

# CatechistNET

CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE • DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

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COVID-19 Information

Campbelltown Resource  
Centre Re-open!

Child Protection  
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& more

WELCOME  
BACK TO  
SCHOOL!



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and Support Personnel

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CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF  
**WOLLONGONG**



## Message from the Director

*Written by Mr Jude Hennessy  
Director*

*Office of Renewal & Evangelisation  
Diocese of Wollongong*

## Returning to schools in 2021

I remember this time last year, writing words of encouragement as we prepared for another year of formation of young people via our teaching of SRE in schools. In doing so, I was completely oblivious to the many and varied impacts that the COVID19 pandemic would have right around the world. It has been a year like no other, impacting all facets of our lives and certainly the way we have been able to come together in worship of our God, and in the impact on our role as Catechists. While, I doubt, we will ever return to 'normal', we are hopefully now beginning to return to a 'new normal', able to go about living our lives, indeed our mission as disciples, with greater certainty.

It is with a great sense of joy and enthusiasm therefore that I note that most of our Catechists have, or in coming weeks will be returning to classrooms to evangelise and catechise children. It is a great joy to be able to again form our solid cohort of new Catechists, and do so 'face to face', as they join our ranks via the completion of Level 1 training. We need more just like them, as a significant number of Catechists validly withdrew from teaching given the pandemic. As such, it is important for Parishes with the support of the CCD Team, to even more strongly focus on recruitment and training to ensure all parishes can continue this pivotal work of outreach, evangelisation, and formation via SRE in the Diocese of Wollongong. This work has already begun in earnest in 2021.

### Welcome to Frances Fairs

It is wonderful to be able to welcome Frances Fairs to the CCD Team as the Faith Education Officer for the Macarthur- Highlands region. A woman of deep faith, Frances has been a long-term Coordinator of SRE in Nowra Parish, and comes to serve in this ministry with great experience of what it means to be a Catechist and coordinator. Formerly an Officer with the Australian Air Force, Frances has qualifications

in Engineering and Teaching and has a passion and enthusiasm for Evangelisation and renewal of the Church for mission. She joins the CCD Team that is being coordinated by Mr Peter Gilmore, who will bring his solid understanding and vast experience in this ministry to ensure it continues to thrive and serve the mission of the Church to make disciples. Together, they are eagerly meeting with parish coordinators, visiting parishes, recruiting, and training as we negotiate in partnership with schools the recommencement of SRE for 2021.

### Directory for Catechesis

This year, we will, via this publication and also in our retreat and formation courses, necessarily make reference to what is our instruction manual as Catechists, namely, the new Directory for Catechesis. The new directory was released on 25 June 2020 by the Vatican amid all of the turmoil last year. It is truly a new approach to Catechesis, with an emphasis on ensuring that our Catechesis in this modern context is urgently, and deliberately evangelising and kerygmatic in nature. The building blocks of this new style of Catechesis looks to bring young people to an encounter with the Spirit of God in prayer and ritual and

in the proclamation of the basic Gospel – the Good News – that must be repeated often because it seems too good to be true. I am excited by its tone and urgency

**“..the proclamation of the basic Gospel – the Good News – that must be repeated often because it seems too good to be true.”**

perceived and be ‘in your face’, to put it in the language of our young people. To help bring this about our teaching must deliberately focus on bringing young people

which has all the elements of a Catechesis in an era of urgent, new evangelisation where the profoundness of the simple Gospel must be brought to the fore.

### No Room for Presumption

In days past, Catechesis, the teaching about the faith, was to come after conversion to faith. Initial evangelisation included a clear introduction to the basic Gospel message through word and deed, with a focus on receiving the gift of faith. Catechesis was regarded as the deepening of the grasp of the mysteries of the faith. This new ‘how to’ document, however, recognises that we must no longer presume that children receiving catechetical instruction have already received the gift of faith. To account for this, Pope Francis speaks of our faith formation as needing to evangelise. By this, he stresses that the Gospel message should be easily

**“This new ‘how to’ document, however, recognises that we must no longer presume that children receiving catechetical instruction have already received the gift of faith.”**

to encounter the risen Jesus through the inherent power of the basic Gospel – the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, his love, mercy and promise of eternal life. It is this message that must be repeated often and vibrantly, and in that will bring young people to encounter the joy of the Holy Spirit in the initial embracing of the gift of faith. Without wanting to oversimplify this document here, it will be important for us as Catechists to not letting the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of our faith, take precedence or overshadow the more foundational ‘who’ and ‘why’ of our faith – namely Jesus Christ and

his deep love for each one of us, and for each one of those children who you teach. The new Directory for Catechesis compels us to bring them to an encounter with this risen Jesus and accompanying them on their journey to being missionary disciples themselves.

