The Year of the Eucharist

Catechist Newsletter, Term Two 2005
A s you would be well aware we are currently observing the Year of the Eucharist (10th October 2004—29th October 2005). As a means of marking the occasion, this edition of the Catechist Newsletter has been devoted to this theme as we come to a greater understanding and love of this sacrament of all sacraments.

During recent months the Catholic Weekly has featured a series of Eucharistic reflections from Sr Carmel Pilcher, Director of the Archdiocesan Liturgy Office. These reflections have proven to be invaluable to many catechists teaching Secondary SRE within government schools. Relevant and insightful, the reflections have proven to be a great conversation starter in many classes, and at times for discussions at home. Equally as relevant and effective as a teaching tool have been the articles entitled What the Eucharist Means to Me which have been written by a cross section of people across the wider catholic community. Recently I was asked by editor Kerry Myers to also contribute to this column and it was this request that really made me consider how influential the Eucharist has been in my own life.

It was on a trip to Mexico some ten years ago that I truly came to a renewed understanding and a deeper conviction of what the Eucharist meant to me.

After enjoying a holiday on America’s West Coast, I made a brief sojourn south of the border. The contrast was amazing. Only hours apart, cities of almost extravagant wealth and excess were replaced with poverty I had not encountered previously. It was here, through the response of a small child, that I would reflect upon what the Eucharist meant to me, possibly for the first time since my very own First Holy Communion.

The hot dusty streets were lined with street dwellers, emaciated and bedraggled, whose income largely depended upon their ability to sell local wares and trinkets to tourists. Families (or at least mothers and their children) sat on footpaths amongst rubbish in order to eek out an income. My immediate sense was one of overwhelming compassion, and at the same time gratitude for my tourist status.

My first day happened to be the first Saturday of the month and so I decided to seek out the local church. Like so many cities of the Mediterranean and South America it was of course in the city centre. The Church of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe. Entering, I expected to find a smattering of people, but to my amazement the Church was packed, with barely a spare inch on any pew, and it was still ten minutes shy of noon. My amazement continued during the next 90 minutes as I was absorbed into a Mass (which I had a little difficulty following) and a beautiful Benediction. I was not just engrossed by the rich beauty of what I had experienced, but I was equally fascinated by my fellow congregation.

Many of these people were clearly street dwellers, but for this moment they were not people of impoverishment or despair, but instead their faces radiated with hope and joy.

At the end of the Mass I sought out the priest, a young Salesian who spoke both perfect and fluent English. Surrounded by young children, and an assortment of people seeking individual blessings we exchanged stories of the sharp contrast between what I had just experienced and what I lived almost every Sunday. In particular the priest was dismayed when I told him of the fewer and fewer young people attending Mass, whereas here, both the Church and the priest were thronged with young people. Perhaps for my benefit or insight the priest asked his eager companions why they came to Mass. A rush of answers followed, some garbled, possibly through enthusiasm to please the priest, and then a young boy, no more than eight offered “WE GET TO HAVE JESUS.” Whilst at the time I didn’t give this much thought, it was this simple and beautiful response that would strike a chord with me in the weeks and years ahead. “WE

GET TO HAVE JESUS.”

This young boy, who by his own bedraggled appearance may well have been a street dweller, was convinced of and motivated by the REAL PRESENCE. Being only of an age where he might have only just made his First Holy Communion the young boy articulated an understanding of Eucharist which so many others take for granted. It was this child’s remark, both powerful and poignant, which has often made me reflect upon the question “What does the Eucharist mean to me?”

For me the young child’s explanation of Eucharist was reinforced last year in Mexico by Cardinal Tomko, when at the opening of the 48th International Eucharistic Congress, he reminded us that we must reflect upon “not what the Eucharist is but at Who the Eucharist is.”

By accepting and believing in the Real Presence we are choosing life not death and enjoying confidence and hope rather than suffering, misery and despair. It was the belief in the Real Presence that liberated the
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Mexican street dwellers from their misery and provided them with a source of joy.

As we celebrate the Year of the Eucharist I am again challenged to consider “What does the Eucharist mean to me?” Immediately I consider an array of notions, some formed and shaped by Church doctrine, others by personal experience.

Yes, the Eucharist is the Sacrament of all Sacraments, not just providing us with grace but the very source of grace.

Yes, the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life.

Yes, the Eucharist is a sacrifice.

Yes, the Eucharist enables us to share in the paschal mystery.

Yes, the Eucharist offers us the Real Presence, a point expounded upon by Fr Peter Joseph at the call to Holiness Conference in October 2004 saying “in the Holy Eucharist he is there: Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. Each one, therefore who receives Holy Communion, receives the entire living Christ, true God, true Man.”

So as I reflect upon what the Eucharist means to me, I consider the beauty and truth of these Eucharistic affirmations but I am still drawn to a young child’s sense and explanation of the Real Presence, a source of comfort, hope and joy, a knowledge that “WE GET TO HAVE JESUS.”

I hope that this edition of the Catechist Newsletter will motivate you to reflect upon and consider the question What does the Eucharist mean to me?

His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter Mane Nobiscum Domine urges “may the Year of the Eucharist be for everyone a precious opportunity to grow in awareness of the incomparable treasure which Christ has entrusted to his Church. May it encourage a more lively and fervent celebration of the Eucharist, leading to a Christian life transformed by love” (2004, no. 29). As a means of heeding this call the CCD is organising a series of initiatives to celebrate this special year.

