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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**;

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).

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 catechist coordinator 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

There is little doubt that the parish catechist coordinator plays a vital role in the life of most parish communities. The parish catechist coordinator is:

- **Delegated the responsibility of attending to** the daily administration of the parish catechist group by the parish priest / administrator;
- **The linchpin** between the local state school(s) and the parish;
- **The first point of contact** for catechists;
- **The liaison person** between the parish and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

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 catechist coordinator.

The Role of the Parish Catechist Coordinator in SRE

It is important to remember that, under the NSW departmental guidelines, the parish priest / administrator is always the “authorising clergyperson” who decides which members of the parish community will be allowed to teach in the name of the Church. Given the size and complexity of many parishes, though, it is impossible for the parish priest / administrator to fulfil this task on his own. For this reason, most parish priests / administrators delegate the day-to-day running of SRE to the parish catechist coordinator.

While the CCD always regards the parish priest / administrator as the leader of the parish catechist group, it recognises the important role the parish catechist coordinator also plays. In his / her role, the parish catechist coordinator:

- Plays a major role in the recruitment process by:
  - **Getting to know** the individual volunteer who comes forward to offer his / her services;
  - Having an **understanding** of the requirements of teaching SRE;
  - Assisting the parish priest / administrator to **assess** 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 the time to commit to SRE each week.
  - Providing volunteers with the initial documentation (SRE Teacher’s Engagement Form and Prohibited Employment Declaration Form) required so that the parish priest / administrator can **authorise** the volunteers who are involved in SRE in state schools. The parish catechist coordinator, however, should never receive the completed copies of these forms.

- Is responsible for the day-to-day liaison with the local state school on behalf of the parish and keeps the parish priest / administrator informed of any significant developments.

- Becomes involved (where appropriate) in child focused parish celebrations (e.g. sacramental programs).

- Promotes the apostolate to Catholic children in state schools (e.g. Catechist Sunday and other appropriate times during the year) among the wider parish community.

- Liaises with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Archdiocese of Sydney) (CCD) on matters pertaining to SRE (e.g. organising training opportunities for the parish catechist group, attending Area Meetings for parish catechist coordinators.

- Decides in consultation with the parish priest / administrator how the parish budget for CCD resources should be allocated.

As this list clearly illustrates, the parish catechist coordinator plays a vital role in assisting the parish priest / administrator. **It is, however, the duty of the parish priest / administrator to attend to all legal matters relating to SRE. The parish catechist coordinator is not in a position to assume responsibility for legal matters on the behalf of the parish priest / administrator.**
Suggestions for Effective Parish Coordination

Depending on the size of your parish, it may be necessary to put in place some structures that will assist you in your role as coordinator.

Appoint School Coordinators

Consider appointing a coordinator for each school in which your parish operates. The school coordinator can then assume responsibility for the day-to-day running of Catholic SRE in that particular school. As parish catechist coordinator, you can keep in touch with the school coordinators on a regular basis.

Appoint an Assistant Coordinator

Regardless of the size of your parish, it is a good idea to appoint an assistant coordinator. This person can assist you in your coordination duties as needs arise. This person can also become a point of contact between your parish and the CCD should circumstances prevent you from performing your duties (e.g. sickness, absence from parish).

Hold regular meetings with the Parish Catechist Group

As parish catechist coordinator, it is important to keep all catechists informed of developments relating to SRE. The easiest way of doing this is by holding regular meetings. Wherever possible, invite the parish priest / administrator to attend (refer also to suggestions for parish catechist group meetings—pp. 8 - 9).

Attend CCD meetings and events

An important source of support for you in your role as parish catechist coordinator is the network provided by the CCD. Wherever possible, try to attend meetings and events that are held. If you are unable to attend, try to ensure that someone from your group (e.g. assistant coordinator) attends on your behalf.

Keep in touch with your Faith Education Officer

Every parish catechist coordinator is assigned to an Area Faith Education Officer. Your FEO will try to contact you at least once per term, but you should feel welcome to contact your FEO whenever the need arises.

Keep your parish priest / administrator informed of developments in SRE

Parish priests / administrators have enormous demands placed on them. Try to schedule regular meetings with your parish priest / administrator to keep him informed about how SRE is going in your parish.

