

# **C**onfraternity of **C**hristian **D**octrine



**Parish Handbook**  
**2003**

**The Role**  
**of the**  
**Parish Priest**

**Volume 1**

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## Director's Message

A lot has changed in Special Religious Education since *The Parish Handbook* was released in 1994. With this in mind, the Confraternity has undertaken a complete revision of the original document. In doing so, we have tried to ensure that the information is presented in a format that is friendly for users.

This edition of *The Parish Handbook 2003* comprises three volumes:

- *Volume 1: The Role of the Parish Priest;*
- *Volume 2: The Role of the Parish Catechist Coordinator;*
- *Volume 3: Recruitment Strategies for Your Parish* (released in August 2001 as *Options: A Four Step Plan for the Recruitment of Catechists in Your Parish*).

The purpose of the revised handbook is to provide an easy reference source for Catholic parishes involved in providing Special Religious Education in their local community. It should also be read in conjunction with *Implementing Special Religious Education: Guidelines for Schools, Providers of SRE, and Parents* (NSW Department of Education and Training) and *The Special Religious Education Handbook* (produced by the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools NSW). It is hoped that the release of this document will assist in the smooth running of Special Religious Education at the parish level throughout the Archdiocese.

It is intended that the Handbook will be reissued to parish communities on an annual basis. In this way, parishes will have the most recent information in making planning decisions for the following year. Throughout the year, updated information on SRE can be obtained from our website ([www.ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au/parish\\_resources.htm](http://www.ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au/parish_resources.htm)).

I would like to express my appreciation to all the people who have been involved in the production of this resource. In particular, I would like to thank Mrs Judy Day and Ms Isla Cameron for the time they have devoted to this project.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the parish priest / administrator for your ongoing support of Special Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

**Anthony Cleary**  
**Director**



## **SECTION A - INFORMATION ON IMPLEMENTING SRE IN YOUR PARISH**

# Introduction

**By virtue of his office, the parish priest is bound to ensure the catechetical formation of adults, young people and children (CIC Can. 776).**

The parish priest / administrator plays a vital role in the effective organisation of Special Religious Education (SRE) within the parish community. In fact, SRE works best in parishes where the parish priest / administrator takes an active interest in the work of the catechists.

The parish priest / administrator:

- Is ultimately responsible for supervising the apostolic work of catechists within the parish; and
- Delegates to the parish catechist coordinator the responsibility of attending to the daily administration of the parish catechist group.

In recent years a number of new requirements have been placed on parish communities. This is particularly the case in the areas of child-related legislation and privacy. Consequently, there has been an increasing responsibility placed on the parish priest / administrator.

## The Role of the Parish Priest / Administrator in SRE

Under the NSW departmental guidelines, the parish priest / administrator is the “authorising clergyperson” who decides which members of the parish community will be allowed to teach in the name of the Church.

The CCD always regards the parish priest / administrator as the leader of the parish catechist group. In this role, the parish priest / administrator:

- Plays a major role in the recruitment process by:
  - **Knowing** the individual volunteer (and checking on prior experience if necessary);
  - Having an **understanding** of the requirements of teaching SRE;
  - **Assessing** the volunteer’s ability to carry out the role which includes:
    - Following the approved program;
    - Managing a class;
    - Being prepared to undertake training; and
    - Having time to commit to SRE each week.
  - **Authorising** the volunteers who are involved in SRE in state schools.
- Has the administrative responsibility for ensuring that the following forms are completed and returned:
  - **Letter of appointment** to the new parish catechist coordinator;
  - **Statement of responsibilities** for the parish catechist coordinator;
  - **Letter of engagement** to new catechists;
  - **SRE Teacher’s Engagement Form**;
  - **Prohibited Employment Declaration Form**;
  - **Authorisation Card**.
- **Delegates** functional responsibilities to the parish catechist coordinator who may, in larger parishes, be assisted by school coordinators. Together they work to ensure this apostolic work is carried out effectively.
- Keeps the coordinator informed on child focused celebrations (e.g. sacramental programs) and seeks involvement where appropriate.
- Promotes the apostolate to Catholic children in state schools (e.g. Catechist Sunday and other appropriate times during the year).
- Needs to allocate a budget for CCD resources.

**It is the duty of the parish priest / administrator to attend to all legal matters relating to SRE.**

# The Structure of Special Religious Education (also known as Scripture) in New South Wales

## Overview

Special Religious Education in New South Wales is governed by two key documents:

- *The Education Act 1997*; and
- *Implementing Special Religious Education: Guidelines for Schools, Providers of SRE and Parents*.

## The Education Act 1997

*The Education Act 1997* governs the conduct of SRE in the following ways:

### (a) Time

In every government school, time is to be allowed for the religious education of children of any religious persuasion, "but the total number of hours so allowed in a year is not to exceed, for each child, the number of school weeks in the year" (Section 32(1)).

### (b) Authorisation of SRE Teachers (Catechists)

The religious education to be given to children of any religious persuasion is to be given by a member of the clergy or other religious teacher of that persuasion authorised by the religious body to which the member of the clergy or other religious teacher belongs (Section 32(2)).

