Engaging Students: ICCOREIS report

On May 18, Mary Carolan, Teresa Culjak, Ruth Sheridan and Robert Milan attended the SRE Teachers’ Conference 2007, hosted by ICCOREIS (Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools). Many valuable insights and practical strategies were shared during the event. We include here some reflection material, as well as some of the practical suggestions offered:

For reflection:

• Children will remember YOU long after your content…
• The most difficult child to love is the child most in need of love…
• Children don’t care about what you KNOW, until they know that you CARE…
• You represent the God you are talking about.
• How does Christ’s attitude towards children compare with society’s attitude?

Practical suggestions:

• What boundaries would you like to set, to ensure that your students know and understand your expectations, so that you can teach well?
• List five things you could say to acknowledge good work (being on task)
• 70-90% of our communication is affected by body-language
• Avoid being stationary
• Selective attending: it is possible to ignore some behaviour when the student is not seriously disturbing others. However, do not turn your back on this student. If he or she does not return to the task, respond with the strategy of your choice.

List five consequences with which you feel comfortable, in order to help students make better choices.

• Follow through—do what you say you will do! This establishes that you really mean what you say. It shows skill and control, reinforces and re-establishes boundaries, gains respect and encourages students to trust your word, and, therefore, your management.

Do you have a faith question, a teaching suggestion, or an amusing or touching anecdote that you would like to share with other catechists?

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**Curriculum Meeting**

On Thursday 31st May a number of catechists gathered at Lidcombe to discuss changes that should be made to the curriculum before reprinting at the end of this year.

The meeting was a great success with lots of very valuable input from those who use the program each week. Some of the suggestions from the day will be able to be incorporated for next year.

Below is a brief summary of some of the things that will be changed.

**Student Book**

- Home activity page as a separate booklet, or loose leaf, thus making student books lighter.
- New covers for Kinder, Stage 1, Stage 2. Coloured covers that will correspond to the ‘To Know, Worship and Love’ CEO curriculum and the big books we use.
- Rewording of suggested home activities
- Correction of errors.
- Values page at front of student book to link lesson content with what students see in their schools.

**Teachers Manual**

- Solutions to all puzzles in teachers manual
- Lesson Aims for each lesson
- “I wonder ...” questions for Year three to six
- Resources for catechists own formation/meditation.

Please continue to forward your comments and suggestions.

All feedback is greatly appreciated.

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**A Saint’s Day**

Saint Anthony was baptised Ferdinand in 1195, in Lisbon, Portugal. An Augustinian monk first, he joined the Friars Minor in 1220. His wish to travel to Morocco was thwarted and he embraced simplicity and silence. His gift for preaching was discovered by accident and became famous for its passion and erudition. He founded a theology school, which eventually became part of the University of Bologna. He died of dropsy on June 13, 1231.

- **June 3** – Holy Trinity
- **June 10** – Body and Blood of Christ
- **June 11** – St Barnabas
- **June 13** – St Anthony of Padua
- **June 15** – Sacred Heart of Jesus
- **June 16** – Immaculate Heart of Mary
- **June 21** – St Aloysius Gonzaga
- **June 29** – Ss Peter and Paul, Apostles

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**A Moment with God**

Prayer, then, and penance are the two potent inspirations sent to us at this time by God, that we may lead back to Him mankind that has gone astray and wanders about without a guide: they are the inspirations that will dispel and remedy the first and principal cause of every form of disturbance and rebellion, the revolt of man against God. But the peoples themselves are called upon to make up their minds to a definite choice: either they entrust themselves to these benevolent and beneficent inspirations and are converted, humble and repentant, to the Lord and the Father of mercies, or they hand over themselves and what little remains of happiness on earth to the mercy of the enemy of God, to the spirit of vengeance and destruction.

Nothing remains for Us, therefore, but to invite this poor world that has shed so much blood, has dug so many graves, has destroyed so many works, has deprived so many men of bread and labor, nothing else remains for us, we say, but to invite it in the loving words of the sacred Liturgy: "Be thou converted to the Lord thy God."