Call to Prayer

### Call to Prayer

As always, I remind you in the midst of all of you do, be prayerful. It is in our prayerfulness that we come to receive the power of the Holy Spirit that prepares us to be witnesses to the love of God for the children we teach. Pray for each other, and as we ‘reboot’ SRE for 2021, that the Lord will bless parishes with many new Catechists eager to contribute to this wonderful work of outreach and evangelisation.

**More support for Catechists**

[support@ccdwoollongong.com](mailto:support@ccdwoollongong.com)

**NEED HELP?**



# Making Jesus Known and Loved

*A Message from Frances Fairs*



**This year marks 13 years since I started as a Catechist in the Diocese of Wollongong. I know that for many of you, that 13 years of service is not very impressive. Some Catechists that I have come to know have been teachers in our ministry for 30+, even 40+ years! These faithful and dedicated Catechists are inspirational, and I look to them as what I hope to be in the future!**

The work that we do in CCD, as Catechists, helpers, and coordinators, is extraordinary. I understand that not every lesson goes well, and I understand what it is like to have to persevere with that “tough” group or difficult school, but our work is too important to throw in the towel when things get hard.

Teaching children in Catholic SRE class is more than just



transferring information from us to them - it is much more meaningful than that! Sharing the Good News, our Catholic Faith and our love of God brings life and hope to our students.

It is deeply fulfilling work that we do in CCD, and I know that I’m not alone when describing the joy that I receive when teaching, leading and guiding our young people into a deeper relationship with God and a better understanding of our Catholic Faith.

Knowing that they are never alone, that they are loved, and that they are always welcome, is a message that



I want every student moving on to High School to take with them from their Catholic SRE lessons about God and our Church.

My hope for CCD is that other people, outside of our ministry, come to a better understanding

of the valuable work that we do and support us practically, and of course, spiritually. We are supported, in part, by the government, by schools, and by other parishioners but let’s not become complacent with any support that we do receive. Making our work in CCD visible by sharing stories with fellow parishioners, celebrating successes, asking for prayer and support, and attending/hosting training and events, will all help to strengthen our ministry for the great task before us: making Jesus known and loved.



# An Important update about Child Protection

*Written by Peter Gilmore*

**CCD Wollongong (Catholic SRE in the Diocese of Wollongong) takes Child Protection incredibly seriously. As stated in our training course, “as Catholics, we have a moral responsibility to keep kids safe”. More than a culture of safety though, we aim to promote a culture of life - one where children are free to flourish and learn the ways of God.**

Because of this, we have sought to empower you with the knowledge and tools you need to act appropriately with children and, when necessary, to take steps to ensure they are kept safe. We have been incredibly encouraged to see Catechists embrace this responsibility.

In 2020, significant changes were made to the Children’s Guardian Act of 2019 in NSW that will impact our involvement in Special Religious Education going forward.

## **Volunteers are now Mandatory Reporters**

Under NSW legislation, there is no longer a distinction between paid and volunteer people who work with children. All people

who work with children are now considered Mandatory Reporters for Child Protection purposes. Where previously we embraced a moral responsibility to report, we now have a legal obligation as someone who works with children.

What does this mean for you? If you suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child is experiencing physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, you must report this to the principal of the school you are teaching at. Please then contact the Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office (4222 2428 or [safeguarding@dow.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@dow.org.au)) and they will assist you in making a Mandatory Report if necessary.

## **Grooming reclassified as a criminal offence**

The offence of grooming has been reclassified as a criminal sexual offence. Grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes their family, to lower the child’s inhibitions, usually with the objective of sexual abuse. Grooming is a clear progression of actions that indicate a person’s desire to break professional

boundaries in the pursuit of a more intimate and abusive relationship with a child.