### (c) Curriculum

The religious education to be given is in every case to be the religious education authorised by the religious body to which the member of the clergy or other religious teacher belongs (Section 32(3)). In the Archdiocese of Sydney, the following programs are authorised for use:

Primary:	<i>Joy for Living</i>
Secondary:	<i>Signs of the Times</i>
Special:	<i>Hearts to Dance</i> (Brisbane CEO)

### (d) SRE time in the school timetable

The times at which religious education is to be given to children of a particular religious persuasion are to be fixed by agreement between the principal of the school and the local member of the clergy or other religious teacher of that persuasion (Section 32(4)).

### (e) Location of SRE classes

Children attending a religious education class are to be separated from other children at the school while the class is held (Section 32(5)).

### (f) Supervision of students if SRE teacher fails to attend

If the relevant member of the clergy or other religious teacher fails to attend the school at the appointed time, the children are to be appropriately cared for at the school during the period set aside for religious education (Section 32(6)).

### (g) Withdrawal of students from SRE

No child at a government school is to be required to receive any general religious education or special religious education if the parent of the child objects to the child's receiving that education (Section 33).

## ***Implementing Special Religious Education: Guidelines for Schools, Providers of SRE and Parents***

To give effect to the provisions of *The Education Act 1997*, the Department of Education and Training produced (in consultation with religious persuasions) a set of guidelines that govern the operation of SRE in New South Wales government schools.

The key points of this document are summarised in The Director-General's Memorandum on Special Religious Education (SRE) No. 93.3316 28/9/93. This memorandum is reproduced below:

# **The Director-General's Memorandum of Special Religious Education (SRE) No. 93.3316 28/9/93**

The Education Reform Act 1990 requires that *"In every government school, time is to be allowed for the religious education of children of any religious persuasion"*. In accordance with the Act and Departmental practice the times for such education *"are to be fixed by agreement between the principal of the school and the local member of the clergy or other religious teacher of that persuasion"*.

In providing for this principals are to ensure that:

1. The times for such education are fixed by agreement between the principal of the school and the local member of the clergy or other religious teacher of each persuasion.
2. Timetabling is organized so that attendance at SRE is not inhibited.
3. SRE occurs in non-competitive periods. Students are not to be placed in a position where a choice has to be made between SRE and another part of the regular school curriculum.
4. Only religious persuasions approved by the Department of School Education to provide SRE operate in the school.
5. Representatives of approved religious persuasions provide a list of authorized SRE teachers at each school. If in doubt as to a SRE teacher's status, principals should request proof of authorization to provide SRE on behalf of the relevant religious persuasion.
6. As part of the process of enrolment at school, parents and guardians are:
  - (i) requested to nominate a religion or religious denomination, and
  - (ii) advised of the nature of SRE at the school, including the denomination of the religious persuasions providing SRE and arrangements made for those students whose parents choose that they not attend SRE.
7. Where SRE is not offered for students of a particular religious persuasion, parents and guardians may nominate an alternative persuasion.
8. Parents and guardians are advised annually of the organization of SRE classes and any changes in this organization so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
9. Parents and guardians are advised throughout the year of the availability of any new SRE class.
10. Students whose parents do not wish their children to attend a SRE class are appropriately cared for at the school.
11. SRE is not utilized as a form of release from face to face teaching. If a religious persuasion is not authorized to provide SRE or is unable to provide religious teachers, it is the responsibility of the school to care for the children during the time set aside for SRE.

All previous memoranda on this matter are cancelled.

Ken Boston  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOL EDUCATION  
28/9/93

# Legal Matters

## Child Protection



**The legal responsibility for ensuring parish compliance with regard to child protection matters rests with the parish priest / administrator.** It is important that the parish catechist coordinator also understands the requirements for compliance with child protection procedures in New South Wales.

Under various pieces of legislation in force in New South Wales, there are two requirements that pertain to any person wishing to become a catechist:

- Every potential catechist must complete a **Prohibited Employment Declaration Form** before he / she enters a classroom (the most recent copy of this pro-forma is available from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Archdiocese of Sydney) (☎ 9390 5122).
- Every potential catechist must complete a **Special Religious Education Teacher's Engagement Form** before he/she enters a classroom (even if he/she is only accompanying a catechist).

When the catechist completes these forms, the parish priest / administrator should keep a copy on file in a secure location. **Under no circumstances should this task be delegated to the parish catechist coordinator.**

On the basis of a potential catechist giving the assurances required in these documents, the parish priest / administrator is then able to issue the potential catechist with an **Authorisation Card** (currently, this is a green card). This card should be returned when the person ceases to be a catechist in your parish.