Following the overwhelming success of the student prayer card Alive in Christ CCD will release a series of prayer cards for the Year of the Eucharist. As a means of ensuring that these cards are age appropriate the cards will be the result of a student competition. I encourage all catechists to involve all students in this enterprise. Connecting young people with the person of Jesus Christ is a great challenge for all those who are privileged to have the opportunity to work with young people. We have this privilege, and we must be proactive in working to ensure that they really encounter Jesus Christ in their everyday lives. Through the Year of the Eucharist prayer cards I hope to be able to really highlight and promote the wonderful spirituality and depth of faith that our young children possess. Just as with the young boy I encountered in Mexico a decade ago, sometimes the language of a child, although simplistic, conveys a sense of awe, wonder and beauty beyond and superior to the communication skills of us as adults.

Perhaps the most significant initiative of CCD to mark the Year of the Eucharist will be the release of a teaching and learning resource entitled The Eucharist, Lessons and Reflections. With articles from His Lordship Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett, Fr John Flader and Fr Peter Joseph this resource offers readers the opportunity to truly glean a deep theological understanding of the Eucharist. Not withstanding the importance of this, the resource is also an invaluable teaching tool, with ready made lesson plans for classes from Kindergarten to Year 10. This is ideal for teachers and we have even prepared the lesson worksheets for you, and for those who want to prepare their own we have provided a variety of graphics and illustrations suitable for this very purpose. The Eucharist, Lessons and Reflections will be available for purchase in late May, in time of course for our major feast, the Feast of Corpus Christi (29 May).

During this Year of the Eucharist may we also focus on the image of the Risen Christ, who has triumphed over all suffering, sin and even death itself. St Paul reminds us that “the cross is the reality of Christian life, but so too is the triumph of the resurrection.” We should always meditate upon the message of salvation given to us in the Resurrection, a message of life. Above all else, as catechists we must share the joy and hope of that message with others, particularly children in government schools. May they come to know that “Christ, who died for us and rose for us, you are the foundation of our hope” (John Paul II 2002).

Anthony Cleary
Director
Bankstown Area

Wow, what a year so far... as usual, so much to do and not enough time to do it all! This is just another reason for us to continue to strive to do our best and at the same time leave it all in the hands of God. It has been a productive year so far, with many new catechists bracing the mission of evangelisation to the young who otherwise may not have such an opportunity to hear the most beautiful and essential truths of our faith. In a society where religion has become a consumer product, just another item or choice in a line of many aisles labelling promising benefits; the witness of catechists, the voluntary nature of your work is evidence that there is something beyond all the treasures that money and fame could hope to purchase and achieve. Your presence and time with the students in state schools reaffirms to the students these words of our Lord Jesus, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust nor moth consumes, nor thieves break in and steal.” (Mt 6:19–20). It is therefore more accurate to admit that our faith is something that cannot be found in an aisle to be bought. It is not an item to purchase, but a treasure to be passed on; a treasure not to be disposed of, but of infinite value, to be kept and cherished. No price can be put on its value. Just reflect on the price Jesus our God and many Saints and martyrs paid, as well as all the years of service catechists have committed themselves to in the Sydney Archdiocese for almost 50 years (since the establishment of the CCD in 1958 and previous).

The revised Basic Accreditation Course has had an overwhelming positive response, both with the depth of content being covered and the number of attendees. There are currently 20 catechists completing this course at St Mel’s Parish, Campsie. I encourage catechists who have completed their Basic Accreditation in the past and are able to take on the Intermediate Accreditation Course (to be held at St Joseph’s Parish, Belmore - see page 12 for more details) do so as it is quite rewarding. I also encourage those who may want a refresher to attend, as much content is revised and different. I will be hoping to run another Basic Accreditation Course at Our Lady of Fatima, Peakhurst - see page 12 for further details. Please advise me if you are interested so that I may ascertain whether there is enough catechist interest to run another Basic Course.

The annual Area Mass will be held earlier than usual this year, Friday 27 May, 12 noon at St Joseph’s Parish, Riverwood. It is an occasion where we can, as an area, celebrate and pray for your mission and apostolate. I look forward to seeing you there if possible. Also take note of the Catechist Gathering on Friday 29 April. This is an opportunity to be updated on relevant issues and meet and greet catechists from all areas of the Sydney Archdiocese. The various Cluster Meetings for catechists’ coordinators will take place this term. All dates and associated information are contained on page 14.

Although there are a great number of new catechists, recruitment is an ongoing necessity for various parishes in our area. Please inform me if I can be of assistance. I’m available to support you in other areas, such as weekend parish visits, school visits and parish catechist meetings or in other ways that could be helpful.

May God Bless you, your families and the students that you teach and help.

Josephine Nassif
Faith Education Officer
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City Area

“I give thanks to my God in all my remembrance of you, always in all my prayers making supplications for you all with joy, because of your association with me in spreading the gospel of Christ from the first day until now. I am convinced of this, that he who has begun a good work in you will bring it to perfection until the day of Christ Jesus.” Corinthians 1:3-6

The new year is certainly underway and now we are all in full swing. I have had the pleasure of visiting some of the schools in Edgecliff, Bondi and Newtown and throughout the year I hope to visit more catechists in their schools. If anyone has any issues they would like to discuss I would be more than happy to come and help out wherever I am able. I have also been to a few parishes to assist with catechist recruitment so if anyone else would like me to, I would love to come and speak at your Sunday masses.