Ordering Procedures for CCD Publications

A vital task that the parish catechist coordinator performs is ensuring that catechists have the appropriate teaching materials for use in the classroom. In October, you will receive a Bulk Order form from CCD Publications. It is important to consult your parish priest / administrator for guidance on how the form should be completed in your parish.
Suggestions for Parish Catechist Group Meetings

The structure and format of meetings with the parish catechist group will depend on the size and complexity of your parish. The following suggestions may be of assistance to new parish catechist coordinators.

(a) Preparation

- An effective meeting needs an agenda. Wherever possible, plan the agenda in consultation with your parish priest / administrator and / or Area Faith Education Officer. Allow members of the group to contribute agenda items;
- If the parish priest / administrator cannot attend the meeting, be sure to give him a copy of the agenda before the meeting is held;
- If possible, distribute the agenda to members of the group a few days before the meeting;
- Select a meeting time that will enable as many catechists as possible to attend.

(b) Process

Begin each meeting by tabling the minutes of the previous meeting.

A possible meeting format could be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Catechists may take it in turns to prepare a prayer. Alternatively, they may decide to use the reflection provided in the quarterly Catechist Newsletter.</td>
<td>5-10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apologies</td>
<td>Always ask whether any catechist has sent an apology.</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting</td>
<td>Give members of the group a chance to read the minutes of the previous meeting. Once this has been done, ask the meeting to confirm that the minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting. Make any modifications that are required.</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business arising from the minutes</td>
<td>If there are any unresolved issues from the previous meeting, these should be addressed at this point.</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Coordinator's Report</td>
<td>Brief members of the group on any developments in SRE since the last meeting (use catechist newsletter, information from Area Parish Catechist Coordinators Meetings).</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Coordinator's Reports</td>
<td>If necessary</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports from individual catechists</td>
<td>Allow time for catechists to tell the group how they are going with their class.</td>
<td>2 minutes per catechist (depending on size of group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Business</td>
<td>Before the meeting closes, give catechists an opportunity to raise any other issues that may need to be addressed. Some issues may be dealt with immediately, while others will need to be acted upon before the next meeting.</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Finish the meeting by summarising any action (who? when? where?) that needs to occur before the next meeting. The Action Sheet (p. 10) may then be distributed with the minutes.</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Close the meeting with a simple prayer (e.g. Catechist’s Prayer).</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and date of next meeting</td>
<td>DO NOT FINISH UNTIL CATECHISTS ARE AWARE OF THE DETAILS FOR THE NEXT MEETING!</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(c) Frequency of meetings

In general, the more frequently you meet, the shorter your meetings will be. Depending on your parish structure you may decide to meet either monthly or once per term.

(d) Ensuring catechists attend

Sometimes, parish catechist coordinators have initial success in getting catechists to attend meetings. As time goes by, though, attendance can fall away. To prevent this from happening, it is a good idea to invite guest speakers to attend meetings from time to time. Examples of possible guest speakers include:

- Parish Priest;
- Pastoral Associate;
- Leader of another parish group (e.g. St Vincent De Paul);
- Representative from the CCD;
- Representative from another Church agency (e.g. Catholic Mission);
- School Principal;
- SRE Coordinator for another Christian denomination in your local area (e.g. Anglican).

Area Meetings for Parish Catechist Coordinators

Organised by the Confraternity, these meetings are held twice each year (usually in February and July). The Area Faith Education Officer chairs these meetings. Wherever possible, the Director also attends (on occasions when this is not possible, a Director’s Report is provided).

These meetings are an important source of information and support for parish catechist coordinators. If you are unable to attend, please ensure that you delegate someone from your group to attend on your behalf.
**ACTION SHEET**

Record on this sheet any item that may require follow-up before the next meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g. Morning tea for Catechist Sunday</em></td>
<td>4 February 10.30am</td>
<td>All catechists</td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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: *Joy for Living*
- Secondary: *Signs of the Times*
- Special: *Hearts to Dance* (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 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, though, 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 revoke the authorisation of a catechist. In these cases, the parish priest / administrator may need to involve the parish catechist coordinator in the process. 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 (a more extensive treatment of this topic may be found in The Parish Handbook 2003: Volume 1- The Role of the Parish Priest, p. 10).