**N.B.: The procedure outlined above must be completed for any person (e.g. catechist's assistant) who may have unsupervised contact with children.**

## Privacy Act: Background Information

**This information is correct at the time of printing. The Archbishop's Office, however, expects to communicate further with parishes on this matter in the near future.**

In December 2001, the Federal Privacy Act changed to give people more control over information that is collected about them. The new legislation requires parish communities to examine how they handle the collection of information (e.g. for parish-based sacramental programs). It is important to realise that the provisions of the Privacy Act do not override disclosure provisions in other pieces of legislation (e.g. Child Protection). Those involved in SRE should also note that the Act does not differentiate between adults and children. In other words, children are afforded similar protection to adults under the legislation.

## Situations in which the Privacy Act May Become an Issue

The Confraternity has identified the following areas in which the new Act may become an issue for parish communities:

- The annual CCD statistical return;
- Collecting information from a new catechist;
- Checking details about a catechist from another diocese;
- Contacting catechists (e.g. passing on a catechist's telephone number to a third party);
- Collecting information from students (e.g. identifying information such as surname, home address).

As the Confraternity is still assessing ways of dealing with these matters (in consultation with the Archbishop's Office), parishes will be informed of new procedures as they are finalised.

## Revoking the Authorisation of a Catechist

From time to time, it may become necessary for a parish priest / administrator to have to revoke the authorisation of a catechist. Fortunately, this only happens rarely. As precise details for handling such situations will depend on the individual circumstances, it is only possible to offer general advice in this Handbook.

In the past, parish priests / administrators have had to revoke catechist authorisation for reasons such as:

- Inappropriate conduct in the classroom (e.g. hitting a student, language);
- Persistent failure to teach the required curriculum; and / or
- Inability to cope in the classroom setting (despite attempts to offer remedial assistance).

In general terms, parish priests / administrators need to ensure that they consider the following issues before they move to revoke a catechist's authorisation:

- Has the catechist been counselled previously about this matter? If so, were time frames and courses of action agreed to by both parties?
- Are there other alternatives to dismissing the catechist (e.g. reassignment to another class or school)?
- Do the circumstances require the parish priest / administrator to pass the matter on to relevant authorities (e.g. police, Ombudsman's Office)?

If, having considered these matters, the parish priest / administrator decides that he has no option other than to revoke the catechist's authorisation, he then needs to consider how to proceed in a way that preserves his pastoral relationship with the catechist. In this regard, it is recommended that he contact the Area Faith Education Officer for advice on the specific circumstances of the case.

In serious matters where a crime may have been committed, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the local police. The Catholic Commission for Employment Relations (CCER) is able to provide detailed advice to parish priests / administrators on these matters in the rare event of such a situation arising (☎ 9390 5255).

It is important that the move to revoke authorisation is handled sensitively for all parties concerned. In the event of having to revoke a catechist's authorisation, it is important that the parish priest / administrator take the following steps (the following presumes that there have been previous unsuccessful attempts to resolve the situation):

- Meet with the catechist to outline why such action is necessary (it is suggested that the catechist be allowed to bring a support person to this meeting);
- Depending on the circumstances, the parish priest / administrator may decide to give the catechist an opportunity to state his / her case as to why this action should not be taken (this explanation may be provided in this meeting or another meeting may be arranged if the catechist needs time to prepare his / her reasons);
- Ensure that the catechist returns his / her Catechist Authorisation Card (i.e. green card);
- Notify the school that the catechist is no longer authorised to teach Catholic SRE on behalf of the parish (and inform the catechist that this will be done);
- Advise the parish catechist group that the person will no longer be a catechist for the parish (again, the information provided will depend on the circumstances of the situation, but something should be said to avoid rumours being spread);
- Notify the Director of CCD- Sydney of the action taken.

Given the various protocols that the Church has adopted, it is not appropriate to allow the person to resign in situations where criminal charges may arise from his / her actions.

It must again be emphasised that the above information is general and will need to be adapted according to the circumstances of individual cases.

**The parish priest / administrator should keep a record of any disciplinary discussions that are held with catechists.**

# The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine



The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was established in 1960 by the Archbishop as an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. The following statistical information for 2002 gives an indication of the scope of operations:

**Table 1. Students Reported As Receiving Special Religious Education in 2002**

AREA	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	SPECIAL	TOTAL	CATECHISTS
<b>Bankstown</b>	4949	253	10	5212	397
<b>City</b>	2964	365	-	3329	252
<b>Concord</b>	4256	355	-	4611	328
<b>Sutherland</b>	4377	1025	23	5425	316
<b>Western</b>	7510	361	-	7871	380
<b>Total for 2002</b>	<b>24056</b>	<b>2359</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26448</b>	<b>1673</b>

Source: *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Archdiocese of Sydney) Annual Report 2001-2002*

Parish Priests / Administrators are supported by the Confraternity in a variety of ways:

- Provision of **catechist training opportunities** throughout the Archdiocese;
- Provision of **authorised curriculum** for use in government schools;
- **Meetings** for parish catechist coordinators (held twice each year);
- **Service recognition** for catechists;
- Supply of quarterly **newsletters**; and
- Provision of support materials for parish **recruitment** campaigns.

