

**Archdiocese of
Sydney**

**RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
CURRICULUM**

PRIMARY

Year 3 TO 6

Catholic Education Office, Sydney
38 Renwick Street (PO Box 217), Leichhardt, NSW 2040
Phone: (02) 9569 6111 Fax: (02) 9550 0052
www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au

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This is a printed version of the On-line Religious Education Curriculum of the Archdiocese of Sydney. Frequent additions to support teachers can be viewed at <http://www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au> OR by going to the CEO Sydney public website at <http://www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au> and clicking on 'Religious Education On-line'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE, SYDNEY

<i>Executive Director of Schools:</i>	Br Kelvin Canavan fms
<i>Director of Religious Education and Curriculum:</i>	Mr Seamus O'Grady
<i>Head of Religious Education:</i>	Dr Leonie Crotty rsm
<i>Core Writing Team (3-6):</i>	Sue Moffat, Paul Taouk, Elizabeth Cowley, Beth Riolo, Patricia O'Gorman
Leader & General Editor:	Leonie Crotty
<i>Scripture:</i>	Antoinette Collins
<i>General Editor:</i>	Leonie Crotty
<i>Additional Writing and Assistance:</i>	Carol Carey, John Charadia, Antoinette D'Cruz, Robyn Gallagher, Tosca Galluzzo, Sally Garmon, Elizabeth Hughes, Cathy Langdon, Anne McGuire, Anthony Steel, Patricia Thomas, Robert Tobias,
<i>Layout & Design:</i>	Julie-Ann Edser, Sally McDowell
<i>Website Design:</i>	Breisi Brito

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4 December, 2003.

Dear Teachers, Parents and Priests of the Archdiocese of Sydney

Jesus Christ is the great model in the teaching of our faith. His example has been an inspiration to the faithful over two thousand years. The mission to continue Jesus' message has been entrusted to us in various ways. It is a calling and a privilege that we cannot treat lightly.

This Religious Education Curriculum brings together the essential components of knowledge, understanding, appreciation and celebration of our rich tradition. It provides the opportunities and the skills for young people to meet the challenge of living the Catholic faith in today's world. The teachers are given a structured support acknowledging that the teaching of religion in our schools is a very special part of the Church's mission. This curriculum is intended to complement the work of the parents and the parish in assisting with the life-long process of the religious education of the individual.

The development of this curriculum has been based on the established and well-received foundational curricula *Celebrating Our Journey* (K-6) and *Faithful to God: Faithful to People* (7-12) developed in the 1990's by the Catholic Education Office, Sydney. It has incorporated a New South Wales edition of the texts, *To Know, Worship and Love*, collaboratively developed with the Archdiocese of Melbourne as the major resource for each year level from years 3-10. These texts will bring to students' homes the focus of the unit being developed within the classroom and provide opportunities for discussion with their parents.

For many reasons the teaching of religion has become more difficult through the past decades. Despite this, the level of commitment from teachers in the classroom, parents in the support of the Religious Education program and from priests, and the Catholic Education Offices, has been inspirational.

I want to thank the many people who have given enormous energy, devotion and skill to the development of these texts. Staff of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney, and especially Sr Leonie Crotty (Head of Religious Education) with advisory assistance from the Dioceses of Wollongong, Armidale and Lismore have produced a remarkable set of documents for use in our schools. My thanks also to the Catholic Institute of Sydney, and the Director of the Catholic Adult Education Centre for their theological readings of the material.

I now authorize and direct that the redeveloped Religious Education Curriculum (December 2003) and the student texts, *To Know, Worship and Love* are to be used in all Catholic school classes of the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Yours in Christ

+ George Cardinal Pell
Archbishop of Sydney

RELIGIOUS FORMATION OF OUR STUDENTS 2003 – 2007

A commitment was made at the Archdiocesan Principals' Meeting on 4 April 2003, in the presence of Archbishop Pell, to address over the coming years, the following goals:

- ◆ to encourage students to base their lives on the teaching and example of Christ
- ◆ to enhance students' understanding and reading of Scriptures
- ◆ to promote the value of students spending regular time in personal prayer and reflection
- ◆ to strengthen students' awareness of how religion helps to answer real questions about the meaning of life
- ◆ to strengthen students' relationship with and belief in Christ as a real person in their daily lives
- ◆ to nurture students' conviction that God always forgives them and lead them to value and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation more frequently
- ◆ to strengthen students' knowledge and belief that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man
- ◆ to enrich students' attitudes to Religious Education
- ◆ to nurture in students a positive attitude to reflection and the value of Retreats.

(This commitment is a response to the longitudinal research Data (Flynn 1972-2000) as reported in 'Catholic Schools 2000')

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – A PARTNERSHIP

Religious Education participates in the Church's mission of evangelisation, to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ. **Evangelisation** belongs to the whole Church. By word and witness it introduces, or re-introduces to people the saving power of Jesus' call to conversion and relationship with God.

Religious Education also participates in the Church's mission of catechesis, to hand on and share faith within the community of believers. The pre-eminent place of catechesis is the parish where the individual is sacramentally initiated and joins the community in worship and service. Religious Education and catechesis are distinct activities that complement each other.

Religious Education presents in a systematic and convincing way the teachings of the Gospel, the nature of Christianity and ways Christians live their lives. As an educational endeavour it reflects "the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines" (*General Directory for Catechesis*, n73).

Religious Education is a lifelong process. Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children and the family is generally the first place where children come to Christian faith. Religious Education in the school years is therefore a partnership of home, parish and school. All those involved in Catholic Education are partners in faith, hope and love.

THE JOURNEY TO EMMAUS

The Emmaus story (Luke 24:13-35) is central to the Religious Education Curriculum. It is also an inspiration for lifelong Religious Education. In the story four movements can be discerned. These movements are part of a dynamic process, which assists students to make sense of their experience in the light of revelation.

