

Our Parish Catechists

*Handing on what we have received
the hope and joy that Jesus brings*

TERM 4, 2015

"True Love"

My artwork is based on Luke 2:19. I choose the Birth of Jesus because it is a gift from God to us as he sent Jesus to save us. I wanted to show everyone the love between Mary and Jesus. I wanted to tell people that, that is what Christmas is all about. The love that Jesus and Mary have for each other and to show us by their example how to truly love one another. I believe Jesus is what Christmas is all about - *Iris*, Year 6, Carlton Public School



Archdiocese of Sydney
CCD Catechist Newsletter

Welcome to Term 4 Sharing the Way – sharing your story

We only pass this way once and if we can't help someone along the way, well, it's a pretty poor state of affairs.

– Roy Banbury

The extent of the service you provide through your Parishes along *the Way* – one of the earliest names for Christianity – is quite overwhelming in a good sense. You are one of 1,900 Parish Catechists, an incredible witness of charity and generosity. Thank you. I look forward to thanking you again in person if you are able to attend the Annual Catechist Mass on Sunday, 20th September.

Our Parishes have Catechists in almost every public primary school in Sydney that run SRE classes each week during school term teaching more than 25,000 children about Christ our Light and Life. We are also present in high schools and, to sustainably increase our high school presence, planning is underway in conjunction with other dioceses in order to “work smarter rather than harder”.

If you helped to recruit someone else this year, another thank you is due to you. Wouldn't it be wonderful to enjoy the luxury of having Catechists in reserve to cover those who might be away on holidays or ill, especially during the winter months? Please, keep tapping others on the shoulder!

Parish Catechists come from all walks of life - from uni students to young parents and grandparents, teachers, builders, doctors, nurses, those who have been Catholic since birth and those who have become Catholic later in life.

Why did you become a Catechist or Helper? Did you respond to Jesus' call to go and teach, to your baptismal calling; is it that you have a great love of your faith and want to share it with others? You know your answer and your answer will inspire others.

Please share your story with other parishioners and, especially, with your students - the next generation of catechists.



The next Catechist Gathering will focus upon the art of storytelling as well as classroom ‘tips and tactics’ – please see details on p. 12. As Christians, we should be the best storytellers in the world.

Catechesis provides a key to inspire and train our young people – and not only those in public schools; for example, Parish children who attend Catholic high schools are benefiting from explaining their faith to primary school students by being in classrooms with you as High School Student Catechists. By providing this catechesis another generation of Catechists are being formed so that their reception of the Sacraments is supported by catechesis and missionary activity, prayer and action. Please see Michelle's story on p. 7.

As Catechists I see that you are among the most engaged parishioners in your Parishes. Through your example and by more being called to be Catechists, those both younger and older, we have a way to enliven aspects of Parish life – to not only sacramentalise but catechise – to help support others to develop a living adult faith life that can weather life's storms and rejoice in hope given the gift of our Lord who is risen.

As you hand on the lessons of Christmas, may the blessings of Jesus whom we call Emmanuel – God with us – be with you and all whom you meet this term and over the Christmas season. May you continue to shine the light and joy of Christ for children to see in the year ahead. And may our Lord bless you and keep you this day and every day.

Doug Mawhinney

Director - CCD Sydney

CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS



No man can say "God became man" unless it is the Spirit within him who prompts that act of faith. So when we celebrate a great feast our attitude must always be one of helpless humility, recognising that it is never by any power of our own that we can take one step of progress in our understanding of the things of God. It is a gift, and one for which we must ask earnestly, sincerely and constantly

If we do not believe, we remain in the dark and the dark brings fear and sadness. If we do not believe, we miss the true meaning of life and the future has no hope.

How, for example, do we see our celebration each Christmastide? What is our belief? Do we go the whole way and kneel at the crib and say, "Yes, God became man in Jesus Christ"? For it is that which we celebrate on Christmas night; that and nothing less. To believe in the fact that God became man is not to walk in doubt and illusion, it is to step into the world of God and so into reality.



The Christmas celebration, like all great feasts of the Church, is a celebration of the mystery of God's love for us. It is often easier to understand the love we

have for others in our hearts; it is less easy to understand, or guess at, the love which others have for us. That is true about human love; it is even more true when we come to think and talk about the love of God.

God so loved the world that He sent us His only begotten Son. That is a familiar truth, which contains mystery.