Through the Faith Education Services division, every parish is assigned to an **Area Faith Education Officer**. This person is usually the first point of contact between the parish and the Confraternity. The Area Faith Education Officer is able to provide support and advice on a wide variety of topics. The following table (p.12) shows the areas to which parishes are assigned.

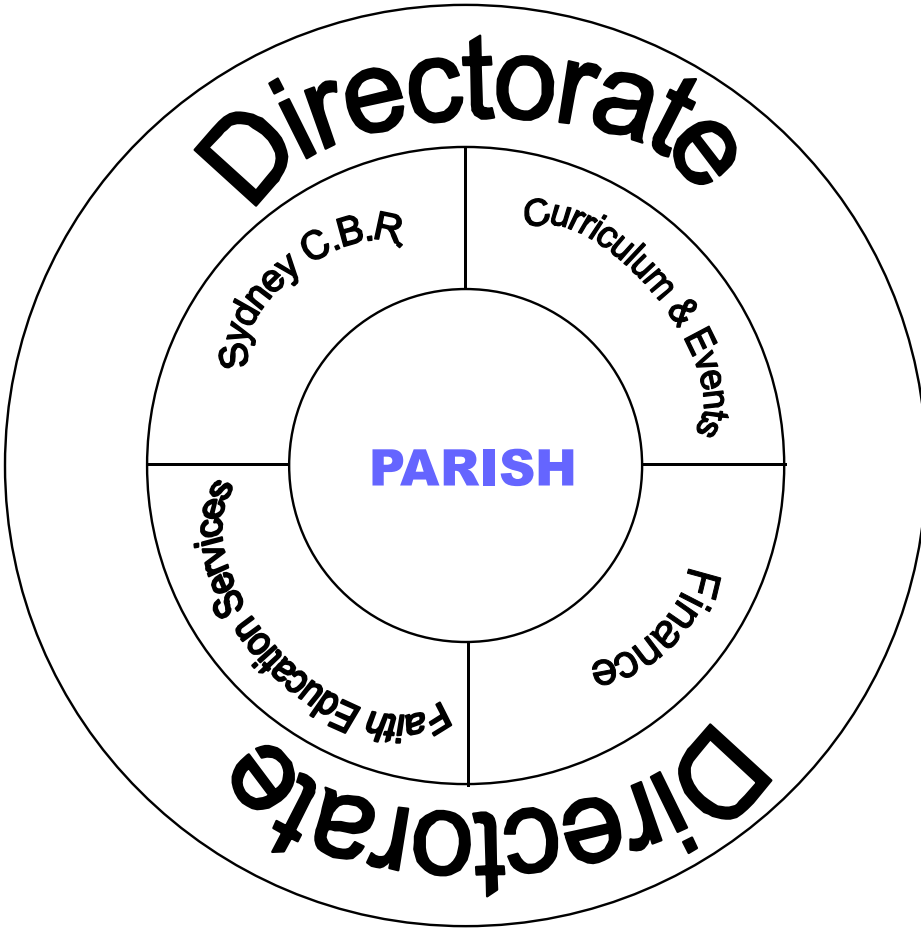


## List of Parishes in Each Area

<b>CITY</b>	<b>CONCORD</b>	<b>BANKSTOWN</b>	<b>SUTHERLAND – ST GEORGE</b>	<b>WESTERN</b>
Annandale	Ashbury	Auburn	Arncliffe	Austral
Balmain	Ashfield	Auburn South	Bexley	Bonnyrigg
Bondi	Beauty Point	Bankstown	Blakehurst	Bossley Park
Bondi Beach	Clifton Gardens	Bankstown Central	Brighton le Sand	Cabramatta
Botany	Concord	Bass Hill	Caringbah	Carnes Hill
Broadway	Concord West	Belfield	Carlton	Fairfield
Camperdown	Croydon	Belmore	Como-Oyster B.	Holsworthy
Cathedral	Denistone	Berala	Cronulla	Horsley Park
Church Hill	Drummoyne	Beverly Hills	Engadine	Hoxton Park-Hinchinbrook
Clovelly	Dulwich Hill	Campsie	Gymea	Liverpool
Coogee	Eastwood	Clemtown Park	Hurstville	Lurnea
Daceyville	Five Dock	Earlwood	Hurstville South	Moorebank
Darlinghurst	Flemington	Enfield	Kogarah	Mt Pritchard
Dover Heights	Gladesville	Georges Hall	Menai	Sadleir-Miller
Edgecliff	Haberfield	Greenacre	Miranda	Smithfield
Elizabeth Bay	Homebush	Kingsgrove	Rockdale	Villawood
Enmore-Tempe	Hunters Hill	Lakemba	Sans Souci	
Erskineville	Lane Cove	Lidcombe	Sutherland	
Forest Lodge	Leichhardt	Oatley	Sylvania	
Haymarket-Peter Julian	Leichhardt Nth	Padstow		
Kensington	Lewisham	Panania		
Malabar	Marsfield	Peakhurst		
Maroubra	Meadowbank	Penshurst		
Maroubra Bay-Beach	Mortlake	Punchbowl		
Marrickville	Mosman	Revesby		
Mascot	Neutral Bay-Kirribilli	Revesby Heights		
Matraville	North Ryde	Riverwood		
Newtown	North Sydney-Lavendar Bay	Sefton		
Norfolk Island	Ryde	Strathfield South		
Paddington	Stanmore			
Pagewood	Strathfield			
Pymont	Summer Hill			
Randwick				
Randwick North				
Redfern				
Rose Bay				
Rosebery				
Rozelle				
Surry Hills				
Waterloo				
Watson's Bay				
Waverley				
Woollahra				

**Supporting Parish Communities in the Archdiocese of Sydney**

The following diagram illustrates how the Catholic community in the Archdiocese supports the provision of SRE.