The Orientation meetings were well attended and it was a great opportunity for me to meet a number of catechists. The Coordinators meeting was also well attended and I thank those who were able to come. These meetings are a great opportunity to learn what plans we have for the year and for everyone to provide input.

The new Basic Accreditation course has been very successful throughout the archdiocese with many extra classes being run due to popular demand, especially in the Western area. Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the course, this helps and encourages us to improve future courses. I will be running another eight week Basic Accreditation Course this term in the Polding Centre commencing Monday 2 May, 1pm-4pm. The new Intermediate Accreditation Course will also be held this term on Wednesdays 10am-1pm at St Peter’s Parish, Surry Hills commencing 4 May. This course will include many interesting topics on Catholic Doctrine and Child...
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Psychology. If you would like to enrol in either course then please contact myself at the Polding Centre 9390 5122 or email sonia@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au. If anyone cannot make the above times/dates and are interested in doing the course then I will arrange a more suitable time and place to re-run the course. I hope you will find these courses not only informative but spiritually enlightening as well.

Please note in your diaries the following important dates that I hope you can all attend. The Catechist Gathering will be held at the Lidcombe Catholic Club on Friday 29 April from 10am-1pm. The City Area Mass will be held at St Brigid’s, Marrickville on Friday 24 June at 12 noon. It would be wonderful to see you all there so we can share in this great opportunity to build up our community of catechists and recognise the great work that you all do.

Concord Area

Term Two has arrived and with it comes more goals, more challenges, more adventures and the middle of the year. Yes, we are approaching the half-way mark of the year! I hope you all had a peaceful, rejuvenated and renewal Easter-time.

Commencing a new role is always challenging and holds with it a moment or two of reservation, but my transition to Faith Education Officer has been a smooth ride to say the least and this has been made easier with the friendliness and warmth of all parishes, coordinators and catechists, so many thanks to you all.

I would like to welcome all our new catechists to the Concord region and offer my support. Having visited several parishes and attended a number of meetings it is with comfort and ease that the commitment, dedication, enthusiasm and passion for the catechetical ministry is alive with the resurrection of Christ and being fulfilled within our government schools.

The Basic Accreditation course held at St Mary’s Concord has been attended by 14 new and current catechists and has been enjoyable to teach and very assuring to see the level of interest, level of participation and inquiry. The course provides catechist with the opportunity to gain an understanding of their faith and build upon the knowledge they already have. Further, catechists learn how to apply, develop and administer scripture classes through learning about classroom management and lesson planning. I encourage all catechists who feel they need a refresher to attend. In Term Two the Concord Area will be holding a Basic Accreditation Course and an Intermediate Accreditation Course, with the Advanced Accreditation Course to take place in Term Three. All are welcome to attend, with limited places available. In the advent of excessive interest I will look at holding a second class of either one or both accreditation courses. Please see page 12 for further details on programs being run this term.

My hope for this year is that we are able to make it into more high schools in the area which could potentially bring many fruits to our Church. If you would like to help out in a high school then please contact me and we can contact the schools in your area to try and make arrangements for scripture classes.

I wish everyone the best for this term and will be praying for you all as we persevere in this most important work for the church. God Bless.

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Sutherland-St George Area

Welcome to Term Two. By now you should be fairly settled with your class – the class rules have been established – you know the students’ names – you have established a pattern of preparation and teaching that gives you some sense of achievement and control.

Term Two is often when you feel brave enough to try something different in your class. Perhaps you could bring in a song as part of the lesson – maybe you would like to try some artwork – perhaps now is the time to make sure you have enough visual materials to enhance your lessons. Please remember there is a selection of pictures at Miranda that might be just what you are looking for. I am at the Miranda office most Mondays just come down and browse.

An enthusiastic group of catechists, including a significant number of gentlemen, completed the Basic Accreditation Course at Miranda last term. This course is designed to help with classroom management, lesson preparation and child protection issues, as well as giving you a basic understanding of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bible. So Mondays at Miranda has seen lots of discussion, plenty of questions and even a little experiment in drama, tongue twister names and role-playing. As an added service the mobile bookshop visited during the course – giving the new catechists some idea of what resources are available in Polding Centre. Please note that the mobile bookshop will visit again on Monday 6 June from 11am to 1.30pm. Feel free to drop in and have a look.

This term there are a few dates for your diary:

- The Catechist Gathering on Friday 29 April at Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club commencing 10am.
- The Sutherland-St George Area Mass will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Caringbah at 12 noon on Friday 3 June. Please bring a plate for a shared luncheon.
- The Intermediate Accreditation Course will run during Term Two on Mondays at Miranda commencing the 2 May. See page 12 for more details.

Parish, 18 Vine Street, Fairfield, (in the demountable) from 11am to 2pm (you can bring your lunch) starting on the 4 May until 22 June.

This term I hope to see many of you at the Area Mass, celebrated at Our Lady of the Rosary, 18 Vine Street, Fairfield, at 12 noon. Please bring a plate for a shared lunch after the Mass. This is a great opportunity to get together with other catechists from the Western area.