It is made richer still by the fact that God who became man was prepared to lay down his life for us. No greater love has any man than the love which prompts him to lay down his life for his friends. But what of the love that will die for the worthless, the enemy? The characteristics of Christian love are: to dedicate ourselves to others, our Lord lived that kind of love to the utmost limit. He showed us what God should mean to us, and what we mean to God.

Cardinal Basil Hume OSB

Salesian Bulletin December 2002

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Catholic Mission resources for CATECHISTS

Catholic Mission has developed a teaching resource that includes a section for Catechists, www.catholicmission.org.au

This resource could be used during Mission week in October or during Lent the following year.

Lessons are designed so that the students' understanding of 'mission' and missionaries' will be nurtured and that students will be encouraged and supported to live as Christ challenges us....

...for I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.
(Matthew 25: 35-36)

Pope St John Paul II states that both the powerful and weak Christians are called to join in solidarity to change the sinful structures of society that cause poverty, hunger and starvation. What response do we make to Pope Francis' call to respond with joy to the Gospel? How do we contribute to Jesus' mission of life for all, especially the poor who are so close to the heart of Pope Francis?

World Mission Day is celebrated every year in every country wherever there are Catholics committed to building a better world for all of God's people, a world where everyone has all they need to live a dignified and fulfilling life.

It is the day on which we reflect on the urgency to proclaim the Gospel in our times. This year **World Mission Day is Sunday 18 October 2015.**



"Don't thank me, I love doing it"

Maureen Power. 1922 - 2015

Many of you who have received your accreditation or Smartboard training in the CCD office in town would have sat in the Maureen Power Room.

Also, many of you would know the namesake of this training room, Maureen Power, who served 75 years as first Theresian, a Parish Catechist, Sacramental Coordinator, mother to migrants and over-a-cuppa counsellor. Maureen passed over to God on Sunday afternoon, 16th August – we pray that she, along with all our departed catechists and helpers, see our Lord face to face.

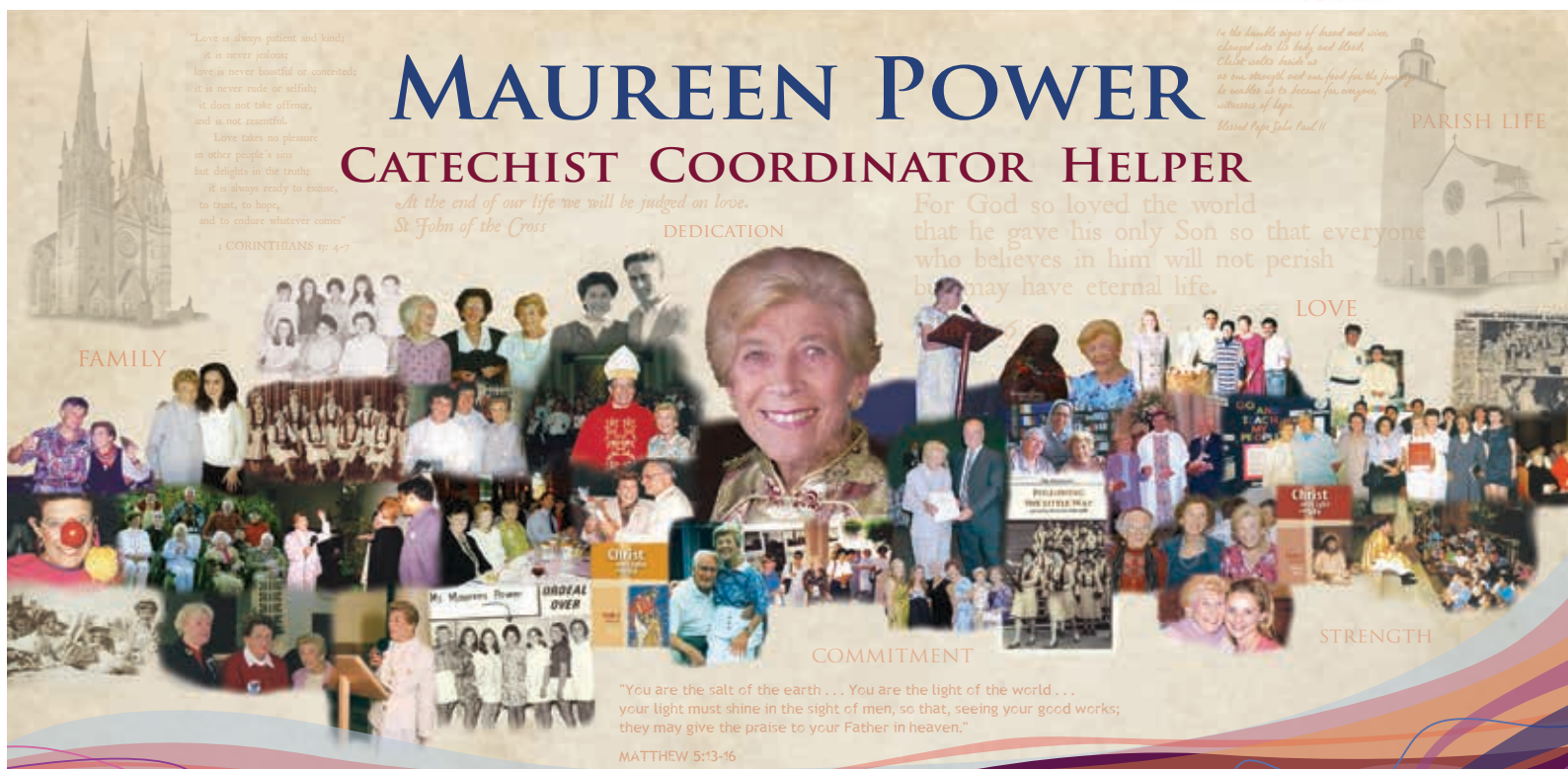
Below is a tribute that featured in the NSW Parliamentary celebration of SRE in 2012 when Maureen received an award for her service ... you can no doubt hear her saying again, "Don't thank me, I love doing it".