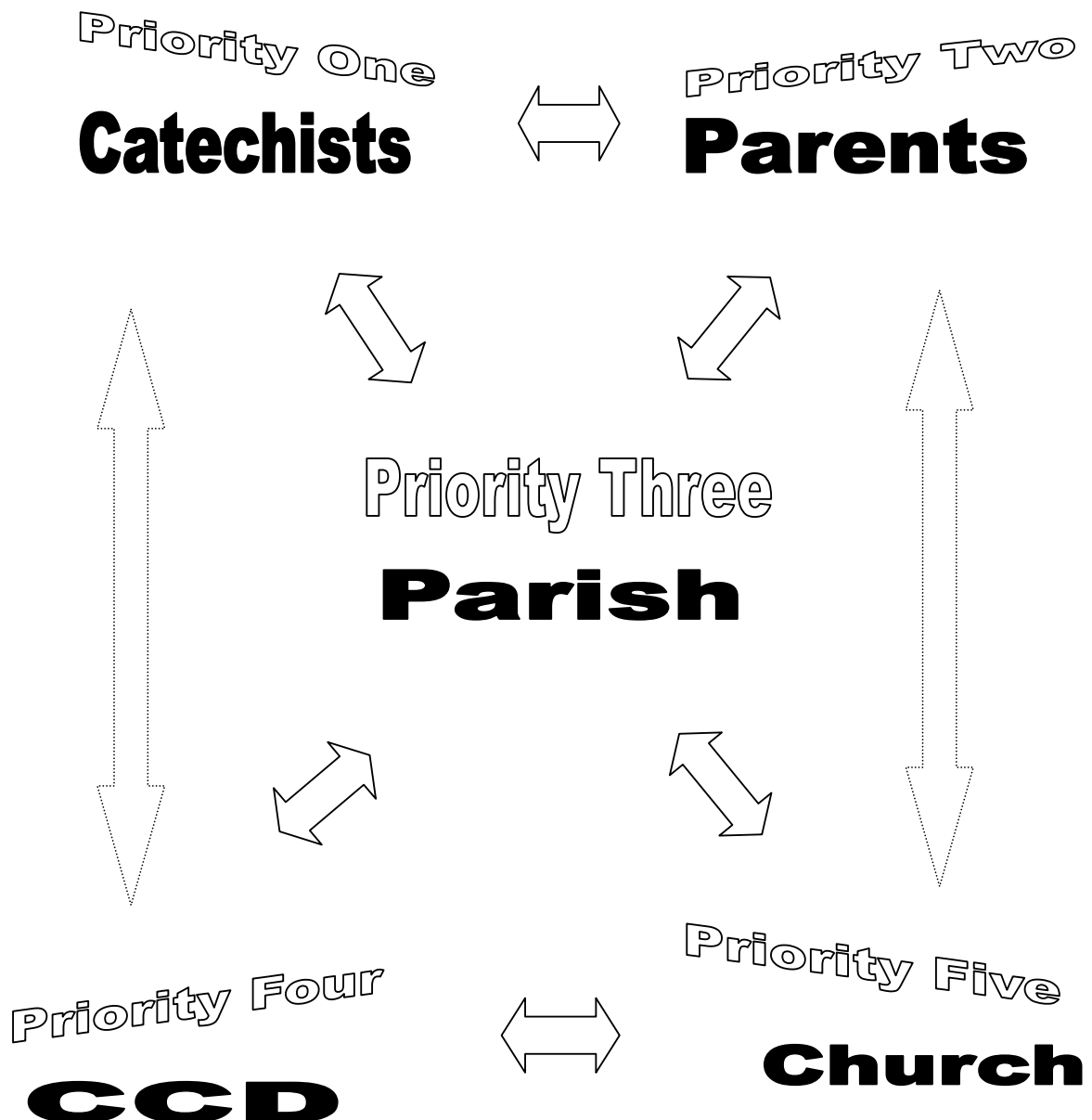
## Moving Forward: Strategic Plan and Action Plan

In 1999, the Confraternity launched its Strategic Plan and Action Plan (*Proclaiming the Good News in the Third Millennium*). This plan was developed on the basis of extensive consultation with the parishes of the Archdiocese. It seeks to provide concrete ways by which the Confraternity may realize its mission and pastoral goals in ways that are consistent with its Charter.