What does this mean for you? We must be vigilant in keeping our relationships with individual children professional and transparent. This does not mean we need to be cold and callous to individual children but, rather, to focus our attention on building a relationship with the whole class. It would be inappropriate to contact or relate to a child outside of the class environment. It is acceptable to invite families to be involved in Parish activities and Sacramental programs. If you have concerns about the behaviour of another volunteer in the ministry, please contact the Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office (4222 2428 or [safeguarding@dow.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@dow.org.au)) to discuss your concerns.

*If you have questions or concerns regarding the changes or you would like to discuss matters further, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with us by emailing [support@ccdwoollongong.com](mailto:support@ccdwoollongong.com) OR visiting [ccdwoollongong.com](http://ccdwoollongong.com)*



# Department of Education **COVID-19** Policy Directives

*Written by Frances Fairs*

**The Department of Education reviewed the COVID-19 restrictions in January this year and has implemented further precautionary measures to ensure all schools are safe for students and SRE teachers.**

- SRE/SEE classes are to be held for no longer than one hour and classes should take place in a suitably sized room or outdoors. There is currently no limit on class sizes.
- Where possible, students participating in these activities should remain within their relevant cohort (i.e. class, year group or stage) to limit the mixing of students between cohort groups.

- Singing and/or chanting activities should be avoided.
- Only one SRE/SEE teacher per class of 30 students. No observers/helpers are permitted at this time.
- All teachers, support staff, and parents must maintain physical distance from each other (1.5m) and maintain hygiene practices while on site.
- Staff and students are not required to wear a face mask while at school. Anyone who wishes to wear their own masks in schools will not be prevented from doing so.
- Masks are mandatory when travelling on public transport in Greater Sydney (including the Blue

Mountains), Central Coast and Wollongong. Please visit the NSW Health advice regarding masks.

- Approved providers of SRE/SEE are not required to have a COVID-19 safety plan to enter schools. SRE/SEE teachers should deliver SRE/SEE as efficiently and safely as possible.

Please note, that it is up to the School Principal to implement these policy directives. In some schools, Principals are allowing Classroom Helpers (Catechist Helpers) to continue in the classroom with the Catechist Teacher as it is the best arrangement for their particular learning environment/situation.