Mrs Maureen Power is most loved in St Brigid's parish, Marrickville. She began her work as a Theresian 75 years ago and since then has worked tirelessly with children's faith education which went far beyond teaching Catechism which she did with joy, enthusiasm, humour and grace. Her care for the children flowed over into

pastoral care and involvement with their families, countless hours of visits, phone calls, cups of tea and chats to offer support, kindness and the strength of faith to struggling parents, families, single parents and more. Her work for children originally Sunday mornings, then became organising and running the Religious Instruction program in over six government schools.

But her work grew beyond faith education for children only. She was instrumental in setting up the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Again her work was more than just teaching "Convert Classes" but a deep and genuine involvement in the lives and struggles of each of the hundreds of candidates who came to seek instruction and found care, community, laughter and love as well.

Alongside this work was her involvement in organising Sunday Children's Liturgies – a ministry she is still involved in. "Miss Maureen", as she is affectionately known, loves children, loves their families, loves her faith –and EVERYONE adores Miss Maureen.



75 YEARS OF SERVICE 1938 – 2012



Thank you from the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

FAITH EDUCATION OFFICER Northern Area

CHRIS COX

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Greetings to all in the Northern Area

I hope you are settling into Term 4 and enjoying the fragrance of springtime!

Firstly, I would like to congratulate all the Northern Area awardees recognised at the Annual Catechist Mass. A big thank you must go to Advanced Accreditation graduates for your commitment and dedication to studies and to all who have attended the accreditation courses run so far this year. These courses are an enjoyable opportunity to learn and deepen our knowledge.

CCD is now starting to see the fruits of the High School Catechist program. Michelle Champ, a former Rosebank College High School Catechist student, took the opportunity to be a student Catechist helping and assisting with classes at Concord and Concord West Public schools. It was there that Michelle discovered her vocation and her love for teaching that gave her a sense of fulfilment in helping younger people grow to learn about God. Michelle's love for teaching has continued to develop and she is now a Catechist in her local parish of Holy Innocents, Croydon. Michelle has found her Catechist experience essential for her vocation as she starts her journey at university next year studying secondary education at ACU. Please see Michelle's article on the facing page.

The Catechist Gathering will be held in the Northern Area on Friday 16th October at St Joachim's Parish Hall, Lidcombe. We are very fortunate to have Emma Harrison from the Catholic Education Office who specialises in developing children's Spirituality through Storytelling. We will be focusing our second session on more practical classroom management techniques with time for questions and answers. If you would like to attend please contact the CCD Office.

I'm starting to plan for next year as 2016 is going to be busy. I am open to suggestions from Catechists as to what areas, days, and events you would like to have in the Northern Area.

