CCD Handbook

*Among the laity who become evangelisers, **catechists** have a place of honour*
(Pope St John Paul II, Redemptoris missio)
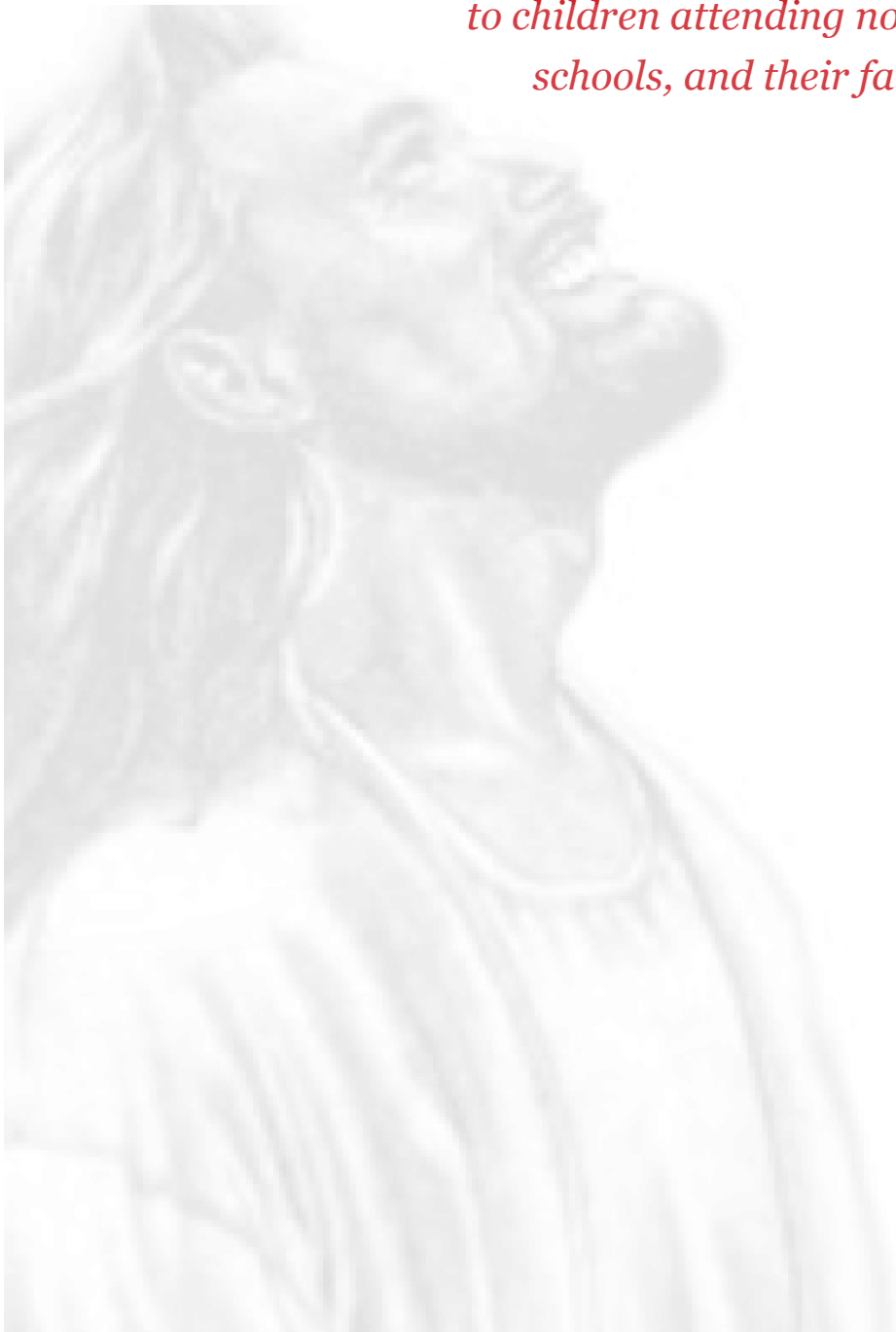
Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
www.amazingcatechists.org.au

Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD)
Mission Statement

Guided by the Holy Spirit,
the Confraternity for Christian Doctrine of the
Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and
Goulburn, is committed to
bringing the Good News of
Jesus
to children attending non-Catholic
schools, and their families.