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 any of these situations, it is important that the parish catechist coordinator informs the parish priest / administrator immediately of any event that may have occurred. Similarly, it is usually not appropriate for the parish catechist coordinator to enter into discussions with the school SRE coordinator to resolve such problems. These matters need to be dealt with by the parish priest / administrator who has recourse to the legal advice necessary to resolve any problems that may arise.
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

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


Parish catechist coordinators 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** with other 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.16) shows the areas to which parishes are assigned.
## List of Parishes in Each Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>CONCORD</th>
<th>BANKSTOWN</th>
<th>SUTHERLAND – ST GEORGE</th>
<th>WESTERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>Ashbury</td>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>Arncliffe</td>
<td>Austral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmain</td>
<td>Ashfield</td>
<td>Auburn South</td>
<td>Bexley</td>
<td>Bonnyrigg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondi</td>
<td>Beauty Point</td>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>Blakehurst</td>
<td>Bossley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondi Beach</td>
<td>Clifton Gardens</td>
<td>Bankstown Central</td>
<td>Brighton le Sand</td>
<td>Cabramatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>Bass Hill</td>
<td>Caringbah</td>
<td>Carnes Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway</td>
<td>Concord West</td>
<td>Belfield</td>
<td>Carlton</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camperdown</td>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>Belmore</td>
<td>Como-Oyster B.</td>
<td>Holsworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathedral</td>
<td>Denistone</td>
<td>Berala</td>
<td>Cronulla</td>
<td>Horsley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Hill</td>
<td>Drummoynye</td>
<td>Beverly Hills</td>
<td>Engadine</td>
<td>Hoxton Park-Hinchinbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clovelly</td>
<td>Dulwich Hill</td>
<td>Campsie</td>
<td>Gymea</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coogee</td>
<td>Eastwood</td>
<td>Clemton Park</td>
<td>Hurstville</td>
<td>Lurnea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daceyville</td>
<td>Five Dock</td>
<td>Earlwood</td>
<td>Hurstville South</td>
<td>Moorebank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlinghurst</td>
<td>Flemington</td>
<td>Enfield</td>
<td>Kogarah</td>
<td>Mt Pritchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover Heights</td>
<td>Gladesville</td>
<td>Georges Hall</td>
<td>Menai</td>
<td>Sadleir-Miller</td>
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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:
Information Leaflet for New Catechists

The first weeks: Challenging but enjoyable

Without doubt, the first few weeks can be a challenging experience. This brochure is designed to answer some of your questions. It will give you a general understanding of how Special Religious Education (SRE) (also known as Scripture) is organized and help you to know who to contact should a problem arise.

Why does Special Religious Education exist?

Under the provisions of the Education Act, 1997, state schools are obliged to provide opportunities for students to attend Special Religious Education (SRE) (Scripture) classes.

Parents must make sure that their child attends Catholic SRE classes. This occurs when their first attend their child at a state school.

Parents of SRE in religious parishes such as the Catholic Church are required to be approved by the Department of Education and Training.

Parish Organisation of SRE

The Catholic Church operates SRE on a parish basis. Every parish catechist program has a coordinator. As a general rule, your parish catechist coordinator is your first contact if you need to know anything about SRE.

Your Parish Catechist Coordinator is:

[Contact information]

Tel: [Contact information]

What is the CCD?

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) is responsible for the overall coordination of SRE for the Catholic Church in Sydney. It supports parishes in the following ways:

- Developing training materials (approved by the Archbishop) that can be used in the classroom;
- Providing training so that resource rich classes are more confident in the classroom and;
- Giving advice to parishes regarding their needs.

How does the state school organise SRE (Scripture)?

The principal appoints a staff member to be responsible for SRE in the school. This person is the State School SRE Coordinator. In some primary schools, there may be a separate SRE Coordinator for infant and primary schools.

The school provides resources for religious education based on the needs of the class groups.

The school will provide you with a class list. It is important to mark your work each week and return it to the State School SRE Coordinator.

Teaching Materials

One of the requirements of the Department of Education and Training is that religious parishes use approved teaching materials. For Catholic SRE, these materials are:

- Primary: Joy for Learning series
- Secondary: Signs of the Times

CCD - Sydney produces these materials for use in the classroom. Materials are designed to be cross-compatible in the classroom.