Now that very same day, two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but their eyes were prevented from recognising him. He said to them, 'What are all these things that you are discussing as you walk along?' They stopped, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' He asked, 'What things?' They answered, 'All about Jesus of Nazareth, who showed himself a prophet powerful in action and speech before God and the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have now gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us; they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they could not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe all that the prophets have said! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into his glory? Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them saying, 'It is nearly evening, and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

(Luke 24:13-35)

The Emmaus Story Opened

making sense

The disciples on the road, reflecting on their experience

gaining access

The meaning that Jesus brings to their experience by walking with them, listening to their experience, then searching the Scriptures and teachings of their tradition with them

celebrating

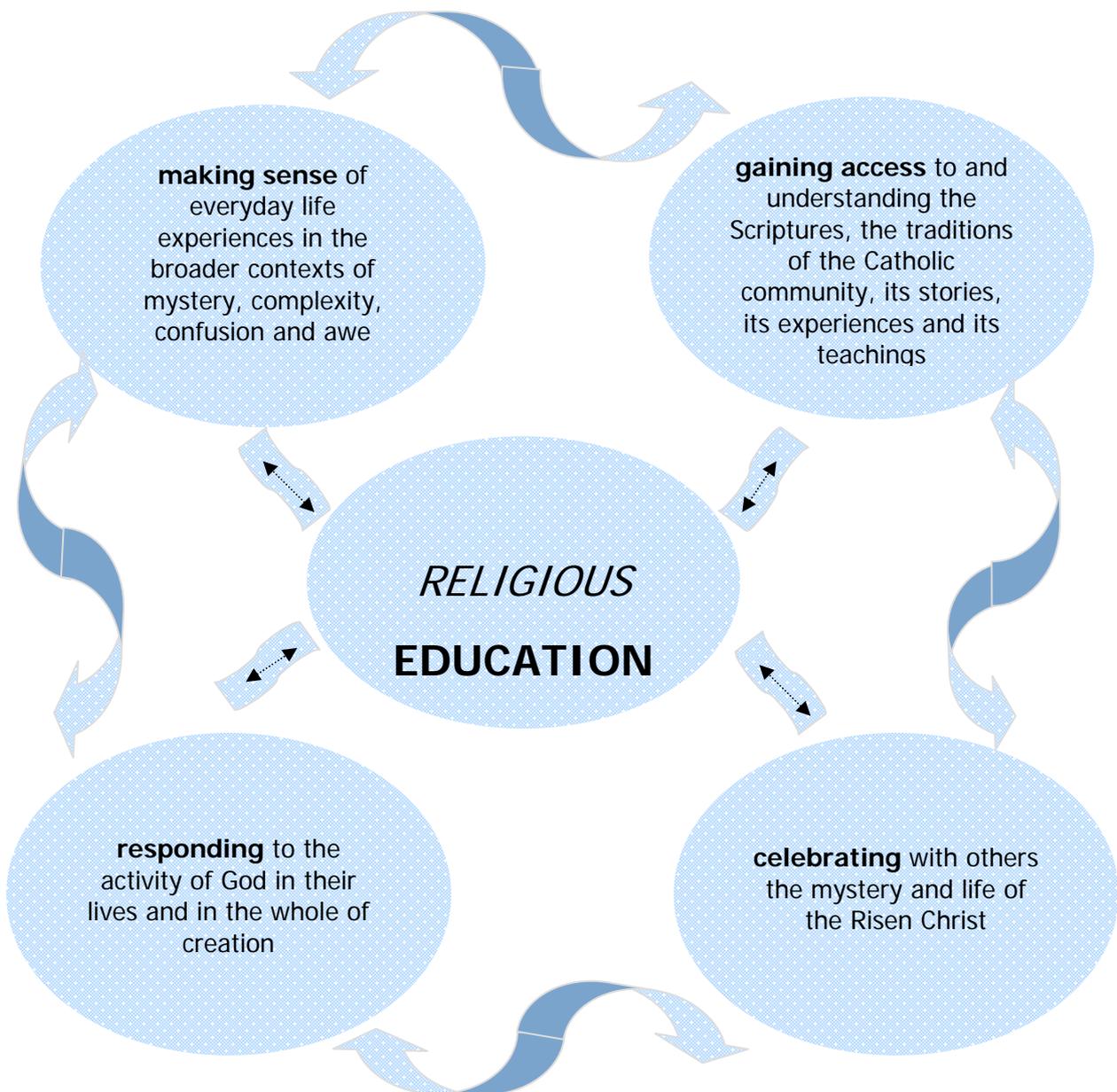
The recognition and experience of the Risen Christ in the moment of celebration – the breaking of bread

responding

They set out and returned to proclaim the Risen Christ

THE EMMAUS STORY

In the Emmaus Story, each of its four movements are inter-connected and can find expression in any of the elements of Religious Education in the school. The Religious Education Curriculum does not present the four movements of the 'Emmaus' understanding of Religious Education as a sequential lock-step process. Each movement enriches every other movement, as the accompanying diagram illustrates.



THE SYLLABUS

In the Religious Education Curriculum, the syllabus and support material have been presented together in units of work to assist teachers with planning and implementation. The following sections constitute the syllabus:

- ◆ Aims – Primary Religious Education
- ◆ Objectives
- ◆ Syllabus Outcomes
- ◆ Classroom Outcomes
- ◆ Unit Content including identified Scripture and Doctrine

These sections form the basis of teaching and learning in Religious Education.

INDICATIVE TIME

The indicative time necessary for students to demonstrate achievement of the Religious Education outcomes in stages 2 and 3 is on average 3 hours per week. This is necessary to maintain the integrity of Religious Education, especially when planning the integration of Religious Education with other Key Learning Areas.

The duration of each unit of work may vary. On average, duration is approximately 5 weeks, with 2 units being covered per term. Some units will need more or less time to be completed effectively. This decision will be made at the local school level.

The religious dimension of the Catholic school includes the Religious Education curriculum, the liturgical, sacramental and prayer life of the school and the opportunity to engage in activities that build Christian community and reach out to those in need. These belong to the life of the whole school. All Key Learning Areas, including Religious Education, should share time for these elements proportionately.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering and interpreting information about the ongoing development of the student in relation to the values and attitudes, knowledge and skills identified in the Religious Education curriculum. Assessment of student progress is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment enables the teacher to identify student needs, and make informed decisions in the light of student learning, about individuals, groups, curriculum policy and procedures.

