.

In the Term Two newsletter, I will deal with the secondary teaching resource, Signs of the Times.

PETER J. IVERS
DIRECTOR

Dates for Orientation meetings and Reflection Days are found on p. 7 and 8.

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO CALENDAR FOR 2002

Continuing catechists will notice that there are significant changes to the CCD calendar for 2002. Of particular significance are the following changes:

May 26 Annual Catechist Mass (previously held in October)

Term 4 Area Masses (previously held in Easter season)

It was necessary to change the date of the Annual Mass due to the commitments of the Archbishop. Usually, the Archbishop of Sydney leaves for Rome on business around the end of October. This means that it is often impossible for him to be the Principal Celebrant at the Annual Catechist Mass. Hopefully, this problem will be alleviated by celebrating the Annual Mass in May.

In changing the Annual Mass to May, it then became necessary to change the Area Masses to October/November. These Masses will now also serve as an end-of-year celebration for catechists.

As a consequence of the new date for the Annual Catechist Mass, CCD will now require nominations from parish communities for Papal Blessings and Cardinal Freeman medals in February. For 2002 only, the Catechist Accreditation Certificate will not be presented at the Annual Mass. Catechists who qualify for this award in 2002 will have their certificates presented at the Annual Mass in 2003.

PETER J. IVERS
DIRECTOR
STAFF DEPARTURES

Towards the end of 2001, the following staff members moved on to other ventures:

- Mr Kevin Wright (Manager: Faith Education Services);
- Mr Michael Tebbutt (Retail Manager);
- Mrs Shereen Kamalaneson (Administrative Assistant: Faith Education Services).

On behalf of the Confraternity, I would like to take this opportunity to thank these people for the respective contributions that they made to CCD- Sydney. I wish them well in their future endeavours.

PETER J. IVERS
DIRECTOR

THANK YOU!

My sincere gratitude to the lady who handed in my Cardinal Freeman Certificate at St Mary’s Cathedral on October 28 2001. Please accept my appreciation and prayers for your thoughtfulness.

Beverley Silk
Catechist from Sadlier-Miller
TEACHING THE CREEDS

A Christian's whole life is a continual statement of his/her faith and beliefs. A Creed is a written summary of these beliefs.

The Apostles’ Creed is so-called because it is rightly considered to be a faithful summary of the apostles’ faith. It is the ancient baptismal symbol of the Church of Rome. (CCC #194) This is the Creed we say when praying the Rosary.

The Nicene Creed draws its great authority from the fact that it stems from the first two Ecumenical Councils (in 325 and 381). It remains common to all the Churches of both East and West to this day. (CCC #195) This is the Creed we say at Mass.

We are in fact teaching the Creed when we teach SRE by using the Joy for Living program. While it is hoped that by the end of primary schooling the children can recognise the two creeds and perhaps say The Apostles’ Creed “off by heart”, we can begin teaching them much earlier. The following are a few suggestions:

- At the beginning of the year ask the students to write down all that they believe about: God the Father, Jesus, The Holy Spirit and God’s Family. This creed can be reviewed and added to during the year. In appropriate lessons they can pray this creed.
- The children can compose individual or class creeds. The children write three or four things in which they believe. To make it a class creed the SRE teacher compiles it from these beliefs. Examples of beliefs are:
  - God loves us and always will;
  - Each person in our family/class is important and gifted; and
  - The Holy Spirit helps us to show love to one another.
- Have either the Apostles’ Creed (for younger classes) or the Nicene Creed (Years 5 & 6) written on a large piece of paper and display it each week. Sometimes at the beginning of the lesson tell the children the part of the creed on which the lesson is based; other times (e.g. at the end of the lesson) ask the children what part of the creed was taught.
- At an appropriate time during the year (e.g. Easter or Pentecost) present the Creed to each child – perhaps in the form of a tied-up scroll. For younger children use the Children’s Creed. This creed is also suitable for the Children’s Liturgy of the Word.

Therese Newell
Faith Education Officer
Concord Area

Children’s Creed

(children repeat each line after leader)

I believe that God is my Father in heaven.

I believe that he made the world
that he gives me life
that he helps me grow.

I believe that Jesus is the Son of God
and the Son of Mary.