While some parishes have been blessed this year with many new catechists, there are still some schools that have no one to take on their classes. It really is sad to think that there are children out there who may never hear the message of Jesus Christ since there is no one to proclaim it to them. I thank all those catechists who take on extra classes and I thank all those new catechists who have decided to give it a go this year! Please do pray that more people will be moved by the Holy Spirit to take up this very important ministry. May God Bless you all!

Western Area

The Basic Accreditation Courses have proved very successful during Term One in the Western Area. We had a total of around 50 catechists participating. Many catechists have commented that they found the Basic Course very informative, helpful and enjoyable. They now feel better equipped with skills for classroom teaching as well as having a greater knowledge and understanding of the faith which is so important when teaching the children. The new Curriculum is introduced in this course so that catechists can get a head start for next year when they will be teaching this new program in Kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5. For all those who missed the Basic Course in Term One, there will be another one held in Term Two, starting on 2 May and running over eight Mondays from 10am to 1pm at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, 18 Vine Street, Fairfield (in the demountable).

In Term Two we will also run the Intermediate Accreditation Course for those who wish to continue building up their knowledge and skills acquired in the Basic Course. The Intermediate Course will run for eight Wednesdays at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, 18 Vine Street, Fairfield, (in the demountable).

PARISH CATECHIST COORDINATORS

- Please note the Annual Statistical forms for 2005 and Recognition of Service forms for Catechists who have completed 20 and 25 years of service will be mailed out to Parish Catechist Coordinators in the first week of Term Two. Please return the forms in the reply paid envelope provided by Friday 13 May 2005.
A REFLECTION ON THE EUCHARIST

I have often heard that the Eucharist is the “Source and Summit of the Christian life” but it is difficult to know what this actually means. I’m young, I have my whole life ahead of me, is the Eucharist the Source and Summit of my life?

I remember the day when the “penny dropped”. I remember the very day when I made the connection that Christ’s sacrifice and the Eucharist are one. Jesus not only gave Himself for me on the Cross, but He continues to give Himself, body, blood, soul and divinity in the Eucharist. I can’t even write that without my head starting to spin. When I receive Our Lord in the blessed Eucharist I literally have within me the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ.

Like doubting Thomas who wouldn’t believe in the Risen Lord until he could put his fingers in the holes in Jesus’ hands and feet, in a similar way, there had been a blockage, not so much one of doubt, but of indifference and incomprehension. How could this be? Having the theological facts is one thing, but allowing that to penetrate one’s heart and even more so, one’s life, is something completely different.

The Eucharist should be the source and the summit of the Christian life! When I reflect back on the other sacraments that I have received, Baptism, Confirmation, and the sacrament of Confession or Reconciliation, I realise that all of it has prepared me, or continues to prepare me to receive the Holy Eucharist. That is what the Church means when she says that the Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life”. The Eucharist is both the “summit” of the seven sacraments, and the “source” of the seven sacraments. And it is precisely through the sacraments that we have a way of developing our relationship with Christ, it is a way for us to be in communion with Him.

I once saw a picture of Jesus knocking on a door, which symbolised the human heart. Jesus was knocking on the human heart! How ridiculous, Jesus is God, He doesn’t need to knock; He can just walk straight in! But Jesus is the perfect gentleman, He will continue to knock, He will continue to invite us to enter a deeper and more personal relationship with Him. He will never force His way into our lives. There are some I suspect that will keep Him knocking outside the door. But it is by letting Him in, and by making Him the guest of honour in our lives, that the Eucharist, and all of the graces associated with this tremendously mysterious sacrament, will become for us, the source and the summit of our Christian lives.

The Eucharist and the Cross are sometimes seen as stumbling blocks to our faith. It certainly has managed to divide Catholics from our separated Christian brothers and sisters, and it may even be our own stumbling block as well. This can’t be surprising, as this was the case in Jesus’ time as well. Jesus clearly stated “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; …for my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed” (Jn 6:53 –56). Many of Jesus’ disciples upon hearing this said “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” (Jn 6:60) and “after this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him” (Jn 6:66). This reaction still occurs today. The profound mystery of the Eucharist is something, which we will be able to meditate and pray on for the rest of our lives, but without the gift of faith, it may seem impossible to believe. But the Eucharist contains the Church’s entire spiritual treasure, that is, Christ Himself, and we have Jesus’ word of honour that this teaching is true (and who is more honourable than God?). And so at times when I find myself behaving like doubting Thomas, I pray, “Jesus I believe, help my unbelief”. Or when I start to feel myself taking this profoundly mysterious sacrament for granted, then just before the moment that I receive Our Lord in the Eucharist, I invoke Mary and I pray, “Immaculate heart of Mary, prepare my heart to receive my Saviour”.

I desire to further make the Eucharist the source and summit of my life. I have no doubt that the Eucharist is the source of my life, but sometimes I feel like I’m only at the foot of the summit. Hence I will spend the rest of my life praying for the grace and attempting to make the Eucharist the summit of my life also.

WILL I BE A GOOD CATECHIST?

Several years ago, I was approached by catechists and Fr Michael O’Sullivan PP (now retired) to join them as they were in great need of catechists for our state schools within our parish. Every year I replied I’d love to, but due to my full time job, family and community commitments I was unable to make myself available. I thought once I retired I would join them.