Please contact me via email or phone should you have any suggestions or require any assistance.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas,

Chris

Phone: 9307 8332



"God is peace, Let us ask him to help us to be peacemakers each day, in our life, in our families, in our cities and nations, in the whole world. Let us allow ourselves to be moved by God's goodness."

Pope Francis' Christmas Message - 25 December, 2013

FROM HIGH SCHOOL CATECHIST TO PARISH CATECHIST

Teaching SRE has been and continues to be a very rewarding avenue through which to channel my faith and my love of teaching. Preparing weekly lessons for my Kindergarten and Year 4 classes, and then conducting the classes each week has been a great learning experience for myself as well; advancing also my confidence and desire to be a teacher.

I took up the opportunity to be a student Catechist at Rosebank College, Five Dock, helping assist with classes at Concord and Concord West Public schools, as I wanted to start teaching as soon as I possibly could. The introductory instruction course (and the Basic One course I did when I left school) was valuable to being a catechist. Also, teaching scripture was very relevant to me as I feel a sense of fulfilment helping younger people grow to learn about God and apply the lessons of love, respect and kindness in their own lives.

I am actively involved in my local Parish and, following on from being a student Catechist, I decided to continue teaching SRE after I finished school.

I have also had the chance to observe other Catechists teach that has provided me with an understanding of a positive and engaging learning environment and classroom management strategies, which I have found a useful and insightful tool to developing my teaching of SRE. I feel that teaching is what God had in mind for me and I believe it is my duty to serve God in this manner. I enjoy imparting my knowledge of Catholic faith.

Structured lessons oversee the children learn about Saints, parts of the Mass, Church celebrations, the Old and New Testament stories and the life of Jesus.

In extension, I see the young curious and inquisitive minds of the children I teach as intent on growing in the world with the guidance of God, and I feel privileged to be able to help them develop an understanding and connection with their own faith.

by Michelle Champ



FAITH EDUCATION OFFICER Eastern Area

ROBERT MILAN

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The Holy Year of Mercy

Feast of the Immaculate Conception to the Feast of Christ the King

8 December 2015 - 20 November 2016

"Let us not forget that God pardons and God pardons always.
Let us never tire of asking for forgiveness." Pope Francis, 13 March 2015

Pope Francis has declared that the coming Church Year, commencing on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 8 December, to be an Extraordinary Jubilee focusing on the Mercy of God – The Year of Mercy. The Holy Father has invited us all to spread the message of mercy through both obtaining mercy and showing mercy towards others. Pope Francis continues in the tradition of his predecessors, especially Pope St John Paul II who declared the Feast of Divine Mercy on the Sunday following Easter. This is fitting since 2016 will see the youth of the world descend upon Poland the home of Saint John Paul II and Saint Sr. Faustina Kowalska in celebration of World Youth Day.

Our Blessed Lord reminds us through the Beatitudes that those who show mercy to others will be shown mercy - "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" [St Matthew 5:7]. In creating a spirit of mercy, we must begin by asking for God's mercy through the Sacrament of Confession then, through the presence of Sanctifying Grace, we can offer mercy to others who hurt us through actions and words. Whilst this is a difficult practice, as Christians and as catechists we are entrusted with this special Apostolate, of not only passing on the message of the Gospel but in presenting the example of the mercy of God in our classrooms, our families and our community.

A number of our Eastern Area catechists have been extending God's mercy through their spirit of service and we congratulate them for their commitment and service awards. They are an inspiration to all of us.

Life Member [30 years of service] Inductee:

Mrs. Josephine Finegan, Maroubra Bay

Cardinal Freeman Medal [25 years of service] recipients:

Ms Arlie McHatton, Clovelly

Dr Peter Wong, Haymarket

Ms Lee Leo, Malabar

Apostolic Blessing [20 years of service] from His Holiness, Pope Francis:

Mrs Enid Webster, Daceyville

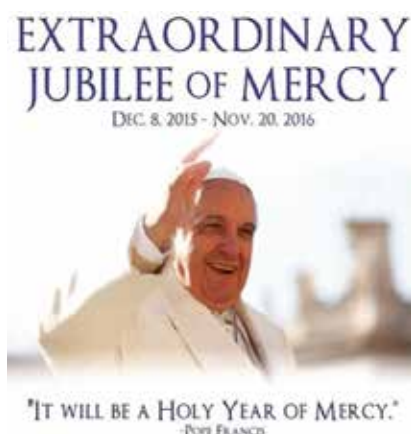
Mrs Carmela Cessario, Maroubra Bay

Mrs Elsie Maxwell, Mascot

Finally, *thank you* for your work and I wish you a most Holy and Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year. May the prayer of the Divine Mercy Chaplet be for us and the entire world as we pray "For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world".