## Catechist Training Level II

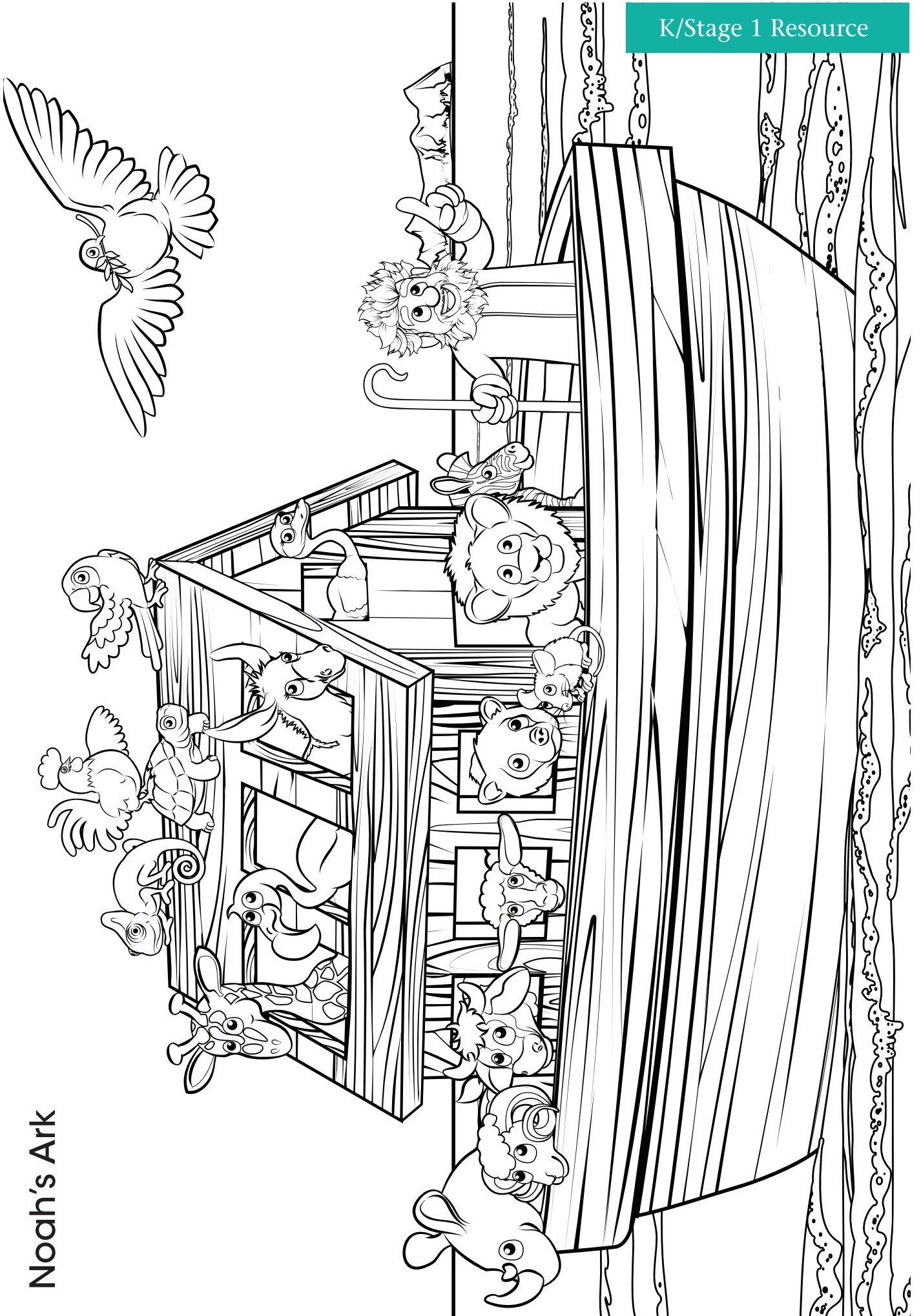


Level II training is a chance for all Catechists to take their knowledge of Teaching & the Catholic Faith deeper. Over six weeks, Level II focuses on a variety of topics to help you grow as a Catechist and Catholic.

### TOPICS INCLUDE

- Storytelling • The Creed • Living our Faith
- The Gospel Narratives • Catechesis & Religious Education • Christian Initiation of Children
- Moral Development • Ecumenism
- Teaching children the Liturgical Year

**See Calendar on last page for course details. Bookings essential.**



Noah's Ark





# HEROES OF THE FAITH



**Name:** St Therese of Lisieux  
(Also known as St Therese of the Child Jesus, the Little Flower of Jesus)

**Status:** Saint & Doctor

**Lived:** 1873–1897, France

**Canonised:** May 17, 1925

Saint Therese of Lisieux is Doctor of the Catholic church, which means that her life and writings are considered particularly important for Catholics. She is also called the Little Flower of Jesus. She lived in France as a nun, and passed away at 24 from tuberculosis. Mother Teresa chose her name in honour of her.

Therese of Lisieux is one of the patron saints of the missions, not because she ever went anywhere, but because of her special love of the missions, and the prayers and letters she gave in support of missionaries. This is a reminder to all of us who feel we can do nothing, that it is the little things that keep God's kingdom growing.