For more information about teaching materials produced by CCD - Sydney, contact:

PO Box A26
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235
Phone: [Contact information]
Fax: [Contact information]
Email: [Contact information]
SECTION B - PRO-FORMAS

Note
A sample Letter of Appointment, Statement of Responsibilities and Welcoming Rite for new parish catechist coordinators is provided in *The Parish Handbook 2003: Volume 1 - The Role of the Parish Priest*, pp. 16-17, 26).
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

Original: To be held in Parish Office (or Presbytery)
Copy: To be retained by catechist (SRE teacher)
Prohibited Employment Declaration Form
(provided by Catholic Commission for Employment Relations)

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

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

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
# CONDITIONS OF SALE

**SYDNEY CATHOLIC BOOKS AND RESOURCES**  
(Fomerly CCD Resource Centre - Sydney)

Being a non-profit organisation and at the same time trading commercially we rely very much on cash coming in.  
To help us maintain our services at the same high standard we ask you to comply with the following conditions of sale:

1. **Account Payment**
   
   As an account customer, we expect you to pay your account debt in 30 days. If you experience any hardship caused by circumstances and are unable to meet your obligation, please do not hesitate to contact us.
   
   Please do not pay in advance as there is no discount on doing so. In addition to that the postage needs to be calculated on an order to order basis.

2. **Delivery**
   
   We deliver using a courier as the most cost-effective method for you, our customer. Bulk orders may be picked up by prior arrangement with SCSR.

3. **Orders**
   
   It will make our job easier and more efficient if the bulk orders for the start of the school year are made on the 2002 Order Form supplied. This form may also be used for any orders placed throughout the year.
   
   Please DO NOT use Order Forms from previous years, changes have been made to the program that are not reflected on those forms.
   
   Orders may also be faxed to this office on (02) 9283 5146.

4. **Returns**
   
   We will be quite happy to replace, free of charge, any goods damaged in transit or incorrectly supplied.
   
   If goods are over ordered or incorrectly ordered, please let us know as soon as possible so appropriate action can be taken.

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**GST NOT APPLICABLE**

**JOY FOR LIVING PROGRAM**

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| YEAR ONE            |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual    | 510  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 501 | $3.40 |     |       |

| YEAR TWO            |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual    | 500  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 491 | $3.40 |     |       |

| YEAR THREE           |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual     | 510  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 501 | $3.40 |     |       |

| YEAR FOUR            |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual     | 510  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 501 | $3.40 |     |       |

| YEAR FIVE            |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual     | 510  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 501 | $3.40 |     |       |

| YEAR SIX             |      |       |     |       |
| Teachers' Manual     | 510  | $4.95 |     |       |
| Children's Activity Book | 501 | $3.40 |     |       |

| COMPOSITE CLASSES    |      |       |     |       |
| Cycle One - Teachers' Manual | 490 | $4.95 |     |       |
| Cycle One - Children's Activity Book | 441 | $3.40 |     |       |

| MIDDLE PRIMARY       |      |       |     |       |
| Cycle One - Teachers' Manual | 490 | $4.95 |     |       |
| Cycle One - Children's Activity Book | 441 | $3.40 |     |       |

| JUNIOR PRIMARY       |      |       |     |       |
| Cycle One - Teachers' Manual | 490 | $4.95 |     |       |
| Cycle One - Children's Activity Book | 441 | $3.40 |     |       |

| SENIOR PRIMARY       |      |       |     |       |
| Cycle One - Teachers' Manual | 490 | $4.95 |     |       |
| Cycle One - Children's Activity Book | 441 | $3.40 |     |       |

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**PARISH NAME**

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**ORDER NUMBER:**

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**OFFICE USE ONLY**
Parish Statistical Forms

Area:          Parish:

Coordinator:   Parish Priest:

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<th>CATECHIST MINISTRY (YEAR)</th>
<th>TEACHING LEVEL</th>
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Role: Coordinator - Co: Catechist - Cat: Classroom Assistant - CA

Years of Service:  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21+

Age:  <19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80+ NR

Teaching Level:  Primary – P, Secondary- S, Special - SP, Primary & Secondary - P&S, Primary & Special – P&SP
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