In the teaching of Religious Education in a Catholic school the students are engaged on two dimensions. Religious Education has a body of knowledge students need to know and skills, values and attitudes to assist them process and use this knowledge. There is also a faith dimension. The curriculum attempts to impart the faith of the Church community and develop the faith of the student. The student's religious knowledge, skills, values and attitudes can be assessed. Naturally, the faith of the student is not assessed.

Assessment in Religious Education:

- ◆ affirms the student and records achievement of learning outcomes.
- ◆ provides regular feedback to the student and encourages further learning.
- ◆ helps teachers adapt and modify their teaching to the needs of the learner.
- ◆ influences the nature and purpose of programming as it identifies the strengths and areas for development of students.
- ◆ provides essential data for teachers in reporting learning progress to students and parents.
- ◆ can take place where Religious Education integrates with other Key Learning Areas.
- ◆ utilises a variety of assessment and record keeping procedures that reflect best practice.

AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Religious Education Curriculum

**through the
seasons of the
Liturgical Year,
aims to assist the students to**

**reflect upon
make sense of
celebrate
live more deeply**

**the mystery of Christ as revealed
in each person
and in relationship with
others,
the Church, and
Creation**

OBJECTIVES

The Religious Education Curriculum will provide appropriate teaching and learning opportunities for the students to develop:

- ♦ openness to the presence and activity of God
- ♦ a sense of wonder, joy and delight in responding to the mystery of God
- ♦ knowledge and understanding of the traditions, beliefs, Scripture and stories of the Church
- ♦ an appreciation of the richness of Scripture and Tradition
- ♦ active participation in the celebrations, prayer and liturgical life of the Church and communities
- ♦ knowledge and understanding of the Church's activity in continuing the mission of Jesus to build the reign of God
- ♦ an awareness of, and commitment to their role in the life of the Church community
- ♦ the ability to research, interpret and analyse the traditions, stories and beliefs of the Catholic Church
- ♦ confidence in communicating and expressing traditions, stories and beliefs of the Catholic Church
- ♦ critical thinking and reflection on life experience and faith.

CONTENT STRANDS

The liturgical year provides the framework for the Religious Education Curriculum. At its heart is the Paschal Mystery – the life, suffering, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. The journey through each liturgical year involves recollection of events in the life of Jesus, celebration of the dynamic presence of Jesus Christ with us now, and the hope-filled expectation of the fullness of the reign of God.

The Religious Education Curriculum is organised under five Content strands:

Liturgical Year

Advent/Christmas

Lent/Holy Week

Easter/Pentecost

L

Teaching and learning in the content strand **Liturgical Year** enables the students to explore the relationship between the Liturgy, the Christian story and their lives. Through the inspiration of the Emmaus Story every student is invited to explore the events, celebrated by the Catholic community in the Liturgical Year and especially during the time of Advent/ Christmas, Lent/Holy Week and Easter/Pentecost.

Self

Teaching and learning in the content strand **Self** enables the students to grow in awareness of themselves as created in the image and likeness of God. In this content strand students are challenged to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Christian response in their lives. Students are invited to reflect upon their uniqueness, decisions and actions. Units in the content strand *Self* also contribute to the content strand *Others*.

S

Others

Teaching and learning in the content strand **Others** enables students to live in right relationship with others. Through the inspiration of the Emmaus Story students are encouraged to celebrate God's presence in their lives and to reach out in love and justice to others. Students are challenged to live the message of the Gospel and to work towards the fullness of the reign of God. Units in the content strand *Others* also contribute to the content strand *Self*.

O

Church

Teaching and learning in the content strand **Church** enables the students to explore and know the traditions, beliefs and stories of the Catholic Church. Through the inspiration of the Emmaus Story, students are invited to a deeper understanding and appreciation of participating in the life and mission of the Church.

C

Creation

CR

Teaching and learning in the content strand **Creation** enables the students to identify and respond to the presence of God in all creation. Students come to know the interconnectedness of all creation. Through the inspiration of the Emmaus Story students are invited to accept their responsibility to care for and live in harmony with all creation.

SYLLABUS OUTCOMES FOR STAGE 2 (YEARS 3 & 4)

Values and Attitudes	Knowledge	Skills
Students will demonstrate that they are:	Students will demonstrate that they can:	Students will demonstrate that they can:

Liturgical Year

L2.1	aware of the relevance of the Scriptures to the Liturgical Year	explain major events in the life of Jesus which are recorded in the Scriptures and celebrated in the liturgical life of the Church	interpret the significant events in the life of Jesus
L2.2	aware of ways in which they can respond to the presence of Jesus in their lives	describe ways people respond to the presence of Jesus	create rituals which celebrate their response to the presence of Jesus

Self

S2.1	able to choose ways in which the gift of self can be strengthened	describe ways in which the gift of self can be developed	identify the need for each to develop and use their gifts
S2.2	attentive to the opportunities in their own lives where the actions and teachings of Jesus might be applied	identify the actions and teachings of Jesus	apply the actions and teachings of Jesus to their own lives

Others

O2.1	able to choose to be guided and challenged by the message of Jesus in their relating to others	describe the actions and teachings of Jesus in his relationships	examine ways in which they can be guided and challenged by the message of Jesus
O2.2	attentive to ways in which they can apply the message of Jesus in reaching out and relating to others	identify the connection between the message of Jesus and their relationships	apply the message of Jesus in making decisions in their relationships with others

Church

C2.1	able to value the lives of love and service led by saints (including Mary and the canonised Saints)	recognise qualities of saints (including Mary and the canonised Saints) who are models of love and service	make connections between the qualities of saints (including Mary and the canonised Saints) and their lives
C2.2	willing to participate in celebrations which	describe ways in which the Catholic Church	investigate ways in which the Catholic

	reflect the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Church	celebrates its beliefs and traditions	Church celebrates beliefs and traditions
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Creation