**“Remember  
that nothing  
is small in the  
eyes of God. Do  
all that you do  
with love.”**

– St Therese of Lisieux

**St Therese of the Child Jesus,  
Pray for us!**

# How to Pray the Rosary

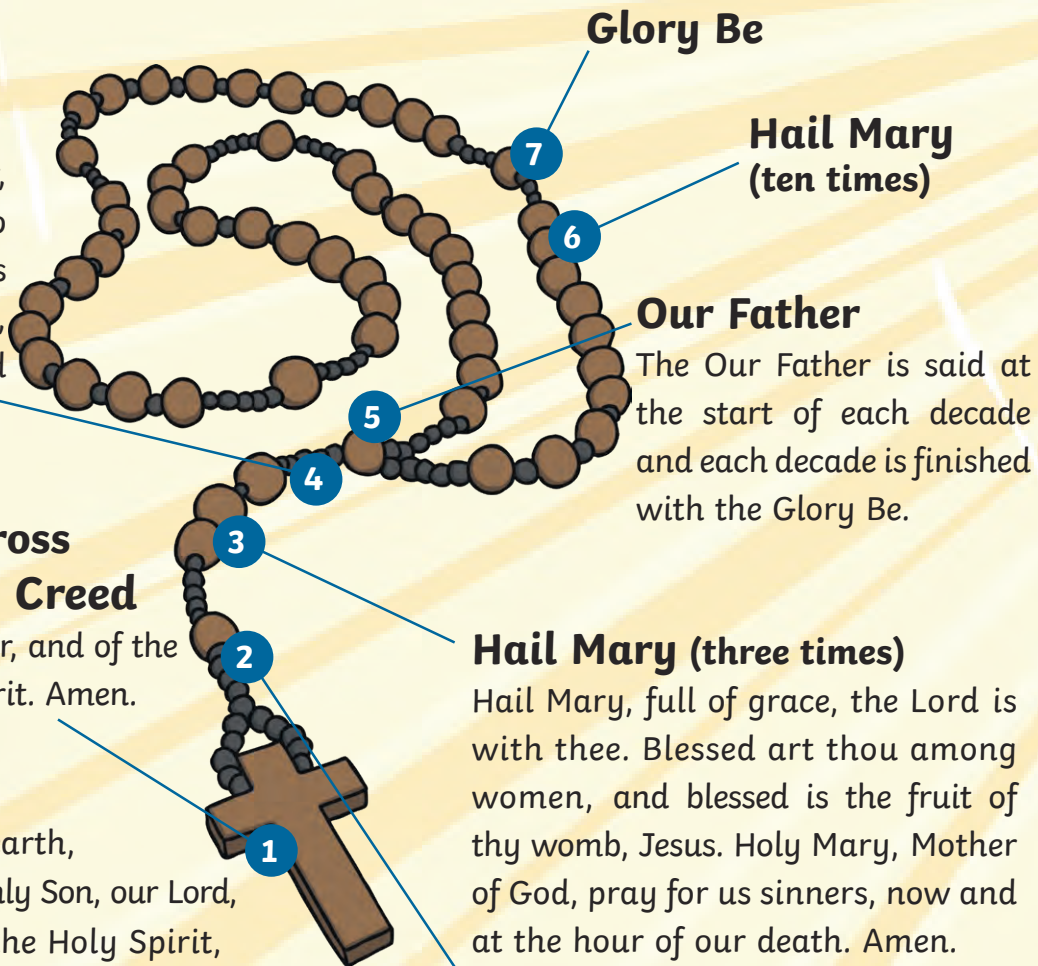
The Rosary is a Catholic prayer based upon the Bible that focuses on the events in the life of Jesus and that of Mary the Mother of Jesus. Saint John Ogilvie threw his rosary beads into the crowd before he was martyred.

## Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## The Sign of the Cross and the Apostles' Creed

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.



## Glory Be

## Hail Mary (ten times)

## Our Father

The Our Father is said at the start of each decade and each decade is finished with the Glory Be.

## Hail Mary (three times)

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## Our Father

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.



SAVE THE DATE

# CATECHIST RETREAT 2021

## **Illawarra-Shoalhaven Retreat**

Monday, September 13th  
10:00am-2:00pm

## **Macarthur-Highlands Retreat**

Friday, September 17th  
10:00am-2:00pm

**Morning Tea provided, BYO Lunch  
Bookings essential.**

## Catechist Training Level III

**GO DEEPER  
IN FAITH**



Level III training is a chance for all Catechists to take their knowledge of the Catholic Faith deeper. Over six weeks, Level III focuses entirely on Theology and Church teaching, with the aim of providing space to explore and reflect on the profound truths of our Catholic Faith.

### **TOPICS INCLUDE**

- Creation: Work of the Trinity
- Communion: Eucharist - Source & Summit
- Reconciliation: Forgiveness of Sins, Healing
- Christ: Heart of Catechesis
- Morality: Life in the Spirit
- Church: Mission of the Holy Spirit

**See Calendar on last page for course details. Bookings essential.**

# The 6 Tasks of Catechesis

Written by Peter Gilmore

**In the new edition of the General Directory for Catechesis, we are told, “at the centre of every process of catechesis is the living encounter with Christ.” (75, Directory for Catechesis, 2020). Quoting Saint John Paul II, it continues, “Accordingly, the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity” (CT 5). This is what we hope to achieve in our lessons.**

We do this systematically – after all, we use a curriculum – by focusing on 6 tasks. These tasks are written into your lesson plans and will be achieved by following your curriculum, so there is no need to fret about whether or not they are being included. (Note: All quotes in this article, unless noted otherwise, are from the General Directory for Catechesis.)