Robert

Phone: 9307 8338



FAITH EDUCATION OFFICER Southern Area

DENISE HUMPHREYS

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Greetings to all in the Southern Area!

Term 3 is the cold and flu season as well as the time catechists often take that overseas trip. *Thank you* to all who have taken that extra class this term. I am grateful for the increasing numbers of university students who have stepped up and taken classes during the year – even one semester helps.

Please check to see when your SRE classes will finish for the year – often it is sooner than you would expect. Allow time to tell the Christmas story – your SRE class may be the only place some students will hear it.

Springtime is the time we celebrate the work of catechists. At the Annual Catechist Mass in September twenty seven catechists will receive a Papal blessing for 20 years of service. Others will be recognised for serving 25, 30, 40 and 50 years as a catechist bringing the Good News to the Catholic children in our public schools.

Congratulations to these catechists from the Southern Area:

Anne Iffland (GyMEA) Mark Halavazis (Hurstville), John Romanous (Hurstville) Kathleen Cullen (Hurstville South), Mary Fanaara (Miranda) and Maria Lumley (Peakhurst) who will receive a Papal Blessing for 20 years of service.

Patricia Craven (Peakhurst) and Patricia Whitelow (Penshurst) who will receive a Cardinal Freeman medal for 25 years of service.

Amy Zuschmann and Judy Ryan who will become a life member of the CCD after 30 years of service.

Thank you again for all the support you have given to me this year.

Denise

Phone: 9524 6400

SRE Online survey

Throughout history the Church has always presumed that religious education was a life long process. All the faithful were taught through sermons, travelling preachers, catechumens, and mystery and morality plays. Only a small part of the population received formal religious education. Over the last hundred years schools have been set up for the education of all children.

In Australia this saw both secular and religious education become part of the classroom program. Parish, school, parents, children, catechists and the CCD; these are all stakeholders in a partnership that comes together to teach Special Religious Education (SRE) to Catholic children who attend public schools.

As most of you would be aware there was a review into the operation of SRE conducted this year. We are grateful to all those who participated in the online survey for the SRE Review. The findings of the SRE Review should be available by December this year.



FAITH EDUCATION OFFICER Central Area

SARAH CHRISTIE

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Greetings to all in the Central Area

It's been a busy year in Central. Our relocation from Bankstown to Campsie has now taken place and it is refreshing that catechists have been able to attend courses at the new location using public transport, which was one of the key factors behind the move.

This last term has been frantic at CCD HQ as we prepared for the Annual Mass. I would like to extend a thank you to the teachers and students from our High School Catechist program at St Charbel's College, La Salle Bankstown, and Bethlehem College Ashfield for their excellent work assisting catechists across the area. This year alone, three former high school catechists joined parishes as full-time catechists, so it's wonderful to see the program's fruit reaching our parishes many years after the students finish their studies.

Our Annual Catechist Mass was a great opportunity to connect with one another and celebrate and give thanks for our work. A big thank you to all those catechists who received awards for their years of service, and our newly accredited catechists who joined us all in taking their oath at St Mary's Cathedral. May God continue to bless and guide you in your work.

Before we know it, 2016 will be upon us and it will once again be the Central Area's turn to host the Annual Mass. I am currently searching for a great parish choir to be the choir at the Mass – so do send good suggestions my way.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have made an effort to submit your

responses to the SRE review. Speaking up can be hard to do but I appreciate your efforts in a climate where we must continue to fight for something so intrinsic to our sense of being. May we all take comfort in the words of the Lord who reminds us that our work shall be remembered: "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my Father."

Wishing you all a Holy Christmas and blessed New Year!

Sarah Christie

Phone: 9787 3579



FAITH EDUCATION OFFICER Western Area

TERESA CULJAK

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Greetings to all in the Western Area

Only a few months remain in our current Catholic SRE classes for 2015. During this time of year, fatigue and tiredness may set in. However, it is a very fruitful time. Let's be encouraged to keep 'running the race.' For the relationship with our students is strongest in these last months. After journeying together, sharing major feasts and celebrations, the little ones entrusted to us, open wide their hearts because hopefully they've seen Christ in the way we speak, act and love.