CR2.1	aware of the importance of living in harmony with the earth community	identify Scriptures which invite people to live in harmony with the earth community	interpret scriptures which invite people to live in harmony with the earth community
CR2.2	willing to care for all creation	describe ways in which all creation can be cared for	identify ways in which they can care for God's creation

SYLLABUS OUTCOMES FOR STAGE 3 (YEARS 5 & 6)

Values and Attitudes Students will demonstrate that they are:	Knowledge Students will demonstrate that they can:	Skills Students will demonstrate that they can:
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Liturgical Year

L3.1	willing to accept their call to respond to God in their lives	identify challenges to respond to the presence of God	examine ways in which the liturgical life of the Church nourishes and challenges them to respond to the presence of God
L3.2	able to value the importance of sign, symbol and ritual within the liturgical life of the Church	describe how the liturgical year uses signs, symbols and rituals to celebrate the presence of God	analyse the use of signs, symbols and rituals in celebrations of the liturgical seasons

Self

S3.1	aware of their responsibility to live according to the values of Jesus	explain the consequences of living according to the values of Jesus	analyse their own actions according to the values of Jesus
S3.2	able to seek out ways in which they can live as Christians	explain the call to live as Christians to bring about the reign of God	investigate ways in which they can live as Christians to bring about the reign of God

Others

O3.1	aware of the Church's mission to reach out to others	explain the Church's mission to reach out to others	identify ways that they, as Church can continue the mission of Jesus
O3.2	able to accept responsibility to reach out in justice to others as Christians	identify ways in which people of God reach out, and fail to reach out to others	evaluate ways in which they can reach out or fail to reach out, in justice to build unity

Church

C3.1	able to value beliefs and traditions which are founded on Scripture and expressed in the story of the Catholic Church	summarise the traditions, beliefs and history which are important to the life of the Catholic Church	research traditions, beliefs and history of the Catholic Church
C3.2	able to value Word, symbol and ritual in the celebrations of Catholic beliefs and traditions	explain how Word, symbol and ritual are used in sacramental and non-sacramental celebrations	prepare celebrations using appropriate Word, symbol and ritual

Creation

<p>CR3.1</p>	<p>able to value symbols from the earth community as expressions of God's presence in all creation</p>	<p>identify how symbols from creation are used in Scriptures to communicate God's presence</p>	<p>use symbols from the earth community to celebrate the presence of God in all creation</p>
<p>CR3.2</p>	<p>able to identify actions of stewardship and carry them out</p>	<p>explain what is required of stewardship</p>	<p>examine practical ways of being stewards in the earth community</p>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM: STORYTELLING IN YEARS 3-6

Key aspects of storytelling in the K-2 pedagogical approach have been incorporated into the 3-6 curriculum to offer primary students the opportunity to continue to engage with the stories of faith through wondering, reflecting and exploring.

The Religious Education Curriculum in K-2 was developed with a particular focus on the ways young children learn. Research on the spirituality and faith development of children informed its development.

The K-2 curriculum drew on the research and work of Jerome Berryman¹ in 'Godly Play' and the work of Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi in 'The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd'², both of which were influenced by the work of Maria Montessori in the early 20th century. These approaches are both used with children from age 3 -12

It is expected that the storytelling approach will be used with the story / stories that are included in each Primary unit.

Principles of Storytelling K-6

Religious Education (K-2) is based on the following guiding principles. These principles also apply for students in Years 3-6.

Young children have a natural capacity for curiosity, imagination and wonder

- ◆ The curriculum aims to nurture and engage these natural capacities.

Young children learn best in a safe and predictable environment

- ◆ Questions are open and children's ideas and attempts are accepted.
- ◆ Materials are suited to students' needs and available for their use.
- ◆ Routines are established so the environment is predictable.

Young children learn through story

- ◆ Scripture stories and stories of the tradition are key elements of the curriculum.
- ◆ Open questions, reflection and opportunities for exploration engage students with the story.
- ◆ Children's literature is included in the curriculum.

Young children learn through play

- ◆ Play allows children to explore, imagine and create as a means of learning.
- ◆ Scaffolded 'play' is part of the curriculum.

Young children learn through symbols and rituals

- ◆ Symbols and rituals nurture the child's curiosity, imagination and sense of wonder.
- ◆ The curriculum engages children with the Church's signs, symbols and rituals as a means of learning.

¹ Berryman J, (2003), *The Complete Guide to Godly Play Vol 1-5*, Living the Good News, Denver, Colorado

² Cavalletti, S, Coulter P, Gobbi G, and Montanaro S Q, (1996), *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey*, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago

Young children learn in kinaesthetic and visual ways

- ◆ Concrete materials, visual materials and the creative arts support the learning needs of K-2 students.
- ◆ Children are active participants in their learning.

Religious Education is theocentric

- ◆ It is about God's activity in and with all creation. At the centre of Religious Education is the mystery of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Children are introduced to the mystery of God through both the Old and New Testaments.

'Story' is fundamental in the Christian Tradition

- ◆ Children are introduced to the faith and practices of the Church through stories from both Scripture and Tradition.

The Church's liturgy is part of Religious Education

- ◆ Children are introduced to the signs, symbols and rituals of the liturgical tradition both in lessons and daily routine.
- ◆ Children become familiar with short responses and parts of liturgy by experiencing and using them.

The experience of prayer is integral to Religious Education

- ◆ Children learn to pray through the experience of prayer.
- ◆ Children are introduced to various forms of prayer – including silence, movement, short liturgical responses, some formal prayers of the Tradition, spontaneous, verbal and non-verbal prayer.

Doctrine underpins Religious Education

- ◆ Children at this early stage are introduced to the source of doctrine in Scripture and Tradition.
- ◆ K-2 Religious Education lays the foundations for exploring the beliefs and practices of the Church more explicitly in later years.