Last year the time came, when I was approached by a dedicated and friendly senior catechist who reminded me of my promise. I vehemently asked myself and my son Sonny (who is active in our parish youth alliance) “Will I be a good Catechist?”

If God has a plan for me, then I have to fulfill it lovingly with peace, joy, wisdom and humility to the school children. After I became a catechist last year, I found out that Special Religious Education (SRE) is needed and must be effective and active. I strongly believe SRE is a spiritual health foundation, and it is necessary for this interactive (high tech) younger generation to be spiritually strong, as they are our future.

Joanne Zwaans
Catechumenate Coordinator
Sydney Archdiocese

Lucy G. Saladar
St Therese’s Parish
Mascot
CATECHESIS AND EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

As a student in senior secondary school, I was launched into my first attempts in catechesis by a fellow student at the Conservatorium High School, which I attended for my last two years of secondary education. My colleague used to quiz me about the Faith on our way home each afternoon and I thought his persistence was due only to intellectual interest. I was amazed when this young man became a Catholic during the last year of my secondary studies.

Some years later, when I attended a weekday Mass close to where I live, this same young man was the celebrant for Holy Mass! I had no idea that his Faith path had moved in this direction and I was overjoyed. I do not believe that I was responsible for his priestly vocation, but I am aware that God can bring good out of our efforts. The fruits of our witness are His and certainly not commensurate with our contributions, which, however so small, He uses as He wishes.

As a young mother, I was asked by a priest who regularly visited our family to give weekly catechetical classes in the local primary and secondary state schools. One of the other denominational participants, a beautiful, elderly lady, was very experienced as a catechist. One day after classes, we were discussing our possible influence in the classroom and she told me a story which I found inspirational: whilst visiting one of her former students in prison, she had been overwhelmed when he confided to her that her direction and warmth when he was in her Scripture classes had been a great influence in his life and that his love for Christ had grown during his period in prison, where available time allowed him to ponder deeply the lessons she had passed onto him so many years before.

Many Catholics are reluctant to become involved in catechesis because they believe they cannot possibly contribute in a positive way. But we never know what influence we have. We never know what God will do with us. Often our words may seem trite but the silent witness of our love of God and His Church speaks volumes. More often than not, we do not see the fruits of our catechesis. Those who follow us may be the ones to reap the fruits of our efforts but the fruits are certainly to be had. I believe wholeheartedly that our catechetical efforts will not be wasted.

More lately, in the last twelve years, my catechetical evangelising input has been in the promotion of Eucharistic adoration. Again and again, I have asked God why He chose me to do this apostolic work. It seems to me that His response has been to enable me to work long hours, to survive with minimal sleep when a major apostolic project is due and to maintain the care of my family with great joy and a deep sense of fulfilment.

In 1993, a group of twenty people met in my lounge room to discuss the formation of an organisation bent on encouraging love and reverence for the Blessed Eucharist. Due to God’s grace this group, the Society for Eucharistic Adoration, has grown to 2,000 members, who make a weekly Holy Hour and who try to promote Eucharistic adoration, particularly perpetual adoration.

This year is a Eucharistic Year and the Holy Father has asked the Church to emphasize the importance of Sunday Mass, the feast and procession of Corpus Christi (the Body and Blood of Christ), Eucharistic adoration in all its forms, including nocturnal adoration, and the importance of frequent and worthy Communion, coupled with the sacrament of reconciliation. The Holy Father asks us, particularly during this Eucharistic Year, to encourage the spirit of mission, which stems from the Eucharist, to share our table and Mass with the poor, in the service of charity and to combine spiritual commitment with the needs of the poor. We are also asked to renew faith, sacrifice, communion and service in the Eucharist, as a sign for the Church and the world.

If we all contribute to fulfilling these aims, the Church must grow exponentially. Our personal love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, for the Mass and for His Real Presence abiding with us always, must intensify.

We can witness to our belief in Sunday Mass by attending every Sunday and inviting all the members of our family to accompany us.

We can ask our parish priest to celebrate Corpus Christi Sunday with a Eucharistic Procession around the streets of the parish or the grounds of the church.

We can train our children to receive Holy Communion with great reverence, reminding them of the need to be free from serious sin, to receive Communion to please God and to grow in holiness, and to be fasting for one hour before receiving Communion.

We can take our children and grandchildren to Confession regularly, as well as receiving the grace of this sacrament ourselves on a frequent basis. We can remind our older children of the great opportunity Confession provides for us to come closer to Christ.

We can invite fellow parishioners to join us in praying before the Blessed Sacrament and we can ask the priest to have Exposition during peak times of support. We can enlist the men of the parish to make a Holy Hour during the night, as is done in Paris to this day in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Montmartre, Paris.

We can pray for the opportunity to witness to others the love and belief we have in the Eucharistic Presence at Mass and outside of the celebration.

We can try to take those who are not as privileged as we have been, either in material goods or in spiritual formation, to Mass, explaining how important the Eucharist is in our own lives. We can also try to share our food and our time with those less fortunate than ourselves.

We can try to strengthen our own faith and practice of the Christian life by learning more about the Holy Eucharist, and by praying for the courage to tell others of our love and belief in the Blessed Eucharist. One good way to evangelise in Eucharistic belief is to try to attend Mass on at least one extra day other than Sunday. This is our personal and public witness that the Mass is of the utmost importance to us. It is also an indication that we are prepared to make sacrifices to participate. It is the public demonstration of our belief that the Mass provides an opportunity to grow in holiness and grace each time we attend and receive Holy Communion.