## **1. Promoting the Knowledge of the Faith**

Imagine you’re an alien arriving on earth. Someone invites you to an oval shaped field and in the centre is long strip of hard finely cut grass. At each end of the strip are three wooden poles with two smaller poles balanced on them. There are 11 people standing in various

places on the field and they hand you a long piece of wood. Now, if you know what cricket is, you probably could give it a go but if you don’t, you’re going to be really confused! When the ball is hurled at you at 160km/h, you might even get angry.

The General Directory for Catechesis says, “knowledge of the faith is required by adherence to the faith”. You’ll probably struggle to live the Christian life if you don’t understand it, just like an alien trying to play cricket. Our first task is to teach the students what it is to be a Catholic. That means we need to be age-appropriate – that’s why having an approved curriculum is so important – For example, a primary school aged student isn’t going to need to understand the problem of adultery, but they can understand what it means to forgive.

Whenever possible we read stories from the Bible, we hear the words of Jesus and we follow along with the great heroes and heroines of our faith. But we should also incorporate our own experience in an age-appropriate way. For example, when you’re talking about “being loving”, give personal examples of what you’ve experienced or what you’ve done. That makes it more real.

## **2. Liturgical Formation**

As Catholics, our liturgy is enchanting, it’s mystical and almost other-worldly. When the liturgy is celebrated with beauty and reverence, not only is it literally heaven touching earth, but it also feels like heaven touching earth. That’s because Jesus is “always present in his Church, especially in ‘liturgical celebrations’”. But let’s face it – when to stand, when to kneel, what the gold thing is with the angels on top and why is he swinging that smokey metal cage around?.. This is all very confusing. Now imagine being a child trying to understand.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, tells us that all the faithful should be led to “fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations”. The fully conscious part is particularly important. Active participation really matters: Being involved, knowing the mechanics, learning the prayers – these are all important things but understanding “why” is equally, if not more, important. This understanding always begins in a basic way and should develop throughout life. So, following the curriculum and explaining the Sacraments and the liturgy of the Church is vital.

### 3. Moral Formation

One of the most important calls in our life is to discipleship and discipleship is a constant process of conversion. As we walk in the footsteps of Jesus, we become like him. For adults being initiated into the faith, through grace and formation, we often see breaking of bad habits, we see change in outlook and morals and sometimes even, as Jesus warned, a change or “cutting off” of unhealthy relationships. In children however, thanks be to God, the threat of many of the bad habits or sinful vices, by their very nature, are years away.

We have an opportunity and a duty to teach them the ways of God – the way of a Jesus follower. This is not simply a list of no-no’s. It’s a list of yes-yes’s too! Virtue is not simply the absence of some vice. By that definition, a pile of rocks is virtuous. Virtue is habitually choosing the Good, the True and the Beautiful and it draws out of us who God created us to be. We do all this with grace in the power of the Holy Spirit. But we cannot choose the good, the true and the beautiful if we do not know what it is. The example of Jesus as well as the lives of Saints, combined with the teaching of the Church will help equip our students to make good decisions in their lives.

### 4. Teaching to Pray

“To learn to pray with Jesus is to pray with the same sentiments with which he turned to the Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial confidence (praying to God as a son or daughter), supplication (asking for what we need) and awe for his glory” .

As Christians, we have a direct line connection to God the Father in the name of Jesus – it’s like a high-speed internet connection, always on, always available. But we can sometimes make the mistake of thinking we should only use it to “check-in” or in times of crisis, but it’s meant to be used all the time, every day and in all situations. We have a direct connection to the One who desires to know us and who waits for the opportunity to speak with us, not just to us.

That’s why teaching students how to pray is of great importance. People often say about their SRE lessons, if the lesson goes awry, students are misbehaving or you are running out of time, always make time to pray and teach the students that prayer is a top priority in the Christian life. There are many ways to pray – wrote prayers (like the Rosary), hymns and songs, prayers of intercession, contemplation, praying with the Scriptures and so on. It is good to change it up and include many ways of praying. Some students will resonate with one type of prayer more than others. A good curriculum will include many forms and styles of prayer. It is good to offer this variety to students.