The Emmaus Story inspires Religious Education

- ◆ Children begin to:
 - reflect on and find meaning in life-experience in light of Scripture and Tradition
 - celebrate the mystery of the Risen Christ
 - respond to the activity of God in their lives and in all creation.

Key sources for the development of the Religious Education Curriculum are Scripture, Church documents including the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the curriculum document *Celebrating Our Journey*³ and the student resource *To Know, Worship and Love*⁴.

The curriculum is influenced by the approach to Religious Education developed in both *The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*⁵ and *Godly Play*⁶.

³ CEO, Sydney, (1991), *Celebrating Our Journey*

⁴ Archdiocese of Melbourne, (2000), *To Know, Worship and Love*, James Gould House Publications, Melbourne, Vic

⁵ Cavalletti, S et al, (1992), *The Religious Potential of the Child* Liturgy Training Publication, Chicago

⁶ Berryman J, (1991), *Godly Play, A Way of Religious Education*, Harper, San Francisco

Story and Wondering in the RE Curriculum 3-6

STORY

Story is a key part of our faith tradition. The activity of God in the lives of people and in all creation as recorded in the Scriptures has been handed on to us, firstly through the oral tradition and then in the written Word. In every age people have engaged with these stories and sought to relate their own story to the larger story of faith. In this way people are helped to know God in their lives.

Children particularly are able to learn and make meaning through story and symbol. Stories carry deep insights which children are often unable to verbalise. However, these insights help them to make sense of their experience of the world and relate to the mystery of God. Stories help children, as well as adults to explore key issues around the meaning and purpose of life and death.

Teachers assist students to learn about the faith by helping them to engage with Scripture, liturgy and Christian life and service. Story and liturgical symbols, words and actions have their own power, which engage the whole person, not only the intellect.

The style of biblical stories is particularly suited to primary students because it uses only actions and descriptions essential to the story. This engages the imagination and provides opportunity to experience the wonder, mystery and power of these stories.

Stories in the Religious Education curriculum are of three main types or genres:

Narrative Stories – about people’s experience of God’s activity in their lives both individually and communally as told in the Old and New Testaments and in the Church’s Tradition. This includes stories of the liturgical seasons which focus on the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Parables – the special teachings of Jesus invite creativity and challenge the listener to understand situations in a new way. Parables cannot simply be de-coded or explained. They “tease the mind into active thought.”⁷

Liturgical signs, symbols and actions - Children learn the language of liturgy by experiencing it. As Jerome Berryman explains, “The liturgical lessons are not the liturgy itself. Children learn the language of liturgy and have an appropriate place to experience it, so they can enter more fully into the liturgical experience of the Church”.⁸

Silence is an essential part of the ‘language’ of religion. Stillness and silence foster reflection and the capacity to listen to God. “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10). Teachers aim help children value silence as a means of listening and responding to God.

KEY ELEMENTS OF STORYTELLING

The key elements of storytelling adopted in this curriculum are:

- (1) Telling the Story
- (2) Wondering
- (3) Exploring
- (4) Prayer

These key elements assist students to engage with the story and with each other. In using the stories of Scripture and the Tradition, including the symbols and rituals of the liturgy, teachers help children bring together faith and life experience. They also teach the importance of the sacred deposit of faith, which the Church seeks to hand on.

⁷ Dodd, C H, (1961), *The Parables of the Kingdom*, William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, Glasgow, p16

⁸ Berryman J, (2002), *The Complete Guide to Godly Play Vol 1, Living the Good News*, Denver, Colorado, p26
Archdiocese of Sydney

1. TELLING THE STORY

There are many ways and styles of telling stories. In this curriculum the main style utilised for initially telling the story is a reflective one using concrete or visual material. This style addresses the learning needs of young students and is suited to biblical stories, which tell only essential actions and descriptions. It draws on the work of Jerome Berryman⁹ in 'Godly Play' and the work of Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi in 'The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd'¹⁰. Professional development will assist teachers to tell stories.

- ◆ The ideal seating arrangement is a semi-circle with children on the same level as the storyteller. A circle encourages interaction and signifies the equality of each person. The floor is suggested but if this is not possible, teachers arrange the seating such that storyteller and children are on the same level. The teacher suggests a comfortable posture for children.
- ◆ The source of the story is most often Scripture. Scripts with suggested actions are included in the scripts in the curriculum. Scripture references are given.
- ◆ The story is best communicated by *telling* rather than reading.
- ◆ It should be told, not necessarily 'by heart' but 'from the heart'.
- ◆ It is accompanied by the use of visual and/or concrete materials.
- ◆ The teacher looks at the materials as s/he tells the story, which indicates that the focus is the story, not the storyteller.
- ◆ At the initial telling, children engage by watching and listening. After the story, children are given time to use the materials.
- ◆ The story is told staying close to the biblical words and without embellishment.
- ◆ The story itself helps children to understand unfamiliar terms, which can be discussed later. It is not necessary to explain and define terms before or during the story.
- ◆ A routine for preparing students for the story needs to be set in place. Children like repetition and ritual. Routine helps them to move into a different 'space' and settle.
- ◆ Some suggestions for getting ready to hear the story:
 - A quietening exercise – see 'Listening', 'Awareness', or 'Breathing' exercises in *To God on a Magic Carpet*¹¹ or the simple exercise used by Jane Reehorst, in *Guided Meditations for Children*¹² to help the children prepare for the guided meditations.
 - Music – a piece of reflective music which signals to children that they are moving to a story
 - Lighting a candle
 - Singing a hymn or song.
- ◆ Using a special greeting (from the liturgy) can signal movement into a special or sacred time and can also assist students to become familiar with key liturgical responses, e.g. students could be invited into prayers of thanks with "*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,*" to which students could respond, "*It is right and just.*"

If the story is from Scripture, other than the Gospels, the teacher could say "*The Word of the Lord*" to which students would respond, "*Thanks be to God.*" If the story is from the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke or John) the teacher could say, "*The Gospel of the Lord,*" to which the students would respond, "*Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Facilitating 'Telling the Story'

The teacher prepares to 'tell the story' by:

- reading the Scripture passage and the Scripture: Background Information.
- becoming familiar with the story script before telling it.
- practising telling the story using the concrete materials before presenting it to the students.