I believe that Jesus shows me that God is love
Jesus lived and died for me
Jesus is alive now, alive in me
and in my neighbour.

I believe in the Holy Spirit
who teaches me to love others
who makes me holy
who helps me to know God better.

I believe in God’s family, the Church.

I believe that I will be happy
with God for ever and ever.
Amen.
## CALENDAR 2002, TERM 1-2 DATES

### ORIENTATION DAYS

#### BANKSTOWN AREA
- **Monday 4 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Our Lady of Lourdes, Parish Hall, 280 Homer St, EARLWOOD
- **Tuesday 5 February**: 10am – 12 noon, St. Therese’s School Hall, 11 Harvey Ave, PADSTOW
- **Thursday 7 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Parish Hall 6 Kerrinea Rd, SEFTON
- **Wednesday 13 February**: 7pm, St. Joseph’s, Parish Hall, 126 Liverpool Rd, ENFIELD

#### CITY AREA
- **Tuesday 5 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Polding House, 1st Floor, 276 Pitt Street, SYDNEY
- **Wednesday 6 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Mary Immaculate, WAVERLEY
- **Thursday 7 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Holy Family, MAROUBRA

#### CONCORD AREA
- **Monday 4 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Holy Spirit Parish Hall, 191 Cox’s Rd, NORTH RYDE
- **Monday 4 February**: 7.30pm – 9.30pm, St Mark’s School Hall, 31 Tranmere St, DRUMMOYNE
- **Tuesday 5 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Sacred Heart Parish, Cardinal St, MOSMAN
- **Thursday 7 February**: 10am – 12 noon, St Ambrose’s School Hall, Stuart St, CONCORD WEST

#### SUTHERLAND AREA
- **Tuesday 29 January**: 10am, Parish Centre, Port Hacking Rd, CARINGBAH
- **Monday 4 February**: 10am, CCD Centre, 50 Kiora Road (next to St VDP), MIRANDA
- **Tuesday 5 February**: 7.30pm, Parish Hall, Flora St, SUTHERLAND
- **Monday 11 February**: 10am, Parish Hall, Bay St, BRIGHTON LE SANDS
- **Friday 15 February**: 10am, Parish Hall (Princes H’way), BLAKEHURST

#### WESTERN AREA
- **Tuesday 5 February**: 10.30am – 12.30pm, St Christopher’s Parish Hall, Heathcote Road, HOLSWORTHY
- **Friday 8 February**: 10am – 12 noon, CCD Office, Twentieth Avenue, HOXTON PARK
- **Monday 11 February**: 10am – 12 noon, Mary Immaculate Parish Meet. Rm, Mimosa Rd, BOSSLEY PK

### PARISH CATECHIST COORDINATORS MEETINGS

#### BANKSTOWN AREA
- **Monday 18 February**: 10am – 1pm, First Floor, Polding House, 276 Pitt Street, SYDNEY

#### CITY AREA
- **Monday 11 February**: 10am – 1pm, First Floor, Polding House, 276 Pitt Street, SYDNEY

#### CONCORD AREA
- **Friday 15 February**: 10am – 1pm, First Floor, Polding House, 276 Pitt Street, SYDNEY

#### SUTHERLAND AREA
- **Friday 8 February**: 10am – 1pm, CCD Centre, 50 Kiora Road, MIRANDA

#### WESTERN AREA
- **Monday 4 February**: 10am – 1pm, St Gertrude’s Parish Meeting Room, Justin Street, SMITHFIELD

### SURVIVAL SKILLS WORKSHOPS

#### CITY AREA
- **Survival Skills**: Tuesday 12 February, 9.30am – 11.30am, Holy Family, MAROUBRA

#### CONCORD AREA
- **Survival Skills**: Wednesday 6 February, 11am – 1pm, St Ambrose’s Parish Room, CONCORD WEST
- **Survival Skills**: Monday 11 February, 9.30am – 11.30am, St Michael’s Parish Hall, MEADOWBANK