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Archbishop's Welcome

"Catechesis is a pillar of faith education and we need good catechists... teaching the faith is something beautiful! It is perhaps the best legacy we can pass on: the faith! To educate in the faith, to make it grow."
(Pope Francis, www.vatican.va)

As the primary faith educators of their children, parents will be first to heed these words of Pope Francis. To bring Jesus to our youth. His words also present a challenge to parish communities and to the Archdiocese as a whole, especially at a time when approximately 50% of our children are in schools other than Catholic. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) has long accepted this challenge on behalf of Catholic children not attending Catholic schools. In schools and parish Schools of Religion, thousands of children and their families in the Archdiocese, have heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and been nurtured in faith within our Catholic Church. This essential work is carried out chiefly by volunteers, who are well supported by pastors and parish communities. To these volunteers the whole Church owes a great debt. The Archdiocesan CCD team also makes an invaluable contribution, and I thank them here.

Catechists come in all shapes, sizes, ages and from all walks of life, reflecting the rich tapestry of our Church. Many Catechists start as a classroom helper and from there are eager to take on a class themselves. Once they have been introduced to the resources and given some basic training, Catechists are most likely to say, "I have so much I want to share with the students, but not enough time!" If you put your hand up to be involved, you'll be really well supported with training and resources. It is a real truism, that in the process of teaching, the teacher also learns and grows.

The work of catechists, whether as Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers in schools or working in Parish Schools of Religion and Sacramental Programs, is an essential part of the evangelizing mission of the Church. You will be 'missionary Disciples', working with the 220 Catechists who teach 2,500 children in government schools across the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

This Handbook provides important information and guidance for the work of faith education of our young people in Government and other non-Catholic schools. I commend it to all involved in this work, and I trust that it will be a great help in passing on to the young the treasures of the Catholic faith. That is their right, and it is therefore our duty.

+ Christopher Prowse
Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn

History Of The Confraternity for Christian Doctrine (CCD)

The Confraternity for Christian Doctrine (CCD) is part of the Educational Mission of the Archdiocese. It was established in the Archdiocese in the early fifties by Archbishop Eris O'Brien in response to a dramatic and unexpected increase in the enrolment of Catholic students in Government State Schools.

The mission of CCD is to provide religious education to Catholic students attending non-Catholic, through the ministry of catechists.

The members of CCD are lay people, priests and religious who volunteer their time and talents To teach religious education to those students either in Government/State Schools (NSW), or in Parish Programs such as the Parish School of Religion (ACT).

The school system in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn has a peculiarity of being aligned with two school systems, namely, the NSW Department of Education and Training, and the ACT Department of Education and Training. One implication of this is that different laws govern the provision of religious education in the two sections of the Archdiocese.

Right of all Catholics to be Educated in Their Faith

The following quotes from Vatican II highlight the fact that each Catholic has the right to be educated in the faith:

... true education is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of their final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share.
(Declaration on Christian Education, Vatican II, p. 727)

... the Church's pastoral solicitude demands ... that the Catholic education of the children be safeguarded with the greatest possible diligence and effectiveness.
(Instruction on Mixed Marriages, Vatican II, p. 475)

John Paul II in Ecclesia Oceania reminds us:

The Church's mission 'to tell the truth of Jesus Christ' in Oceania today summons her to renew her catechesis, instruction and formation in the faith ... Every baptised person, precisely by reason of being baptised, has the right to receive from the Church instruction and education enabling him or her to enter on a truly Christian life ... Basic to all human rights is the freedom of religion, which includes the right to be instructed in the faith.
(Ecclesia in Oceania – The Church in Oceania, John Paul II, pp. 64 – 64, November 2001)