In this Year of the Eucharist, let us pray that our love for the Holy Eucharist may grow more deeply, that our attention to Eucharistic celebration and adoration may become more intense, that the Eucharist may be more intimately at the centre of our lives, and that our witness to Christ’s Eucharistic Presence in the world may lead us to more courageous evangelisation.

Christine McCarthy
HOLY COMMUNION — THE BREAD OF LIFE

Bread is one of our main foods. This is why Jesus chose bread.

He wanted to give himself as the bread from heaven — a sign of his love.

WORK OUT THESE PATCHWORK PUZZLES

The answers are in the ‘WORDBANK’ below.

**Ordinary Bread**

1. Bread is one of the most ….. foods we eat.
2. Bread helps our bodies to …..
3. Bread helps our bodies to …..
4. Bread …… good to eat
5. Bread gives us ……..
6. Bread helps keep us ……..
7. Bread helps our bodies to grow …..
8. Bread feeds our ……..

**The Living Bread**

1. Jesus, the living bread, helps us grow in ……..
2. We show love to others when we are …..
3. Jesus promises that if we eat his flesh and drink his blood we will one day live……..
4. Jesus in Holy Communion is the bread of God’s ……..
5. Jesus comes to ……… us to him and to one another in love.
6. Jesus helps us really to …..

To God’s Family by sharing, loving and caring.

**WE OFFER OURSELVES WITH HIM**

Write a prayer offering yourself with Jesus to God our Father.

________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________

**MEMORY CARD 4**

What words tell us that the bread and wine are changed into Jesus’ body and blood?

The words Jesus used at the Last Supper:

This is my body
This is my blood.

Taken from **EUCHARIST IN GOD’S FAMILY Joy For Living Activity Book** available from Sydney Catholic Books & Resources.
Youth from all over Australia and some overseas countries attended the Adore Conference which was held in Sydney at St Mary's Cathedral Hall from the 20th to the 23rd January 2005. Around 1000 people attended this conference which focused on the Real and True Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Some highlights of this conference included a talk from Bishop Anthony Fisher who pointed out that Jesus is more ‘present’ to us today than when he walked on this earth. Then he was only present to the people around him whereas today he is present in every consecrated Host.

Bishop Julian Porteous also gave a talk emphasising that Jesus is not distant. He is with us and he wants to abide in us. Before we receive Jesus in Holy Communion we need to make an act of faith and be conscious of the fact that we are in reality receiving Our Lord who loves us and wants us to be united with him.

Fr Edgardo Arellano, came from USA, to give a number of talks. During one of his talks he said that the Eucharist is Jesus’ Heart. The heart is a physical manifestation of love (which is spiritual). Therefore, when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist we receive the Heart of Life!

A number of youth also gave testimonies of their faith in the true Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. Many of them spoke of spending time in prayer and adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament (the consecrated Host). They also mentioned how it was important to show with our body what is in our heart.

For example, to kneel in front of Jesus when we pray shows that we love and adore him and in this way we show reverence. There were a number of posters around the hall and one of the slogans that stood out was: “His True and Real Presence. Doubt no longer but believe.”

The highlight of this event was the Eucharistic procession which took place on Saturday night. Around 1000 people – predominantly youth – walked through the streets of Sydney following Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament which was held and carried by Bishop Julian Porteous. It really felt like we were walking with Jesus Christ through the streets of Sydney. It was an awesome experience!

Lydia Siutz
Faith Education Officer
Western Area

What if Jesus was knocking at your door? Would you invite Him in?

The reality of our Lord being substantially present (Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity) in our tabernacles makes Him more present than you or I could ever hope to be! He is available in our churches all the time.

Where do we put our money and time? Who do we go and visit the most often?

People pay psychologists on a regular basis to hear their problems and give advice on particular and general difficulties. But isn’t it obvious? The greatest physician (doctor) we could desire is Jesus our Lord. “It is not the healthy who need a physician but the sick … I have come to call sinners” (Mt 9:12). And the great reality is that nobody knows us better, the Lord even knows us better than ourselves. Jesus said, “…as for you, the very hairs of your head are all numbered” (Mt 10:30).

Jesus awaits His beloved individuals with all the patience and compassion we could hope for. I therefore consider the four days invested in the Adore Conference (held in January) to be one of the greatest investments I could have made with my time.

The atmosphere was fantastic – many hundreds of lively youth and individuals were motivated to get to know and somehow come closer to the same Man.

The speakers were dynamic and informative. There was a good balance of lively music and quiet time for adoration; the combination helped to enlighten those who attended with a greater desire to love and please Jesus who was the centre and reason for the gathering.

Some of the highlights I experienced were the beautiful Masses celebrated by his Lordship, Bishop Porteous and His Eminence George Cardinal Pell. But nothing could surpass the experience of the Eucharistic procession held in the streets of Sydney. Being able to walk with our Lord in our city and worship Him with a thousand other Catholics as a family united in love for Jesus. It was an experience I recommend for all parishes, especially during this year of the Eucharist.

The whole experience has reaffirmed that the Lord is waiting for us all the time. My time was and is best used in those quiet moments in His presence.