### REFLECTION DAYS

#### BANKSTOWN AREA
- **Our Baptismal Call**: Friday 22 March, 10am – 2pm, Venue: TBA

#### CITY AREA
- **Our Baptismal Call**: Monday 25 March, 10am – 2pm, Venue: TBA

#### CONCORD AREA
- **Our Baptismal Call**: Friday 22 March, 10am – 2pm, Venue: TBA
# BASIC ACCREDITATION PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BANKSTOWN AREA - Please bring Joy For Living Manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 7 March</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 14 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 21 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 4 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 3 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 10 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 1 May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 4 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 27 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 8 April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCORD AREA - Please bring JFL Manual, Lunch and Bible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 20 February</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 3 April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUTHERLAND AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 19 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 21 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 11 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 21 March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WESTERN AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 3 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 26 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 9 April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTERMEDIATE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BANKSTOWN AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Thursdays) June 6, 20, July 4, 25, August 1, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Wednesdays) May 8, 22, June 5, 19, July 3, 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCORD AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Mondays) April 29, May 13, 20, 27, June 3, 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUTHERLAND AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Fridays) March 8, 15, 22, May 17, 24, 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WESTERN AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Tuesdays) April 30, May 7, 14, 28, June 4, 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FAITH EDUCATION SERVICES

Contacting Faith Education Services in 2002

Due to some changes in staffing arrangements for 2002, please note that contact details for Faith Education Services are as follows:

In the first instance, catechists should try to contact their Area Faith Education Officer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Faith Education Officer</th>
<th>Telephone / Fax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Ms Isla Cameron</td>
<td>9580 4263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>Ms Therese Newell</td>
<td>9579 5917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>Mrs Anita Sicari</td>
<td>9554 5569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutherland - St George</td>
<td>Mrs Denise Humphreys</td>
<td>9524 6400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Mrs Judy Day</td>
<td>9816 2978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the Faith Education Officer is unavailable, the answering machine is always left on. Please leave a message and the Faith Education Officer will return your call (usually within 24 hours). If the matter is urgent, contact Mrs Carmel Duffy (tel.: 9390 5122).

Overview

Welcome back to a new year! 2002 promises to be an exciting year for all involved in this apostolic work. While we welcome back continuing catechists, we welcome in a special way those who are new to this apostolic work. We hope that you enjoy your first year as a catechist and undertake to support you in whatever ways we can.

During Term One, we encourage new catechists to attend any of the orientation days that are on offer in your area. These meetings will provide an opportunity for new catechists to gain an initial understanding of the work of a catechist. More experienced catechists might also find these days useful in updating their current knowledge about various matters.

The key celebration in Term One is Catechist Sunday. The Archbishop’s Office has advised that Catechist Sunday will be celebrated on 3 February throughout the Archdiocese (although parishes retain the right to celebrate Catechist Sunday on a different day). We congratulate all those catechists who will be presented with certificates for five, ten, or fifteen years’ of service as part of this celebration.

During February, we also look forward to meeting with parish catechist coordinators. Given the changes to the Archdiocesan calendar in 2002, it is important that as many coordinators as possible attend these meetings.

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, CCD- Sydney will be focussing in 2002 on deepening the understanding of catechists of the significance their baptismal calling. To this end, Reflection Days on the theme: Baptismal Call will be held in the City, Bankstown and Concord areas during Term One (see p. 7 for further details). Catechists in the Sutherland-St George and Western areas will have an opportunity to reflect on this theme in Term Three.

Peter J. Ivers
Director

Bankstown

Welcome to a new year! I hope your break was restful.

We begin this term with Orientation meetings at various parishes. It is important that catechists attend these meetings. This is because meetings such as these provide opportunities for CCD to maintain a link with you. Basic Accreditation workshops will be offered this term at Auburn, and a night session will be held at Enfield. These workshops are open to new catechists. They are also open to experienced catechists who wish to update their knowledge.

I look forward to seeing you all. Have a great term.

Anita Sicari
Faith Education Officer
tel.: 9554 5569
Bankstown catechists get into the Christmas spirit at the Sydney Catholic Club!

City

Welcome to 2002! I hope that the year will be fulfilling for everyone as we continue to take God’s Word to the students in our care. Each year has seen the City area grow in enthusiasm as the number of catechists increases. This will indeed benefit our children in providing better connection to them in classes, as well as alleviating the strain on those who have been taking extra classes.