⁹ Berryman J, (2003), *The Complete Guide to Godly Play Vol 1-5, Living the Good News*, Denver, Colorado

¹⁰ Cavalletti, S, Coulter P, Gobbi G, and Montanaro S Q, (1996), *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey*, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago

¹¹ Macdonald Anthony Sr, (2004), *To God on a Magic Carpet: Meditating with Children*, Spectrum Publications, Richmond, Australia

¹² Reehorst J, (1986), *Guided Meditations for Children*, Brown-Roa, Iowa USA
Archdiocese of Sydney

2. WONDERING

- ◆ The 'I wonder' statements engage students with the story, invite reflection and elicit the students' ideas and thoughts.
- ◆ Wondering together teaches the art of dialogue, of listening to others, accepting and learning from others' ideas and contributions. It lays the foundation for relating to others in community.
- ◆ Wondering together allows for learning that comes from within each person. It is important to trust the presence of the Holy Spirit in this process.
- ◆ Suggested 'wondering' statements are provided with the story script and in the unit. Teachers select from these and adapt where necessary to suit the needs of their students. Teachers may create their own or follow the student's ideas. Students also may initiate wondering.
- ◆ There are no 'wrong' answers to wondering statements. All responses are accepted. They are not comprehension questions.
- ◆ Wondering statements are not suited to factual information, e.g. "I wonder how many apostles there were" or key belief statements, e.g. "I wonder if Jesus really rose from the dead."
- ◆ Each person's response is influenced by their particular life experiences.
- ◆ Wondering statements are only the beginning of 'wondering'. This is continued as students expand their wondering in the exploring activities.
- ◆ Open wondering statements signal to the students the on-going and life-long process of engaging with the mystery of God.

Facilitating 'Wondering'

The teacher:

- engages the students in wondering by looking up from the story materials and making eye contact with students. The focus is now the community of children.
- listens to understand each student's ideas.
- receives and accepts each response.
- reflects back what is said without additional comment.
- questions only to understand not to 'correct' a student's response or steer them in a different direction.
- trusts the silence. Young students often wonder or reflect silently. It is not necessary to force responses.
- does not provide answers but encourages the student to develop and articulate ideas.
- reminds the student who wishes to talk about unrelated topics, that there will be another time for this.

3. EXPLORING

This element provides the opportunity for individual/small group exploration of the story. It gives students time to focus on and explore the story or aspects of it which have significance for them. For this reason students choose the type of work they do and their focus on the story. It is time to 'stay with' the story or some particular aspect of it.

- ◆ Students choose the work they do and the part of the story on which to focus.
- ◆ Some students find it easier to explore and express their feelings and ideas through art and drama.
- ◆ The Creative Arts provide 'tools' through which the student can explore, imagine and express ideas.
- ◆ Writing, Reading and the use of ICT will also provide opportunities for exploring and reflecting.
- ◆ The concrete materials used for the story are made available for students' use. Working with the story is a means of entering it more deeply.
- ◆ Student will incorporate their own experience and imagination while engaging with the story. The student's re-telling of a story will reflect their experience and understanding.
- ◆ The story can be re-told in different ways.
- ◆ The exploring is not set as an assessment task.

- ◆ Children’s literature identified in the Religious Education curriculum is made available for students’ use. It supports the stories of Scripture, liturgy and the Tradition. See each unit, and also RE Online / Religious Education /Primary / e.g. Year 3 / Resources / Unit Resources)
- ◆ Writing is a powerful means of responding to and exploring the story. Opportunities to integrate Writing are provided.

Facilitating ‘Exploring’

The teacher:

- demonstrates the use of visual arts, writing and ICT materials and techniques, through which the students can explore and express their ideas.
- allows for choice, openness, and negotiation in what the students do: these are not ‘craft activities’ with a set finished product.
- ensures students have sufficient time for their work. By arranging for storage of incomplete work students can continue in further sessions if they need. Often much is invested in the student’s work.
- responds by engaging in dialogue with the student, asking open questions, describing what they see but not interpreting it.
- provides for students to share their ‘work’ only if they wish. The ‘work’ itself is often an expression of the child’s experience or feelings.
- provides opportunities for exploring which are open-ended and cater for a variety of learning styles.

4. PRAYER

- ◆ Children learn to pray through the experience of prayer. Teachers help students to pray by praying with them and providing regular opportunities for prayer.
- ◆ Routine times for prayer are important. Regular times of prayer need to be established, e.g. morning prayer, prayer before and after lunch, prayer at the end of the day.
- ◆ Within the Religious Education teaching there are opportunities to invite students to pray. These prayers offer students the opportunity to pray the prayers of their hearts and to experience silence, stillness, movement, ritual and symbol.
- ◆ Teachers can establish simple rituals for bringing students together, perhaps sitting in a circle, lighting a candle and/or singing a familiar hymn or refrain. Introducing the prayer time with words from the liturgy, e.g. “Let us pray” or “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God” will help build familiarity with these words for when they are used in the Church.
- ◆ Frequent opportunities for spontaneous prayer should be provided. This type of prayer needs to be set in the context of simple gathering rituals mentioned above.
- ◆ The Religious Education curriculum introduces Scripture stories and psalms along with liturgical ritual, symbol and action. ‘Telling the story’ is one way of proclaiming the Word of God. It provides a language for prayer. The form and words from Scripture and the liturgy can be used in prayer, e.g. lines from psalms, “The Lord is my Shepherd”.
- ◆ The Word should also be proclaimed from the Bible. Reading a short passage of the story from the Bible provides a focus for prayer.
- ◆ Students learn through movement which is also an important part of liturgical action. Prayer with movement includes simple hand or body actions and praying with hands raised or joined. Simple processions provide movement, even when not all are involved.
- ◆ Formal Prayers are best taught by praying them regularly. Suggested formal prayers are to be found in ‘Our Prayers’ section of *To Know Worship and Love* student books.
- ◆ Teachers encourage students to share their prayers at home with the family, as well as suggesting that the *Reflecting Together at Home* activity is done by students with their parent/s or guardian.