Josephine Nassif
Faith Education Officer
Bankstown Area
Earlier this year I had the opportunity to attend the Adore Conference held at St Mary's Cathedral. It was truly an awesome experience to be amongst such beautiful and devoted Catholics all praising and worshipping God. It really set the scene for the Church’s Year of the Eucharist and highlighted the importance of prayer before our Blessed Lord in the Eucharist. There were hundreds of youth from around Sydney and even many interstate visitors who had come to attend the conference. The talks formed an important aspect of the gathering and were all inspiring and uplifting, encouraging the young to be faithful to Christ and live their call to holiness. It was also very lively with upbeat music and an enthusiastic and charged band. The reverence shown at Mass by the gathering was beautiful and I wish that many Catholics from Sydney could have witnessed such devotion in the youth because it would give us all more hope for the future to see the youth respond to God’s call for them to be apostles of His love.

The highlight for me and for many people was the Eucharistic procession throughout the streets of the city. There were at least a thousand people in the procession, and we even picked up some passer-bys whilst walking along. The procession was very stirring and filled us all with much courage and strength as the people out enjoying their Saturday night just watched in awe at this spectacular crowd in prayful reverence. I hope that many other parishes are able to have Eucharistic processions this year as they are a great blessing for the Catholic community and a sign of our love and devotion for Christ in the Eucharist. The four days left us all feeling renewed and invigorated to tackle the new year and persevere through the trials, knowing that Christ in the Eucharist is our source of strength and love. I hope we can have many more conferences like this one and I would fully support all the youth to attend it once again.

Sonia Baldwin
Faith Education Officer
City Area
## BASIC ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Please contact your Faith Education Officer to enroll for the Basic Accreditation Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>Our Lady of Fatima Parish</td>
<td>June 3, 10, 17, 24, July 25, August 5, 12, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>825 Forest Rd, Peakhurst</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fridays 10am - 1pm</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>Holy Spirit Parish</td>
<td>May 20, 27, June 3, 10, 24, July 22, 29, August 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>191 Cox’s Road, North Ryde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fridays 10am - 1pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Polding Centre</td>
<td>May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 20, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>133 Liverpool Street, Sydney</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mondays 1pm - 4pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Our Lady of the Rosary Parish</td>
<td>May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 20, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 Vine Street, Fairfield (in the demountable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mondays 10am - 1pm</td>
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## INTERMEDIATE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Please contact your Faith Education Officer or Mrs Carmel Duffy (9390 5122) to enroll for the Intermediate Accreditation Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>St Peter’s Parish</td>
<td>May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1, 8, 15, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>243 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesdays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>St Mary’s Parish</td>
<td>May 16, 23, 30 June 6, 20, 27, July 25, August 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burton Street, Concord</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mondays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Our Lady of the Rosary Parish</td>
<td>May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1, 8, 15, 22</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18 Vine Street, Fairfield (in the demountable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wednesdays 11am - 2pm</td>
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## ADVANCED ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (TERM 3)

Please contact your Faith Education Officer or Mrs Carmel Duffy (9390 5122) to enroll for the Advanced Accreditation Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Venue: TBA</td>
<td>July 26, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, Sept 6, 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesdays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sutherland-St George</td>
<td>CCD Miranda</td>
<td>July 18, 25, August 8, 15, 22, 29, Sept 5, 12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 Kiora Rd, Miranda</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Mondays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Note: Mobile bookshop will visit on June 6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>St Mary’s Parish</td>
<td>August 15, 22, 29, Sept 5, 12, 19, Oct 10,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burton Street, Concord</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mondays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holy Spirit Parish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>191 Cox’s Road, North Ryde</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fridays 10am - 1pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Note: Mobile bookshop will visit on August 22.</td>
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</table>
Catechist Newsletter, Term Two 2005

Catechist Ministry Certificate

Prerequisite: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Accreditation Program

Please contact Mrs Carmel Duffy Tel. 9390 5122 to enroll for any of the units listed below.

Church History (M12)
Robert Haddad
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
10am-2pm

April: Monday 18, Tuesday 19, Wednesday 20

Term Two

Foundations of Religious Education (MC02)
Anthony Cleary
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
Mondays, 10am - 1pm
May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6

The Year of the Eucharist (M19)
Maree Nelson
CCD Office, 21 Twentieth Street, Hoxton Park
Thursdays, 10am - 1pm
May 12, 19, 26, June 2, 9

Catholics in History (M13)
Lucy O'Connell
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
10am - 2pm
July: Monday 11, Tuesday 12

Term Three

The Call to Holiness (MC04)
Dr Charles Hill
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
Mondays, 10am - 1pm
August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Theology of the Body (M15)
Lydia Siutz
CCD Office, 21 Twentieth Street, Hoxton Park
Thursdays, 10am - 1pm
August 4, 11, 18, 25, September 1

The Sacraments of Initiation (MI07)
Joanne Zwaans
Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club, 24 John Street, Lidcombe
Thursdays, 10am - 1pm
August 4, 11, 18, 25, September 1

Christology (M11)
Robert Haddad
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
10am - 2pm
October: Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5, Thursday 6

Term Four

The Mission of the Catechist (MI16)
Lydia Siutz
CCD Office, 21 Twentieth Street, Hoxton Park
Thursdays, 10am - 1pm
October 27, November 3, 10, 17, 24