I hope to meet as many catechists as possible at the Orientation meetings which are to be held in early-February (see p. 7 for details). I look forward to planning for workshops and meetings in parishes to give as much support as possible during the year. I am expecting that 2002 will be filled with rewarding experiences for catechists, students, parishes and families.

Isla Cameron
Faith Education Officer
Tel.: 9580 4263

Concord

I hope you are all feeling “geared up,” ready to go back into the classroom each week to share your love and knowledge of Jesus, to tell the Good News of God’s Reign!

Elsewhere in this newsletter (see p. 7) there are dates and venues for the Concord Area Parish Coordinators’ Meeting, the Orientation Meetings, and the Survival Skills Workshops. It is important that each Parish will be represented at the Coordinators’ Meeting either by the respective Coordinator or his/her representative. All catechists, the experienced and the beginners, are invited to attend an Orientation Meeting. This meeting will provide an opportunity to pray together, to hear first hand the plans for 2002 and meet other catechists.

The Survival Skills Workshop is designed to support new catechists going into the classroom for the first time. Already planned are workshops at Concord West and Meadowbank, but I am happy to present these workshops (day or evening) in any parish where there are new catechists.

This year I aim to continue offering practical assistance in a variety of ways: at schools; attending catechist meetings; presenting workshops (including the Basic and Intermediate Accreditation Programs); and hopefully meet many of you at some of the occasions already mentioned.

Be assured that God will bless all our efforts throughout 2002.

Therese Newell.
Faith Education Officer
Tel.: 9579 5917

Sutherland – St George

Welcome to all catechists who are taking classes in 2002. I hope to meet many of you at our area orientation days, reflection day, area mass and accreditation workshops. These days are for all catechists and are advertised in these catechist newsletters.

If you are a new catechist and feel the need for some survival skills please phone me or contact your coordinator for help. The times and places for some basic accreditation workshops are listed in this newsletter. Please remember that you can come to any of these workshops at any of the venues.

In Term 2, we will run an Intermediate Accreditation course on Fridays at Miranda and hopefully on Thursdays at Bexley. More details will be available later. The number below is a phone/ fax/ answering machine. Please ring if you need help and I will get back to you.

Denise Humphreys
Faith Education Officer
Tel.: 9524 6400
Western Area

As the new school year begins I ask for God's blessing on you the catechists, and on your students in the Special Religious Education classes. Once again you are encouraged to come along (and bring a friend) to the Basic Accreditation Workshops to be held in various parishes throughout the area. I am happy to organise workshops in parishes as the need arises, so please let your Coordinator know if you would like to participate.

Last year many of you completed the Basic Accreditation Workshops. You are invited to join the Intermediate Accreditation Course, which will be held during Term Two. Those eligible for Advanced Accreditation will be advised when that is to take place.

Please highlight these other important dates on your calendar:

- Annual Mass: Sunday May 26
- Western Area Reflection Day: Friday August 16
- Area Mass: October / November (Date to be confirmed)
- Archdiocesan Catechist Gatherings: Monday May 6 and October 21

FOUR FOUNDATIONS – LIVED FAITH / FAITH IN ACTION

One of the four foundations as expressed by Archbishop Pell states that “we believe in the Catholic Church, the Body of Christ”. Not only are we members of the Catholic Church, together we who are baptised are the Church. When we are in our SRE classes we are the church in company with our students. We are also the church, the Body of Christ collectively, when we gather together as a community in our parishes.

Knowing that we are members of a specific community, the next step is to live what the community stands for and values. Then we are living our faith in action. Recently a young woman whom I know was trying to make a decision that would influence her life. Her friends were also trying to influence her decision by talking about the path they would take in the same situation – the “modern” way. After much soul searching, she could not go along with her friends and made a decision based on the values and standards she had grown up with. She spent quite some time weighing up her own ideas against those of her friends, trying to come to a right decision. Her final choice was not made easily but she could not have been happy with living contrary to her faith and beliefs.

Each time we give a lesson, telling our students about the Christian message, we are providing them with the framework that will become their lives. This will enable them to know about the community that is the Church and understand how to live in a way that will allow them to live their faith in action.