*Proclaiming the Good News in the Third Millennium* is divided into five priority areas that are to be addressed between 2000 and 2003. The priority areas are:

- **Priority One:** Catechists / SRE Teachers
- **Priority Two:** Parents
- **Priority Three:** Parish communities
- **Priority Four:** Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Archdiocese of Sydney)
- **Priority Five:** Participation in the life of the Church

The links between these priority areas are expressed in the following diagram:



## **SECTION B - PRO-FORMAS**

# Letter of Appointment to Volunteer Parish Catechist Coordinator

## PARISH LETTERHEAD

Dear

Thank you for having offered to volunteer your services as the Catechist Coordinator of this parish.

I would like to welcome you and acknowledge the valuable contribution made by volunteer Catechist Coordinators, giving freely of their time and talents.

A statement of the tasks to be undertaken in your voluntary capacity is attached. These will be reviewed at your request.

It is agreed you will give your services to the parish for a period of three years with provision for a further three year term if you wish. This agreement may be ended by either you or me at any time if circumstances change.

You understand that, as a volunteer, no remuneration can be paid for services. Out of pocket expenses may be reimbursed.

The parish has a Personal Accident Voluntary Workers Policy with Catholic Church Insurances Limited which covers volunteer workers to a maximum age of 80 years.\* As you are not being remunerated for your services you will not be eligible for any Workers Compensation benefits in New South Wales. Further details of the Personal Accident Voluntary Workers Policy will be provided upon request.

While assisting as a volunteer, I ask that your conduct is at all times consistent with the ethos of the Catholic Church.

I look forward to your contribution as a parish catechist coordinator to the religious education program of our parish.

Yours sincerely

Parish Priest

\* CCI Ltd has advised CCD- Sydney that catechists over the age of 80 years need to be listed individually on the policy. Please contact CCI Ltd for further information.

# **A Sample Statement of Responsibilities for the Parish Catechist Coordinator**

**(This will need to be adapted for use in your parish)**

## **PARISH LETTERHEAD**

**N.B.: It is anticipated that this statement will be modified to reflect the needs of the local parish community.**

### **Mission**

The parish catechist coordinator assists the parish priest in coordinating the provision of Special Religious Education in government schools in accordance with the New South Wales Education Act 1997.

### **Reporting Relationships**

The parish catechist coordinator reports to the parish priest in all matters pertaining to Special Religious Education in government schools.

### **Responsibilities**

In addition to assuming overall responsibility for the coordination of Special Religious Education within the parish community, the parish catechist coordinator assumes special responsibilities in the following areas:

- Coordination of the staffing of Special Religious Education classes in government schools;
- Ensuring that catechists have the required material (e.g. *Joy for Living* program, *Signs of the Times Resource Folder and Curriculum Document*) so that they are able to teach effectively;
- Encouraging the faith formation and training of catechists (as provided by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine- Archdiocese of Sydney);
- Keeping the parish priest / administrator and parish catechist group informed of developments pertaining to Special Religious Education (as notified by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine- Archdiocese of Sydney);
- Liaison with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Archdiocese of Sydney);
- Liaison with the local government schools in matters pertaining to Special Religious Education;
- Liaising with other Christian denominations from time to time (e.g. Christmas, Easter);
- Ensuring that each catechist has signed a letter stating that he/she is permitted to teach Special Religious Education in government schools;
- Assisting the parish priest / administrator to ensure that each catechist has an Authorisation Card.

# Letter of Appointment to the Volunteer Catechist

## PARISH LETTERHEAD

Dear

Thank you for having offered your services as a volunteer catechist / catechist assistant in this parish.

I would like to welcome you and acknowledge the valuable contribution made by volunteer catechists, giving freely of their time and talents.

You understand that, as a volunteer, no remuneration can be paid for your services. Out of pocket expenses may be reimbursed.

The parish has a Personal Accident Voluntary Workers Policy with Catholic Church Insurances Limited which covers volunteer workers to a maximum age of 80 years.\* As you are not being remunerated for your services you will not be eligible for any Workers Compensation benefits in New South Wales. Further details of the Personal Accident Voluntary Workers Policy will be provided upon request.

While assisting as a volunteer, I ask that your conduct is at all times consistent with the ethos of the Catholic church.

I look forward to your contribution as a catechist to the religious education program of our parish.

Yours sincerely

Parish Priest

\* CCI Ltd has advised CCD- Sydney that catechists over the age of 80 years need to be listed individually on the policy. Please contact CCI Ltd for further information.

# Special Religious Education Teacher's Engagement Form

## PARISH LETTERHEAD

(For use in Catholic parishes in the Archdiocese of Sydney)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Fr, Dr, Sr, Br, Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Responsible to:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Parish Priest / Administrator)

**Parish:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Schools in which I am authorised to teach:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **VOLUNTEER TASKS:**

- To assist Catholic students to seek, accept and deepen their understanding of the Christian message, according to their age and stage of development.
- To cooperate willingly with the parish priest / administrator and with those he has appointed to share his responsibilities.
- To develop your own knowledge of the Christian message and ability to present it as a genuinely educational activity using the authorised teaching materials of the parish.
- To be available to consult with parents / caregivers as partners in the religious education of the child.
- To maintain and develop relationships with fellow catechists and others in the educational ministry of the parish and the community school.