Theology 1 (MC03)
Dr Charles Hill
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
Mondays, 10am - 1pm
October 31, November 7, 14, 21, 28

The Old Testament (MI01)
Lucy O’Connell
Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
10am - 2pm
December: Thursday 15, Friday 16

Date Claimers 2005

Monday, 18 July  Concord Area Coordinators Meeting
Friday, 22 July  Bankstown Area Coordinators Meeting
Monday, 25 July  Western Area Coordinators Meeting
Friday, 29 July  City Area Coordinators Meeting
Monday, 1 August  Sutherland-Si George Area Coordinators Meeting
Sunday, 18 September  Annual Catechist Mass (St Mary’s Cathedral at 2pm)
Friday, 14 October  Archdiocesan Catechist Gathering (Venue TBA)
Friday, 25 November  Life Members Mass & Luncheon
Catechist Newsletter, Term Two 2005

Bankstown Area Cluster Meetings

Beverley Lamaro
Cluster Coordinator
Wednesday 13 April at 10am
St Felix Parish
550 Chapel Road,
Bankstown
Parishes include:
Auburn, Auburn South, Bankstown, Bankstown Central,
Bass Hill, Berala, Lidcombe and Sefton

Maureen Pasqual
Cluster Coordinator
Wednesday 13 April at 1pm
Please contact
Josephine Nassif 9390 5122 for
venue details.
Parishes include:
Enfield, Greenacre, Lakemba, Punchbowl, Riverwood and
Strathfield South

Pat Cosgrove
Cluster Coordinator
Tuesday 3 May at 10am
St Joseph's Parish
763 Canterbury Road,
Belmore
Parishes include:
Belmore, Beverley Hills, Campsie, Clemton Park, Earlwood,
Kingsgrove, Peakhurst and Penshurst

Mike Cummins
Cluster Coordinator
Monday 9 May at 1.30pm
St Patrick's Parish
294 The River Road
Revesby Heights
Parishes include:
Georges Hall, Oatley, Padstow, Panania, Revesby and
Revesby Heights

Area Masses

Western Area
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church
18 Vine Street, Fairfield
Friday 6 May, 12 noon

Bankstown Area
St Joseph's Catholic Church
26 Thurlow Street, Riverwood
Friday 27 May, 12 noon

Sutherland/St George Area
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
389 Port Hacking Road, Caringbah
Friday 3 June, 12 noon

Concord Area
St Michael's Catholic Church (Meadowbank Parish)
45 Maxim Street, West Ryde
Friday 17 June, 11am

City
St Brigid's Catholic Church
153A Livingstone Road, Marrickville
Friday 24 June, 12 noon

Please bring a plate for a shared lunch.
Parish Catechist Coordinators are asked to bring their
CCD Parish Candle to the Area Masses
President of the Society for Eucharistic Adoration Mrs Christine McCarthy currently has three titles available which are ideal for catechists and suitable for children of all ages. Each of these books is particularly relevant in this, the Year of the Eucharist and are readily available from Sydney Catholic Books and Resources at very affordable prices.

First published in 1999 *I the Lord Am With You Always* is really a best seller. Containing prayers and meditations for Eucharistic adoration this book has been enthusiastically received by adults and adolescents alike. The artwork within is stunning in its detail. $12.50

*Come to Me, My Children* provides a wonderful treasury of prayers, an ideal gift for children, particularly those who might be introduced to formal prayers for the first time. Children making their first Confession or First Holy Communion or perhaps participating in Confirmation 2005 would really benefit from such a gift, which they could keep as a life-long companion. This collection of prayers is interspersed with contemporary illustrations and graphics which are very eye-catching. $6.95

Recently released *In Memory of Me* is a wonderful supplement to the Apostolic Letters *Dies Domini* and *Mane Nobiscum Domine*. In a style that is very easy to read *In Memory of Me* provides a comprehensive overview of this ineffable Sacrament. Readers are given an understanding of Old Testament sacrifice, the Passover, the Last Supper as well as meaningful reflections on the Eucharist from a number of perspectives. A range of illustrations and photographs are used to great effect. Not only do readers get to see Renaissance artworks and a number of stained glass settings but they also have a selection of contemporary photographs of local churches. For children, it is a wonderful introduction to the sacred objects inside our churches. *In Memory of Me* features local priest Fr Michael de Stoop. $11.95
There is no love, like a mother’s love

no stronger bond on earth..

like the precious bond that comes from God,
to a mother, when she gives birth.

A mother’s love is forever strong,
ever changing for all time..
and when her children need her most,
a mother’s love will shine.

God bless these special mothers,
God bless them every one..
for all the tears and heartache,
and for the special work they’ve done.

When her days on earth are over,
a mother’s love lives on.
through many generations,
with God’s blessings on each one.

Be thankful for our mothers,
for they love with a higher love..
from the power God has given,
and the strength from up above.

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY TO ALL OUR MOTHERS
AND GRANDMOTHERS!!!

M” is for the million things she gave,
“O” means only that she’s growing old,
“T” is for tears she shed to save me
“H” is for heart of purest gold,
“E” is for her eyes, with love-light shining,
“R” means right, and right she’ll always be,

“Put them all together, they spell
“MOTHER”
A word that means the world to me!!!