Isla Cameron
Faith Education Officer
City Area
FREEDOM - CHOICE - RESPONSIBILITY

One of the greatest gifts we have been given is free will. How do we as catechists help the children in our class use this gift responsibly? We can teach them about Jesus and the Beatitudes, Moses and the Ten Commandments but we cannot make moral choices for the children we teach. How do we help them to make a choice for good and not evil, for right and not wrong?

When we give our students the opportunity to discuss moral dilemma stories we are educating them in the use of free will. However they need to practice at age appropriate levels as our moral life has a growth of its own, just like our physical growth. Kohlberg divides this growth into three main stages, pre-conventional, conventional and post conventional.

Children in lower and middle primary classes are likely to be at the pre-conventional stage. The pre-conventional person acts from self-interest and considers an action good if it brings him/her pleasure or praise and bad if it brings pain or punishment.

Children in upper primary and secondary school are possibly at the conventional stage of moral reasoning. Children at this stage follow the morality they learn from those around them. They are not able to make up their own minds on moral issues but have to rely on the judgment of others.

The post-conventional stage person is one who has fully thought out and freely accepted the principles of the moral life. Such a person will hold on to these principles even if those around him/her do not. Some people never reach this stage and others only reach it from time to time.

In the Joy for Living program there are many opportunities to help the children develop the gift of free will by practicing moral reasoning at an appropriate stage level. They often take the form of a moral dilemma story.

The following is a guideline that can be used when presenting a moral dilemma story to your class.

1. Present the moral dilemma.

Let the children reflect on the dilemma. With older children, who need to hear the opinion of those around them, this may take the form of a buzz session. The children speak among themselves and clarify their thoughts.

2. Children are asked to comment on the dilemma.

The catechist must make it clear they will accept all responses at this stage. The children will develop in their moral reasoning by hearing the opinion of others and by expressing their own feelings in a non-threatening and supportive atmosphere. Catechists may call for explanation, or intervene to clarify issues and ask probe questions. This will help the children analyse their motives.

3. Samples of probe questions that will help focus the children's thinking on different aspects of the dilemma.

- Why do you think the characters acted in that way?
- What do you think the character should have done?
- Why do you think like that?
- Would anyone be hurt if that were done?
- What else could be done?
- What might happen afterwards if he/she did that?

Denise Humphreys
Faith Education Officer
Sutherland – St George
BOOK REVIEWS

Fundamental or Fanatical? (Charles Hill)

It hardly seems like five years since I first read *Fundamental or Fanatical?*. The author, Dr Charles Hill, is well-known to most catechists in the Sydney area. In fact, I feel that I need to begin with a 2UE-style disclaimer that Charles is both a friend and mentor of mine.

I was initially quite surprised when Charles told me that he had just finished working on a book on fundamentalism. Over the years, Charles has developed a well-deserved reputation as a Scripture scholar with an impressive list of international titles to his credit (*Jesus and the Mystery of Christ* and *The Scriptures Jesus Knew* to name but two). To write a book on fundamentalism seemed to be straying into unknown territory! In reading the book, though, Charles' background as a Scripture scholar is very evident and stands him in good stead to tackle the complex and difficult problem of fundamentalism in the world today.

In fact, five years later, *Fundamental or Fanatical?* has proven to be quite a prophetic work. Charles originally wrote the book in the wake of the assassination of the then-Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. Appalling as this act was, Charles could have had no inkling of the terrible events that were to unfold on 11 September 2001. In fact, it is now impossible to read this book without an awareness of the potential danger that fundamentalism poses to the world. It would be wrong, though, to simply be concerned about a particular form of Islamic fundamentalism. As Charles comments, with typical irony:

> One has to observe of fundamentalism, as of the flu, that there's a lot of it about. One then proceeds to ask whether one can take something for it, like the flu, or is one saddled with it for life, despite one's best efforts. Is fundamentalism, in other words, the result of nature or of nurture? (1997, p. 3)

Throughout the book, Charles then explores a variety of different "strains" of fundamentalism—political, educational, religious, social, economic and environmental. His analysis of the characteristics of fundamentalism (Chapter 3) is particularly useful for teachers. In the wake of 11 September 2001, few will argue with his call for a realisation of the biblical concept of *metanoia* (change of heart) as the only real solution to the problem.

This book is easy to read and well worth the effort if we want to deepen our understanding of the contemporary world.

