Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

Parish Handbook
Revised Edition 2007

The Role of the Parish Priest

Volume 1
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General Manager's Message

The 2007 edition of *The Parish Handbook* includes the *Christ Our Light And Life* curriculum and the revision of original documents including the new *Prohibited Employment Declaration* form. We have continued to ensure that the information is presented in a user friendly format.

*The Parish Handbook Revised Edition 2007* 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 communities. 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 this document will assist the smooth running of Special Religious Education at the parish level throughout the Archdiocese.

It is intended that the Handbook will be reissued as the need arises to parish communities. This will ensure parishes have the most up-to-date information. These handbooks 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.

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

Robert Milan
General Manager
SECTION A

INFORMATION ON IMPLEMENTING SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 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 clergy person” 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. He needs to:
    o Know the individual volunteer (and checking on prior experience if necessary);
    o Understand the requirements of teaching SRE;
    o 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 time to commit to SRE each week.
    o Authorise the volunteers who are involved in SRE in public schools.
  • is responsible for ensuring that the following forms are completed and returned:
    o Letter of appointment to the new parish catechist coordinator;
    o Statement of responsibilities for the parish catechist coordinator;
    o Letter of engagement to new catechists;
    o SRE Teacher’s Engagement Form;
    o Prohibited Employment Declaration Form;
    o 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 public 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 public 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:** Christ Our Light and Life
- **Secondary:** To Know, Worship and Love
- **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 public 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 public 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 on page 8.
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 public 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 pertaining 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

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).
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 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) or the Vicar General Office (VGO) are able to provide detailed advice to parish priests / administrators on these matters in the rare event of such a situation arising (CCD 9390 5122 or VGO 9390 5100).

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 (CCD) was established in 1960 by the Archbishop as an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. The CCD teaches approximately 30,000 students and has approximately 2000 active catechists across the Archdiocese of Sydney.

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 public 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.

An **Area Faith Education Officer** is usually the first point of contact between the parish and the Confraternity. This person 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

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<th>CITY</th>
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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.
SECTION B

PRO-FORMAS
Letter of Appointment to Volunteer Parish Catechist Coordinator

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 (CCI Ltd) 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.

I ask that your conduct while assisting as a volunteer 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 public 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 public 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 public schools;
- Ensuring that catechists have the required material (e.g. Christ Our Light And life program, To Know, Worship and Love 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 public 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 public schools;
- Assisting the parish priest / administrator to ensure that each catechist has an Authorisation Card.
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 (CCI Ltd) 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.

I ask that your conduct while assisting as a volunteer 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
(provided by Catholic Commission for Employment Relations)

The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 makes it an offence for a prohibited person (a person convicted of a serious sex offence, the murder of a child or a child-related personal violence offence, as well as a Registrable person under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000) to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in, child-related employment. It does not apply if an order from the Industrial Relations Commission, Administrative Decisions Tribunal or Commission for Children and Young People, declares that the Act does not apply to a person in respect of a specific offence.

For further information on what is child-related employment see the Working With Children Employer Guidelines.

Section 33B of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as:

- an offence, involving sexual activity or acts of indecency, committed in New South Wales and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more; or
- an offence, involving sexual activity or acts of indecency, committed elsewhere and that would have been an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more, if it had been committed in New South Wales; or
- an offence under section 80D or 80E (sexual servitude) of the Crimes Act 1900, committed against a child; or
- an offence under Sections 91D-91G (child prostitution, other than if committed by a child prostitute) of the Crimes Act 1900 or a similar offence under a law other than a law of New South Wales; or
- an offence under Section 91H, 578B or 578C (2A) (child pornography) of the Crimes Act 1900 or a similar offence under a law other than a law of New South Wales; or
- an offence of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit an offence referred to in the preceding paragraphs; or
- any other offence, whether under the law of New South Wales or elsewhere, prescribed by the regulations.

NOTE: A conviction for carnal knowledge is classified as a serious sex offence under this legislation.

Section 33B of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 defines a child-related personal violence offence as an offence committed by an adult:

- involving intentionally wounding or causing grievous bodily harm to a child; or
- of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit such an offence.

Under Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998:

- it is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in child related employment;
- employers must ask existing employees, both paid and unpaid, and preferred applicants for child-related employment to declare if they are a prohibited person or not;
- all people in child-related employment must inform their employers if they are a prohibited person or remove themselves from child-related employment; and
- penalties are imposed for non compliance.

I am aware that I am ineligible to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in, child-related employment if I have been convicted of a serious sex offence or child-related personal violence offence as defined in the Commission for Children and Young People 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 Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998. I am aware that it is an offence to make a false statement on this form.
I consent to a check of my relevant criminal records, to verify the statements I have made here, being undertaken by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People for monitoring and auditing purposes in accordance with Section 36 (1)(f) of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998.

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

I understand that this information may be referred to the Commission for Children and Young People and/or to NSW Police for law enforcement purposes and for monitoring and auditing compliance with the procedures and standards for the Working With Children Check in accordance with Section 36(1)(f) of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998.

All fields must be completed. Please use block letters.

Name:________________________________________________________________________

Aliases (previous/other names):____________________________________________________

Date of birth:___________________________________________________________________

Signature:_____________________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________ Contact telephone number: ________________________

Contact Email:__________________________________________________________________

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: ________________________________
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 _____________________________
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 (if possible member 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 public 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.

This is the Word of the Lord

Intercessions

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

That the example of N…’s commitment provide 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 you 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 be blessed with every gift.
Show them your love and fill them with every blessing.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
FOUR CATHOLIC FOUNDATIONS

1. We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who loves us.

2. We believe in one Redeemer, Jesus Christ, only Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, who died and rose from the dead to save us.

3. We believe in the Catholic Church, the Body of Christ, where we are led in service and worship by the Pope and Bishops.

4. We believe that Jesus, Our Lord, calls us to repent and believe; that is, to choose faith not doubt, love not hate, good not evil, and eternal life in heaven not hell.

This is our faith. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus, Our Lord.