### **General Condition**

**It is essential that all volunteer catechists carry out their tasks in accordance with the principles and values of the Catholic Church and exercise due care for the safety and behaviour of students when they are teaching or supervising them and for giving the authorised teaching.**

### **Volunteer Statement**

**I hereby state that:**

I wish to volunteer my services on the above basis

to \_\_\_\_\_ Parish and have never been convicted for:

- (a) an act of violence towards another person; or
- (b) sexual assault; or
- (c) any offence against a minor person; or
- (d) provision of prohibited drugs.

I consent to allow such police checks as are necessary to verify this statement;

**I understand that should I fail to meet any commitments as set out above I could be asked to withdraw from teaching SRE in schools.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **RECORDS**

<b>Original:</b>	<b>To be held in Parish Office (or Presbytery)</b>
<b>Copy:</b>	<b>To be retained by catechist (SRE teacher)</b>

# Prohibited Employment Declaration Form

(provided by Catholic Commission for Employment Relations)

## Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998

*The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 makes it an offence for a person convicted of a serious sex offence (a prohibited person) or a registrable person under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000, to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment. It does not apply if an order, from the Industrial Relations Commission or the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, declares that the Act does not apply to a particular person,*

**Section 5 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed in NSW and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more, even if the sentence was not served, or, an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed elsewhere and that would have been punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if it had been committed in NSW.**

**Child-related employment** means any employment, where at least one of the essential duties of the position, involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised. Section 3 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 specifies that child-related employment is employment:

- involving the provision of child protection services
- in pre-schools, kindergartens and child care centres (including residential child care centres)
- in schools or other educational institutions (not including universities)
- in detention centres (within the meaning of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987)
- in refuges used by children
- in wards of public or private hospitals in which children are patients
- in clubs, associations or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) having a significant child membership
- in any religious organisation
- in any entertainment venues where the clientele is primarily children
- as a babysitter or childminder that is arranged by a commercial agency
- involving fostering or other child care
- involving regular provision of taxi services for the transport of children with a disability
- involving the private tuition of children
- involving the direct provision of health services
- involving the provision of counselling or other support services for children
- school buses
- at overnight camps for children.

## Under this Act

- it is an offence for a prohibited person to **apply for, undertake or remain in** child related employment.
- employers must ask existing employees, both **paid** and **unpaid**, and preferred applicants for employment to declare if they are a prohibited person or not.
- All child-related employees **must** inform their employers if they are a "prohibited person" or remove themselves from child-related employment. A prohibited person is someone who has been convicted of a serious sexual offence or, who has had a finding for a charge of a serious sexual offence proven in court, even if a conviction was not recorded.
- penalties are imposed for non compliance.

***I am aware that I am ineligible to apply for, undertake or remain in, child related employment if I have been convicted of a "serious sex offence" as defined in the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 or if I am a "registrable person" under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000.***

***I have read and understood the above information in relation to the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 and understand my responsibilities and obligations under this Act.***

***I declare that I am not a person prohibited by the Act from seeking, undertaking, or remaining in child related employment.***

_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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**Note: Seek legal advice if you are unsure of your status as a prohibited person.**

# Notification to Public Schools of Catholic Special Religious Education Teachers Authorised to Teach SRE.

## PARISH LETTERHEAD

PARISH: \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

To the Principal / SRE Coordinator

The following Catholic Special Religious Education Teachers have been authorised to teach SRE in your school:

(List names)

### Contact Person

For routine matters relating to Catholic SRE in your school, please use the following person as a contact point:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

**N.B.: This contact information is for the use of the school only and should not be disclosed to third parties**

To enable them to teach Special Religious Education, the persons listed on this pro-forma have complied with all relevant child protection and departmental requirements.


Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
**PARISH PRIEST**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARISH STAMP**

## Authorisation Card



**CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY**

**AUTHORISATION CERTIFICATE**

**SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

TEACHER'S UNDERTAKING

I commit myself to:

- Value the dignity of each child
- Deepen my union with Christ in the Church
- Prepare my lessons to the best of my ability
- Attend classes regularly and punctually
- Participate in teacher development opportunities
- Co-operate with Church appointed SRE authorities

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE RETURNED TO PARISH PRIEST/ADMINISTRATOR  
WHEN YOU CEASE BEING AN SRE TEACHER IN THIS PARISH.