CONCRETE MATERIALS

Children particularly learn through the senses as well as through the mind. Learning is enhanced through movement, sight, sound, smell, feeling and touch. Concrete materials such as figures and visuals support the telling and re-telling of the biblical stories and the child's exploration work. Objects, symbols, gestures, movements and words of the liturgy support the telling of stories about the liturgy. Concrete and visual materials help the children to picture the story in their minds.

The Religious Education curriculum suggests using the following concrete and visual materials:

To Know, Worship and Love Student Books – Years 3, 4, 5, 6

- These student books support the Religious Education curriculum 3-6

3D Materials

- small wooden figures for most stories
- objects, e.g. bread, oil, water, plate, doll for liturgical stories
- objects, e.g. chain, map, for some stories

2D Materials

- laminated 2D figures for parables

Visual Images

- laminated A4 illustrations

Using Concrete Materials

- ◆ The concrete materials should be simple and sturdy. Only key figures and objects need to be represented in the story. Materials that are too detailed and elaborate distract from the story and may not engage the imagination.
- ◆ Materials for each story should be stored in containers e.g. boxes or baskets. The materials should be stored in the order in which they appear in the story. This assists the teacher's re-tell.
- ◆ The movement of figures should be simple and include only those essential to the story.
- ◆ The teacher focuses the children on the story by looking at the materials as the story unfolds. The teacher does not engage with the participants during the presentation of the story.
- ◆ During the story, movement of materials is done at a slow and reflective pace. The movement of materials is often done after the words are spoken and silences have been created. These silences assist the imagination as students observe what is happening. It allows time for 'feeling' the story. While children have a real capacity to enjoy silence, they may need to get used to it in the school context.
- ◆ The materials used for the story need to be accessible to the students for their use after the story. They should remain in the room in a designated place.
- ◆ The teacher, by collecting the materials, telling the story with them and packing them away demonstrates reverence for the materials as one would demonstrate reverence for the Bible. During the story, figures and objects should be handled carefully to model respect for both the people and mysteries they represent.
- ◆ Symbols used in liturgy, e.g. water, bread, oil, Bible, candle, cup should be used where possible in stories about liturgy. Pictures can be used to support the use of objects but should not replace them.

PLAY

- ◆ Play is a natural way children explore their world and experiences.
- ◆ Through play and fantasy children investigate, create, role play, critique and construct meaning.
- ◆ Play supports the development of creativity, language, social skills and problem solving. In imaginative play children are able to step out of the limits of their real situation to explore other worlds and experiences.
- ◆ In this Religious Education curriculum children are introduced to the Catholic faith through story, symbol and action. They are invited to play thorough engagement with the story, symbols and actions, through wondering and exploring.
- ◆ A secure, safe and organised environment is necessary to support and encourage real engagement, exploration and creativity.

RELATIONSHIPS AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE

"Contemporary people listen more openly to witnesses than teachers, or if they listen to teachers it is because they are witnesses" (Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41).

In Kindergarten to Year 6, Christian values are learned not only by what is taught but by the climate created in the classroom. Our students learn also by the attitudes and behaviour that is modelled and encouraged by the teacher in relating with the students and others in the community. It is a truism that values are caught and not taught.

God's covenant relationship is a central theme of the Bible and the core of the Christian message. In this covenant relationship God first loved us and called us into relationship with God and with one another. In relationship, young people learn of God's love for them.

At the heart of Catholic teaching is the belief that each person is made in the image and likeness of God. It is in relationship that young people come to know and value themselves and others as created in God's image.

The quality of relationships in the classroom and in the school depends to a large extent on the teacher. Teachers give witness to and teach Christian values and the Christian way of relating by:

- respecting each student
- valuing each student's contribution
- listening to each student
- respecting the work of each student
- keeping comments open
- giving students time to explore what is important to them
- providing a secure and organised environment
- handling disruptive behaviour in constructive and non-judgmental ways.

Each young person comes to the classroom as a unique individual already loved and cared for in their family unit. The school supports the family by reflecting in practice the values of Christian community. This is the privilege and the challenge of those whose vocation it is to teach.

HOW TO USE A UNIT

Section	Description	Implications
Unit Title	The unit identifies the intended year group and provides the teacher with the key focus of the unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers need to become familiar with the overview prior to planning the unit for their class.
Syllabus Outcomes	The broad syllabus outcome includes values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The broad syllabus outcome/s that appear with the unit direct the more specific classroom outcomes. ◆ Teachers will need to ascertain the students' readiness to achieve these outcomes. ◆ There is an assumption that these outcomes will be achieved at the end of a two-year cycle. ◆ Assessment identifies student progress towards the achievement of these outcomes. In a more specific way this is addressed through the classroom outcomes. ◆ Units may address outcomes of more than one strand.
Classroom Outcomes	The specific values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding and skills that students address in the particular unit. Teachers need to ensure that through the use of purposeful teaching/learning activities, clear links are made to the classroom outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The classroom outcomes address the broad syllabus outcome/s within the unit. ◆ Teachers ascertain the students' readiness to achieve these outcomes. ◆ Teachers ensure that these outcomes are addressed in the unit through purposeful teaching/ learning activities. ◆ Assessment is linked to the classroom outcomes. ◆ Those providing leadership in RE programming ensure that the classroom outcomes are addressed and assessed.
Scripture	Specific Scripture texts have been identified to ensure that students are exposed to a breadth and depth of Scripture. Core Scripture is identified and underpins the focus of the unit. Related Scripture is also listed and supports understanding of the unit outlines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The core Scripture must be taught and explored. ◆ Students need to have a clear understanding of each Scripture passage.
Doctrine	Key statements of Catholic belief that are written in language accessible to students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Students gain an understanding of the main beliefs of the Catholic Church, relevant to the focus of each unit. ◆ The role of the teacher is to ensure that the teaching/learning strategies enable students to become familiar with each of the doctrinal statements.
Scripture: Background Information	This section helps to 'break open' the Scripture. The commentaries explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers read and reflect on the background information of the Scripture prior to beginning the unit. ◆ This understanding will assist teachers to address