### 5. Preparation for Community Life

We hear stories of great saints like St Francis who preached in the streets or modern-day missionaries like St Teresa of Calcutta and we think, wow, they’re incredible – I could never do that! But we neglect to mention that Francis had a community of brother monks with him and Mother Teresa was the abbess of an order of sisters. In Christianity, we aren’t meant to be lone wolves. We have Jesus living in and through us but we were made to live in community – a common unity – with a group of believers who pray, learn, eat and live their lives together with a common vision and purpose. Our faith is both personal and communal.

It’s important in our lessons to emphasise the powerful place that the Church has as not only the body of Christ but as a community of believers, traveling this road together. These are the people who are meant to encourage us, challenge us and help us on the journey. We are called out of our ordinary life into a radical life of belonging and responsibility for one another. We each have a place and a purpose in the body. We all belong.

### 6. Missionary Initiation

Everything we receive from God is meant to be given away. We are forgiven, so we must forgive.

We were told of God’s great love, so too we should tell the world. The General Directory tells us that the missionary dimension of Catechesis “seeks to equip the disciples of Jesus to be present as Christians in society through their professional, cultural and social lives” Put simply? Be a missionary in the world by being the best you. We are all called to mission.

If you take the analogy of the cross – the vertical beam represents our relationship with God and the horizontal is our relationship with others. The vertical beam grounds us and keeps us firm – God’s love is our strength – and from there, the horizontal beam, we can love others. This is through works of mercy and actions of social justice.

### Conclusion

So they are our six tasks! Promoting Knowledge of the Faith, Liturgical Formation, Moral Formation, Teaching to Pray, Preparation for Community Life and Missionary Initiation. Ok, wait, before you freak out and become overwhelmed by all that – Remember, we go into classes with pre-written lesson plans. You don’t need figure out how to include these things. They are included already! We share these tasks with you so that you get an idea of the thinking behind the formation of the lessons in the curriculum you will receive. And now that you have heard about them, you won’t be able to not notice the fact they are included!



# Thank you, Campbelltown Catholic Club

*Written by Frances Fairs*

The Campbelltown Catholic Club supports CCD Wollongong each year by donating funds to supply parishes in the Macarthur region of our diocese with resources, such as books and teaching manuals. Considering that the region is made up of 250 Catechists and 4000 young people in nearly 50 schools, this donation is very much appreciated and gives us a great boost in sustaining Catholic SRE in the region.

Last year was the first time in more than 100 years that SRE was paused by the NSW Government

and Department of Education due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

To help with the recommencement of Catholic SRE in 2021, the Campbelltown Catholic Club has generously donated \$5,500, in addition to their substantial grant to Parishes in the Macarthur, to sponsor sets of the new COLAL (4th Edition) teacher manuals and workbooks for each parish in the diocese.

This will mean that parishes will receive at least one set of teacher manuals and workbooks, with larger parishes receiving several

sets of teacher manuals and workbooks.

We are very grateful to the Campbelltown Catholic Club for their continued and generous support of CCD Wollongong.

We were very fortunate to be able to hold the Macarthur Catechist Coordinator meeting and the first session of the CCD Level 1 Course in one of their many beautiful event rooms, at a discounted rate. If you have not visited the Campbelltown Catholic Club in a while, it is time to do so!



## Resources to inspire!

*Written by Lisa Metcalfe*

With Easter fast approaching it is time to get in touch with the amazing Resource Centre Managers Cindy and Anne to work out what helpful additional resources will assist you to break open the scriptures for the Easter season in your classrooms.

There are Big Books, puppets, props, music and pictures available to help to focus student's attention and highlight the powerful Gospel message that Jesus came to provide an example for us to follow, died for our sins and because of the wonder and awe of the resurrection we are able to be fully reunited with God. Such good news to share!

**Illawarra-Shoalhaven** Catechists can access the Resource Centre by contacting Anne Russell on 0427 072 363 Resources will be selected by Anne and then can be picked up and dropped off to the Marian Centre, Catholic Education Office at 86-88 Market Street Wollongong.

**Macarthur-Southern Highlands** • Micah House has reopened Monday to Thursday 9am until 3pm (35a Cordeaux St, Campbelltown). Contact Cindy Oliver on (02) 4640 8550 or email [cindy.oliver@dow.org.au](mailto:cindy.oliver@dow.org.au)

# Catechist Profile

## Patricia & Russell Williams

Catechists

Milton-Ulladulla Parish



*How long have you been a Catechist?*

My first urge to become a Catechist was when my children enthusiastically embraced their Religious Instruction. So, when my youngest started School, I decided I would give it a go.