- *Caritate Christi Compulsi*, Encyclical on the Sacred Heart,
Scientist Hopeful About New Stem Cell Studies
Method May Give Results Without Destroying Embryos

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah, JUNE 8, 2007 (Zenit.org)-

New studies done by three independent teams of scientists show promise in producing embryonic-like stem cells without destroying embryos. The studies, published Wednesday, use ordinary skin cells from mice and reprogram them to act like embryonic stem cells -- that is, capable of being manipulated into almost any type of bodily tissue. Maureen Condic, an associate professor of neurobiology and anatomy at the University of Utah School of Medicine, spoke with ZENIT about the functionality and ethics of these new studies.

"The finding that adult cells can be directly converted into the functional equivalents of embryonic stem cells is very promising," said Condic. "It is not yet known whether the procedure for generating IPSCs [induced pluripotent state cells] from mice will work in human cells, yet given how simple this procedure is, and how much we know about altering gene expression in cells, it is highly likely that we will be able to apply this same approach to human cells with minor modifications in the near future." Condic cautioned, however: "It is important to appreciate that the intrinsic problems associated with ESCs [embryonic stem cells], such as tumor formation, genetic instability, difficulty in controlling differentiation, will apply to IPSCs as well.

Circumventing concerns
"This procedure is not only easier than current methods of generating embryonic stem cell lines," Condic explained, "it circumvents the vast majority of ethical concerns raised by embryo-destructive research, human cloning and large-scale harvesting of human oocytes.

"Using this technique, it should be possible to produce human cell lines with all the properties of embryonic stem cells that are genetically identical to patients, perfectly addressing the problems of immune rejection that have raised such concern for potential ESC-based therapies."

An added benefit, is that "IPSC lines could also be easily generated from patients with specific genetic diseases and used to study these diseases in the laboratory."

"On a political front, IPSCs give scientists everything they have been asking for from human ESC research and so-called 'therapeutic cloning'; that is, pluripotent stem cells that are genetically matched to patients," Condic concluded that "IPSCs deliver these same features without ethical controversy and with considerably less technical difficulty than current procedures for isolating human ESC lines."

http://www.zenit.org/ (emphasis added)
Around the Archdiocese...

Intensive Intermediate and Advanced courses held on Saturdays at the Church of Korean Martyrs & St Stanislaus 26 Carnarvon Street Silverwater 9am -1pm including 30 minute break

Intermediate Course

21 July Ruth Sheridan
• Scripture & New Testament
• Ten Commandments
• The Christian Moral Life
• Virtues
• The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
• The Four Last Things

28 July Denise Humphreys
• Sacraments
• Introduction to Child Psychology
• Child Development [5-12 years]
• Moral Development & Discipline

Advanced Course

4 August Robert Milan
• The Early Church
• Medieval Church
• Reformation
• Vatican Council II
• Eastern Churches
• Catholic Church in Australia

11 August Mary Carolan
• The Liturgical Year
• Call to Holiness – The Saints
• Christian Ethics & Practical Application

18 August Robert Milan
• Theology of the Body
• Family Life [Sex & Marriage]

25 August Teresa Culjak
• Christian Education
• Christ Our Light And Life Curriculum
• Class room management

Engaging Students (cont’d…)

• Before the lesson make a list of the behaviour that you would like to see in your students before teaching your subject and/or commencing a task.
• List five limit-setting consequences that could be effective for you in your role.
• The teacher has the right to assistance with discipline problems. Have you discussed your strategies/policies with your teacher, co-ordinator or principal?
• Dress conservatively; plain colours are more authoritative and professional.
• Avoid “please” – say “thanks” in crisp tone. Avoid saying “Don’t” as that sets a challenge!
• Perfect the art of storytelling
• We can encourage ‘tune out’ lack of attention, if we talk too much. Allow time for students to process information.

Co-ordinators Meetings
10am–1pm

(If unable to attend in your area please attend one of the following)

Monday 16 July City Area Polding Centre
Friday 20 July Western Area All Saints Parish Liverpool
Monday 23 July Sutherland Area CCD Miranda
Friday 27 July Concord Area Holy Spirit Parish North Ryde
Monday 30 July Bankstown Polding Centre