There are times when we may feel spiritually poor in the classroom. This is normal. It is during these times one says, "Lord I can't, but you can. Come Holy Spirit." It is the Lord's work and only He has the key to unlock the hearts of our students. If you need a spiritual boost, desire some quiet time with the Lord, or would like to prepare well for Christmas, a retreat/spirituality day may be the key. The CCD is planning to host a Free retreat for all catechists in Term 4. We will advise you all with details via your Coordinators.

If you are struggling for creativity with your Christmas lessons and need a little boost, Br Julian's resources/lessons are available on CD and can be printed free of charge. Please contact our city office or myself for further details. It might just help to give your lessons a little more pizzazz!!

A very big **thank you** you to Fr Thanh, Louise Hartin, Sr Helen Madden and all catechists at St Christopher's, Holsworthy, for hosting this year's Western Area Mass. Their tireless efforts did not go unnoticed with the beautiful church decorations, liturgy and a very generous lunch provided. St Christopher's is a small parish with a very big heart.

The Mass was well attended with ten priests and almost 150 catechists who joined together in prayer and thanksgiving for our catechetical ministry.



High School Catechists from Freeman Catholic College, Patrician Brothers Fairfield, with primary school students from Hammondville Public School and St Christopher's Catholic School.
Western Area Mass - St Christopher's Parish Church, Holsworthy

Thank you for your wonderful service in 2015.

Have a blessed Christmas,

Teresa Culjak

Phone: 9637 2526





Events Calendar

TERM 4, 2015

October

6 Oct (Tue)

Term 4 Commences

16 Oct (Fri)

Catechist Gathering
10:00am to 1:30pm

St Joachim Parish Hall
Lidcombe

November

27 Nov (Fri)

Life Members Function
12:00pm to 2:30pm

Dooley's Catholic Club
Lidcombe

December

18 Dec (Fri)

End of Term 4 (Term 1 commences Wednesday 27 January 2016)

Catechist Gathering
Friday 16 October 2015
10am to 1.30pm
St Joachim's Parish Hall
corner of John & Keating Streets
LIDCOMBE



SESSION 1: Special guest speaker, Emma Harrison

"Developing Children's Spirituality Through Storytelling"

SESSION 2: Classroom Management

More teaching tips & tactics with time for questions & answers.

Please RSVP by Tuesday 6 October 2015, via email: office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au or

Phone: 02 9307 8330

2015

CCD Courses

All course bookings: Phone 02 9307 8330 or Email office@ccdsydney.catholic.edu.au

BASIC ONE ACCREDITATION

9 Oct (Fri) Chris Cox	10am to 2pm	Polding Centre 133 Liverpool St. Sydney
12 Oct (Mon) Denise Humphreys	10am to 1pm	CCD Miranda 50 Kiora Rd, Miranda
19 Oct (Mon) Sarah Christie	10am to 2pm	St Mel's Parish 7 Evaline St, Campsie
26 Oct & 2 Nov (Mon) Teresa Culjak	10am to 2pm	Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish Hall 230 Humphries Road, Bonnyrigg
13 Nov (Fri) Robert Milan	10am to 2pm	Polding Centre 133 Liverpool St, Sydney
9 Dec (Wed) Chris Cox	10am to 2pm	Polding Centre 133 Liverpool St. Sydney

BASIC TWO ACCREDITATION

26 Oct, 2 & 9 Nov (Mon) Sarah Christie	10am to 2pm	St Mel's Parish 7 Evaline St, Campsie
19, 26 Oct & 2 Nov (Mon) Denise Humphreys Days 1, 2 & 3	10am to 1pm	CCD Miranda 50 Kiora Road, Miranda (next to St Vincent De Paul Shop)
9 Nov (Mon) Denise Humphreys Day 1	10am to 1pm	St Thomas More 298 Bay Street Brighton-Le-Sands

ADVANCED ACCREDITATION

9, 23, 30 Oct, 13, 20 Nov & 4 Dec (Fridays) Denise Humphreys	10am to 2pm	CCD Miranda 50 Kiora Road, Miranda (next to St Vincent De Paul Shop)
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SMART Board Beginners Class

12 Oct (Mon) Robert Milan & Chris Cox	10am to 3pm	Polding Centre 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney
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NEW MEDIA

Inspiration and spiritual nourishment

Please let us know of any good websites that offer ideas for lessons so that we may inform other Catechists.