ARCHDIOCESAN OFFICE (02) 9390 5122

\_\_\_\_\_

is hereby authorised to teach  
Special Religious Education Classes  
on behalf of the Catholic parish of \_\_\_\_\_

in the school/s listed below

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

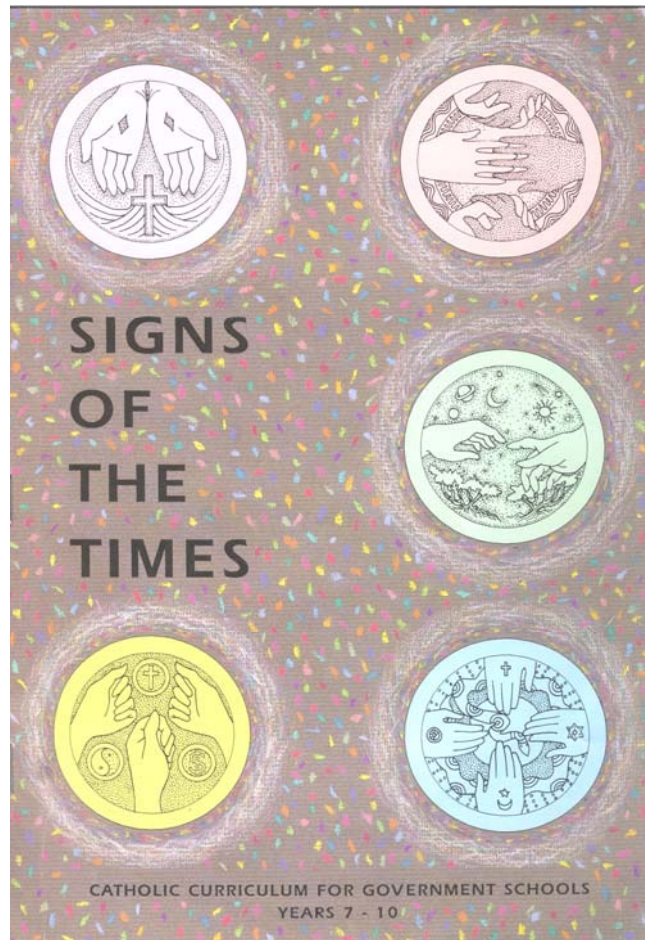
\_\_\_\_\_

using the approved curriculum.

This authority is valid unless revoked by me or a new Parish Priest/Administrator.

Parish Priest \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **SECTION C – CELEBRATION**

## **Welcoming Rite for a New Parish Catechist Coordinator Within a Eucharistic Celebration**

(It is suggested that this Welcoming Rite would be appropriate for use immediately after the Profession of Faith).

### **Celebrant**

Our parish is blessed with many groups of people who share their gifts and talents. The vitality of these groups depends on the leaders who are willing to give generously of their time and talent. We pray today for N who is our new parish catechist coordinator.

### **Reader (possibly members of the Parish Catechist Group or member of the Parish Council)**

1. God has shaped and formed us into his people; grant, Lord, that we may do your will in all things and so remain close to you. With faith we pray.

### **RESPONSE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER**

2. God's presence is found where unity and love prevail; grant, Lord, that we may strive to work together in harmony and peace. With faith we pray. **R/**.
3. God is the strength and protector of his people; grant, Lord, to N. our new parish catechist coordinator, the strength and courage she/he needs to serve our parish. With faith we pray. **R/**.

### **Celebrant**

God sent his Son Jesus to be the light to the world.  
Lord,  
grant that N.,  
along with the members of the parish catechist group,  
may take the light of Christ  
to Catholic students in the state schools.

*(Celebrant presents the coordinator with the Parish Catechist Candle)*

### **Prayer of Blessing:**

Almighty God,  
We give you thanks for the many and varied ways  
you build up your Church.  
Bless N.  
Grant that through his / her vision and direction he/ she may be of service to this parish and  
bring honour and glory to your name.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

### **RESPONSE: AMEN**

# Prayer Service of Thanksgiving for Catechists

This prayer service can be used outside the context of Mass:-

- To thank catechists for their year's commitment to teaching; and/or
- When catechist(s) are finishing their ministry

## Celebrant:

We gather today to give thanks for the work of this catechist(s) N... God has blessed him / her / them with the gifts of faith and commitment, to enable the gospel message to be given to students. Jesus' work on earth has been continued through the energy of N... to bring understanding and love to his / her/ their students.

## A Reading from the Book of Psalms

(to be read by a member of the catechist group or appropriate other person)

Happy are those who fear Yahweh  
who greatly delight in his commandments.

Their descendents will be mighty in the land;  
the generation of the upright will always be blessed.

Wealth and riches are in their houses,  
and their righteousness endures forever.

They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;  
they are gracious merciful and righteous.

The Word of the Lord

## Intercessions

For N... that his / her / their faith always shine as a light to the world. We pray to the Lord. R/

That the example of N...'s commitment be a model for others to follow. We pray to the Lord. R/

That N... continue to receive blessings in abundance in his / her / their life. We pray to the Lord. R/

## Blessing

God of life and source of inspiration,  
You have given people an abundance of gifts  
to bear witness to your undying love.  
Send down your blessings on N...  
to enable him/her/them to enjoy the fruits of his /her / their commitment.  
Let their faith shine as a beacon to others  
and may they continue to bless you with every gift.  
Show them your love and fill them with every blessing.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.





**Produced by:**  
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