	the contextual, cultural, historical, political or religious background of particular texts.	the Scripture in the unit with students.
The Church's Teaching and Lived Tradition	This section presents an explanation of aspects of the Church's Tradition that are presented in the student books <i>To Know Worship and Love</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Adult background knowledge of the Catholic Tradition can only enhance the way teachers address the unit with students.
Celebration: Prayer and Liturgy	This section presents suggestions for celebrating in prayer and liturgy, related to the focus of the unit. Most of the suggestions are included as teaching/learning activities in the Unit Content sections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Most of the suggestions in this section are part of the teaching/learning strategies in the Unit Content sections. ◆ Teachers are encouraged to innovate and expand on the suggested ideas presented. ◆ Celebration is an integral part of teaching the unit.
Suggested Assessment	An interim Assessment Statement has replaced the former identification of specific assessment strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers identify the prior knowledge of students. ◆ Teachers ensure that assessment covers all elements of the classroom outcomes. ◆ Assessment allows for a range of responses in a variety of ways. ◆ Individual performance should be observable. ◆ Assessment occurs throughout the unit.
Resources	A range of texts, websites, hymns and music are referred to throughout the unit to support teaching the unit content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers identify from the list the resources that are available, and those that are to be purchased for their school. ◆ Inclusion of alternative resources is encouraged. Lists could be shared with regional advisory personnel in order to be updated. ◆ Comprehensive lists of resources will be available on RE Online.
Unit Content	Numbered sections identify the key content for each unit. These are the focus for teaching/learning strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ These identify what it is intended that children will learn in the implementation of the unit. ◆ Teachers address the content to explore with the students.
Unit Content: Background Information	Basic information provided for teachers, which names the relevant essential background knowledge. It is specific to the unit content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers find direction and background information necessary to implement the Unit Content
Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies	A list of suggested strategies. They are generic and need to be modified to address specific class and student needs. Note: It is intended that the storytelling approach strategies of 'Telling the Story',	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers ascertain the readiness of their students through observable indicators, eg a pre-test. ◆ Teachers plan the unit in light of the needs of their students. Teachers are encouraged to innovate, modify and expand upon the strategies as required ◆ Teachers design their unit to ensure students develop skills and knowledge sequentially and maintain the integrity of the unit (refer to unit content).

	<p>'Wondering' and 'Exploring, be used in the units in which they occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers ensure that strategies used provide a balance of Life Experience, Scripture, Doctrine, Prayer, Celebration and Lived Response (cf. The Emmaus Inspiration). ◆ RECs ensure that the integrity of the unit is presented in the Teaching/Learning strategies.
<p>Resource Sheets (Work sheets)</p>	<p>A suggested proforma that may support a particular teaching/learning strategy. (To be adapted.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers are provided with some possible activities for the class. ◆ May be modified to suit student needs.

CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY - YEARS 3 – 6 REVISED UNITS

Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
<p>3.1</p> <p><i>Created by God: A Gift to Share</i></p>	<p>4.1</p> <p><i>Living the Law of Love</i></p>	<p>5.1</p> <p><i>The Reign of God: Reaching Out in Justice</i></p>	<p>6.1</p> <p><i>The Reign of God: Breaking Down the Barriers</i></p>
<p>3.2</p> <p><i>Lent: A Time for Reaching Out in Love</i></p>	<p>4.2</p> <p><i>Lent: A Time to Make Choices</i></p>	<p>5.2</p> <p><i>Lent: A Time for Growth</i></p>	<p>6.2</p> <p><i>Lent: A Time for Building a Just World</i></p>
<p>3.3</p> <p><i>Easter: A Time to Celebrate the Presence of the Risen Lord</i></p>	<p>4.3</p> <p><i>Easter: A Time to Live the Good News</i></p>	<p>5.3</p> <p><i>Easter: A Time for Hope & New Life</i></p>	<p>6.3</p> <p><i>Easter: A Time to Celebrate Hope in the Risen Lord</i></p>
<p>3.4</p> <p><i>Pentecost: The Holy Spirit gives us Strength</i></p>	<p>4.4</p> <p><i>Pentecost: The Holy Spirit gives us Courage</i></p>	<p>5.4</p> <p><i>Pentecost: Celebrating the Presence of the Holy Spirit</i></p>	<p>6.4</p> <p>Confirmation: Celebrating the Gift of the Holy Spirit</p>
<p>3.5</p> <p><i>Called to be Saints</i></p>	<p>4.5</p> <p><i>Mary, Mother of God: First Among the Saints</i></p>	<p>5.5</p> <p><i>The Catholic Church in Australia has a Special Story</i></p>	<p>6.5</p> <p>Mary: Faithful Disciple</p>
<p>3.6</p> <p><i>Relationships: Sharing God's Love</i></p>	<p>4.6</p> <p><i>One with God's Creation</i></p>	<p>5.6</p> <p><i>Creation – A Change of Heart</i></p>	<p>6.6</p> <p><i>The Bible: Our Sacred Story</i></p>
<p>3.7</p> <p><i>Eucharist: Jesus is With Us</i></p>	<p>4.7</p> <p><i>Prayer: Being with God</i></p>	<p>5.7</p> <p>We Celebrate the Sacraments Part 1</p>	<p>6.7</p> <p><i>We Celebrate the Sacraments Part 2</i></p>
<p>3.8</p> <p><i>Advent to Christmas: A Time for Responding in Love</i></p>	<p>4.8</p> <p><i>Advent to Christmas: A Time for Journeying in Hope</i></p>	<p>5.8</p> <p><i>Advent to Christmas: A Time to Prepare and Celebrate</i></p>	<p>6.8</p> <p><i>Advent to Christmas: A Time for Longing and Fulfilment</i></p>