Many Courses followed - so different from the way they are now presented. As there were several moves and disruptions due to my husband's Naval Career, my Catechist teaching had many starts and stops. When those times were over, I once again heard the Catechist call at Mudgee. A very different approach all together, as it involved teaching Ecumenically – Christian Religion across the board and no references to anything specifically Catholic (eg. Mary or the Eucharist). It was quite challenging as it involved large classes, no Catechist helper and no Class Teacher in the room and was, at times, very daunting.

*What inspired you to become a Catechist?*

My inspiration was a beautiful Nun, Sister Mary Clement (OAM), who peddled her push bike to classes each week carrying her books and teaching aids all in her carry basket. She tackled two schools on the one day. Truly a Saint in my eyes.

When there was a call at our Milton Ulladulla Parish to fill a depleted Catechist Ministry, I thought that must be the Holy Spirit once again tapping

me on the shoulder. The support that I received here when I recommenced was truly remarkable. I was gently eased back into the Catechist Fold surrounded by so much love. A bonus for me and the students was that my husband Russell, has now become my helper in the Classroom. We both prepare the lessons and have many strategies down pat as we can take our tasks home and plan lessons together.

*What do you enjoy about teaching SRE?*

The thing that I enjoy most about being a Catechist, especially teaching Kindy is witnessing the absolute awe and wonder as they experience their first encounter with their Heavenly Father. For most students it is their first knowledge of how they were loved into existence and that God knows each of them individually. I feel so privileged that God has asked us to play a part in that.

*Do you have a particular talent or skill that you make use of in the classroom?*

What I find is a useful tool in reaching out to Kindies is for me to become animated in my approach. I use actions, facial expressions, music and mime even in teaching prayer. It does encourage them to join in and serves to enliven each lesson with joy and fun.

*What warms your heart when you are in the classroom?*

One experience that stays with me, is when, after hearing the story of Noah and the Great Flood a little boy brought me in a "Big Gift" it was a wooden replica of Noah's Ark complete with animals. He said it was for me to keep, so I could show all the other children instead of just pictures. I was so touched. He donated a loved toy. Indeed, Jesus himself would have shed a tear.

*What is your future direction as a Catechist?*

I envisage that I will continue to respond to this ministry as my circumstances permit. My words of encouragement would be to trust in the abundance of help on offer. All one needs is that "Yes" and the Holy Spirit will do the rest. Your presence each week, demonstrates to these little ones, that God indeed is with us and knows us by Name.

***Thank you so much, Patricia and Russell, for sharing about your journey in the ministry and congratulations on receiving your 20-year Papal Blessing Award in 2020!***



# Calendar 2021

## Coordinator Meetings (10:00-11:30am)

Illawarra-Shoalhaven Xavier Centre	Jun 25 Nov 19
Macarthur-Highlands Micah House	Jun 28 Nov 22

## Level II (9:30am-1:30pm)

Illawarra-Shoalhaven Xavier Centre	May 7, 14, 21 28, Jun 4, 11
Macarthur-Highlands Micah House	May 3, 10, 17 24, 31, Jun 7

## Level III (9:30am-1:30pm)

Illawarra-Shoalhaven Xavier Centre	Jul 23, 30 Aug 6, 13, 20, 27
Macarthur-Highlands Micah House	Jul 19, 26 Aug 2, 9, 16, 23

## Craft Day/Morning Tea (10:30-12:00pm)

Macarthur-Highlands Micah House	Mar 15 Oct 25
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## Catechist Retreat (10:00am-2:00pm)

Illawarra-Shoalhaven	Sep 13
Macarthur-Highlands	Sep 17

## Annual Catechist Mass (10:30am)

St Francis Xavier Cathedral	Nov 13
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\*Dates are correct at time of printing

*Please note:* This calendar was correct at the time of printing. Please ensure that you contact Cindy Oliver when booking to confirm any changes to dates and availability of courses and events due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some events have been rescheduled or changed to online only in response to the current situation we are in. Thank you for your understanding.

# “No one learns to hope *alone*”

POPE FRANCIS



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