RADIO CATHOLIC JOURNEY

The Director of CCD Wollongong, Jude Hennessy, has a weekly show, Journey Catholic Radio, that is taking off around the country.

You can receive Journey Catholic Radio in Sydney, via a weekly email or iTunes app.

CRADIO

new media – new evangelisation

Archbishop Julian Porteous' CRADIO online resource is also popular offering music, both sacred and modern, talks, interviews, homilies and reflections...



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Wisdom from the Abbey



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– THE CATHOLIC GUY
Inspiring you to Dream



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DR BYRON &
FRANCINE PIROLA
Smart Loving for Healthy Marriages



FR DAVE CALLAGHAN MGL
Walking Daily with God in The Call



PETER GILMORE
Encouraging us in Living the Gospel



SAMUEL CLEAR
Walk4one Promoting Christian Unity



MARILYN RODRIGUEZ
Tips for Peaceful Parenting

THREE WAYS TO LISTEN

WEEKLY EMAIL



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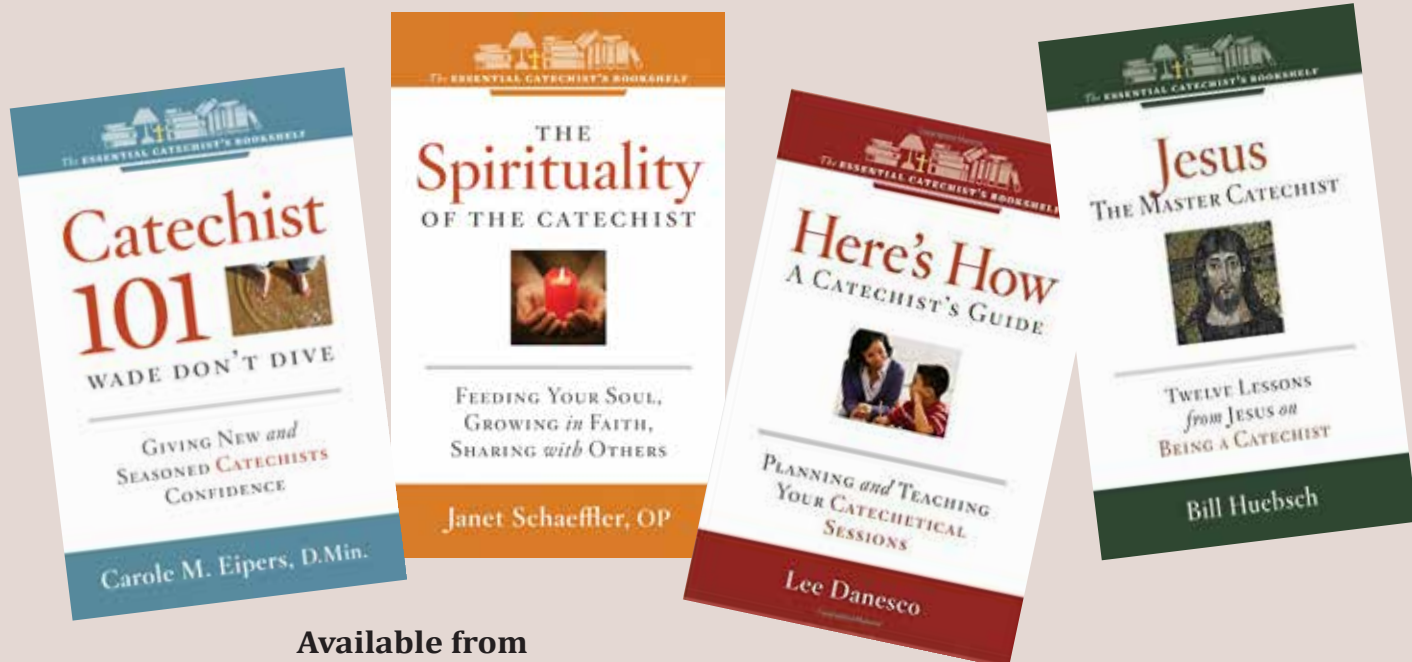
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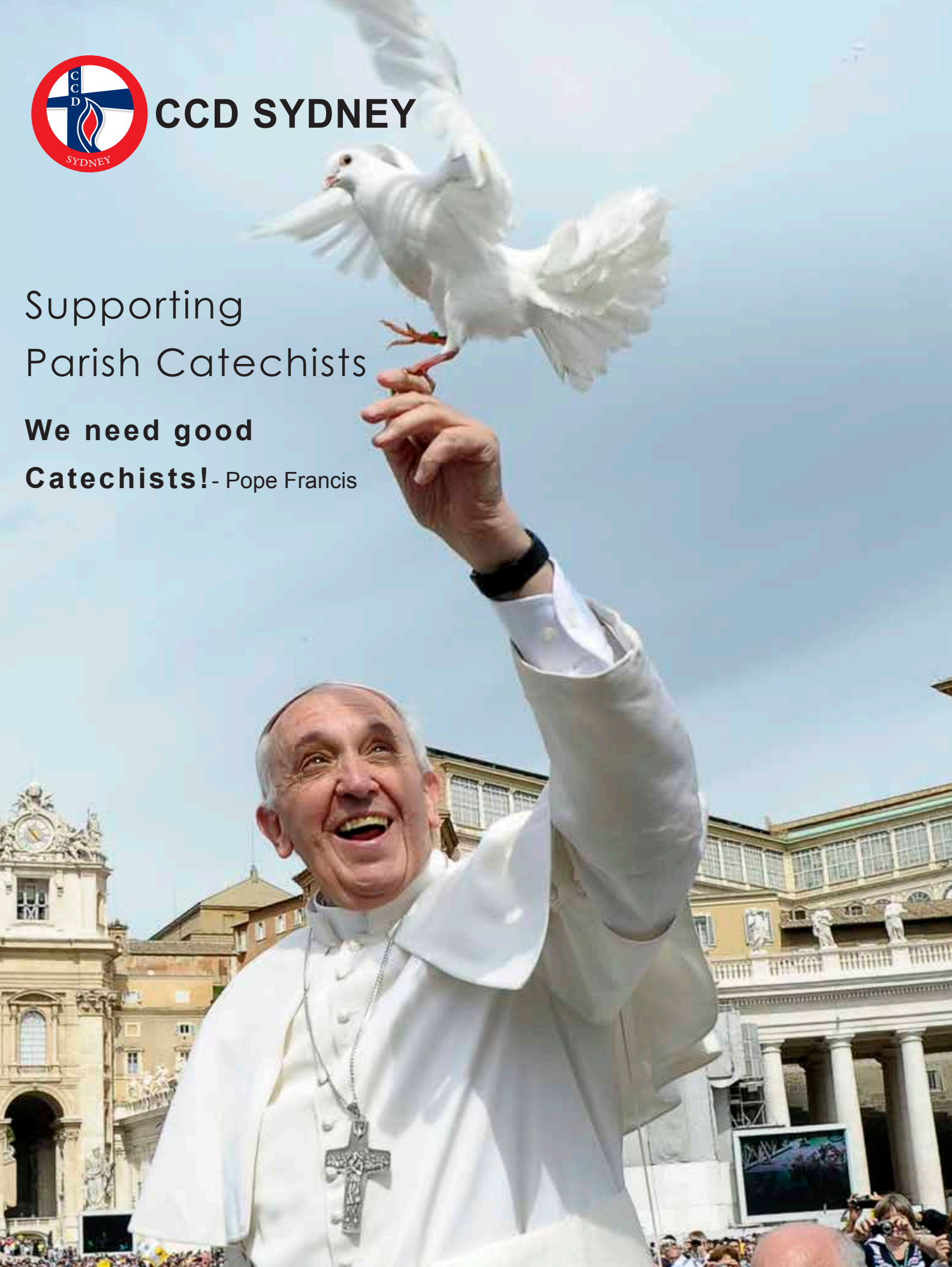
Join our Birthday Club and receive a 25% discount voucher for your Birthday. Conditions apply. Birthday Vouchers cannot be used in conjunction with Christ our Light and Life, To Know Worship and Love Text Books, Big Books, Sacramental Programs and already discounted stock. The voucher can be used within a year of the catechist's birthday.



CCD SYDNEY

Supporting
Parish Catechists

**We need good
Catechists!** - Pope Francis



Contact your local Parish or CCD Sydney on 9307 8330