**RRP: $21.45**

*(Available from Sydney Catholic Books and Resources)*

For children

**Arch Books**

The purpose of this review is to remind catechists of the value of the Arch Books series. A variety of these attractively produced books are recommended throughout the *Joy for Living* program. Essentially, each title retells stories from The Bible in language that is familiar to students. Used wisely in the classroom, Arch Books can brighten up any lesson.

Some titles that are relevant to the Lent/Easter seasons are:

*Jesus Enters Jerusalem*
*The Story of the Empty Tomb*
*The Man Who Carried the Cross for Jesus*
*My Happy Easter Book*
*The Week That Led to Easter*

**RRP.: $4.95**

*(Selected titles available from Sydney Catholic Books and Resources)*
Practical Catechesis: Visions and Tasks for Catechetical Leaders (Judith Dunlap)

Judith Dunlap has been involved in religious education for over twenty years and during that time has focused on the importance of the family’s role in catechesis. The material contained in this book has been collated from material Judith Dunlap wrote in her columns for the magazine Church between 1993 and 2000. It is both instructional and formational, and draws on the General Directory for Catechesis.

The chapters on practical catechesis have the material arranged according to themes: Visions and Tasks; Message, Community, Service; Catechesis, Liturgy and the Liturgical Year; Those to be Catechized; and Catechesis: A Shared Ministry.

This is a very readable book. As the title suggests, it is full of practical suggestions, but not just suggestions. Each chapter includes ways to achieve those suggestions. For example, Chapter Eleven deals with the Liturgy of the Word with children. In this chapter, Dunlap has a section on what liturgy is about. Rather than going into a long and technical essay on the right way to prepare and perform the Liturgy of the Word with children, she discusses issues such as: setting the environment so that it is suitable for children, taking into account their needs, and the ability (or lack of ability) of children to sit still for an extended period.

This is continued with ideas on: how to bring the children to that space, appropriate introductory rites and ways of proclaiming and breaking open the Word. An interesting feature is the section that deals with training the presiders and facilitators who are involved in this ministry.

As I read this book, I kept thinking how simply these ideas have been written about. This gives the classroom catechist, the children’s liturgy team or the overall parish co-ordinator a wealth of ideas. It is because of this that Practical Catechesis: Visions and Tasks for Catechetical Leaders will make a valuable addition to the parish library. It should be recommended reading for all those involved in the catechesis of children, teenagers, young adults and adults.

RRP.: $16.95

Michael Tebbutt

(Available from Sydney Catholic Books and Resources)
REFLECTION: IN PRAISE OF GOD – FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

GREETING:  In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all.

GOSPEL:  John 16:12-15
'I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for the Spirit will not speak on his own but will speak whatever He hears and will declare to you all things that are to come. The Spirit will glorify me, because He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason, I said that the Spirit will take what is mine and declare it to you.'
The Gospel of the Lord.

QUIET REFLECTION

ALL:  Yahweh's love will last forever
His faithfulness till the end of time.
Yahweh is a loving God.
Yahweh, the faithful one.

LEADER:  For this lovely planet earth; for its beauty and its fertility;
For the human family with its many races and faces;
And for Your utter faithfulness to us in spite of our rebellion and sin;
In the name of the Father, most generous Creator, We thank you.

SONG:  Trinity Song  (Frank Andersen) (found in Eagle’s Wings) (Verse 1)
Father in my life I see, You are God who walks with me.
You hold my life in your hand. Close beside you I will stand.
I give all my life to you. Help me Father to be true.

ALL:  Yahweh's love will last forever.

LEADER:  For the deeds and the words of the prophets and the saints;
For the Word made flesh in Jesus, our Brother
Who lived among us, suffered and died for us,
And rose with abundant life;
In the name of the Son, most gracious Redeemer, We thank you.

SONG:  Trinity Song  (Verse 2).  Jesus in my life I see…
ALL:  Yahweh's love will last forever.

LEADER:  For your renewing presence,
Creating the Church and inspiring deeds of justice and love;
In the name of the Spirit, most Holy Comforter, We thank you.

SONG:  Trinity Song  (Verse 3).  Spirit in my life I see…
ALL:  Yahweh's love will last forever.

BLESSING:  May almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit bless us and keep us holy. Amen