Parents are acknowledged as the prime educators of their children in faith. By choosing Baptism for their children, they make a commitment to bring up their children in the Catholic faith. They have the right to choose the method of education for their child – Government, Independent or Catholic School. Parish Programs i.e. School of Religion and Sacramental Preparation will assist the child's religious formation. The Parish Programs are NOT in competition with Catholic Schools, but in partnership with the whole parish community. Parents can be greatly assisted in the faith education of their children by attending Parish Programs e.g. Parish Based Sacramental Preparation, Sunday Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Spirituality of Catechists

A Catechist is a person who gives her/his time voluntarily to provide Special Religious Education to Catholic students in Government Schools. They are generous, dedicated people who live their faith and share it with others. Catechists should minister according to the Catechist Volunteer Statement and be practising Catholics.

In order to keep up-to-date with current theology and deepen their understanding of their Catholic faith, catechists are encouraged to attend the opportunities provided for training and formation provided by the CCD Team. To grow in their personal spirituality, Weekend Retreats and Reflection Days are offered each year. Through participation in these days, catechists are furthered empowered to nurture the spirituality of the students they minister to.

History of Parish Schools of Religion

The ACT Parish Schools of Religion were formed as a result of the 1974 Policy of Religious Education in Government Schools. The Parish School of Religion is a very important point of contact for many parents who should be supported by the parish community.

Volunteer catechists at the Parish Schools of Religion are required to undertake training through the CCD office to become accredited teachers of religious education. This is an ongoing process to ensure all teachers are up to date with the official Church teaching and are well grounded in the Catholic faith.

Extract from Education Act 2004 (ACT).
For whole Act, go to www.legislation.act.gov.au)

28 Secular education
(1) Education in government schools is to be non-sectarian, secular education.
(2) Secular education in government schools may include the study of different religions as distinct from education in a particular religion.

29 Religious education
(1) If parents of children at a government school ask the principal for their children to receive religious education in a particular religion, the principal must ensure that reasonable time is allowed for their children's religious education in that religion.
(2) The principal must ensure that the educational program continues for students at the school not attending religious education.
(3) Religious education must be authorised by the religious body to which the person providing the instruction belongs.
(4) Students attending a religious education class at a government school must be separated from other students at the school while the class is held.
(5) In this section: *religious education* means education in a particular religion as distinct from the study of different religions.

Role of Parish Catechist Coordinator

The Parish Catechist Coordinator's role is an extension of that of the catechist and is a vital link in the ministry of Christ and the Church. The Coordinator organises the CCD Program to bring the good news of Jesus to the Catholic students attending non-Catholic schools, and to welcome these children and their families into the community of faith. This program is often the child's only contact with the Church. The work is vital, appreciated by the parish and parents, and is a source of grace. The most important qualification for this work is the coordinator's own faith and personality. Anyone who wants to bring students closer to God, who enjoys working with others and who is willing to put in the time, will make a good coordinator.

Coordinators need to maintain regular contact with the Parish Priest, the Parish Pastoral Council and the local Catholic school. In particular they should:
1 at the beginning of each year ensure that all catechists have Identification badges to allow them to teach Religious Education in the Parish School of Religion;
2 discuss the recruitment of catechists with their Parish Priest;
3 ensure new catechists complete:
   • Catechist Registration Form;
   • Code of Conduct and Agreement Form;
   • Relevant State Children's Check;

- arrange suitable rooms for catechists to use for Parish School of Religion;
- arrange for a suitable room for meetings and storage space;
- place notices in the Parish Bulletin to keep parishioners informed and to promote the work of the catechists;
- liaise with the local Catholic School REC (Religious Education Coordinator) and the parish priest regarding the Parish Based Sacramental Preparation; and
- negotiate a realistic CCD Budget with parish authorities to cover:
  - Purchase of authorised Religious Education program, *Jesus Christ our Light & Life, Walking With Jesus, Connect or GodSpace*
  - Development of resource library for catechists to borrow from; and out of pocket expenses of the coordinator and catechists.

It is important that the Coordinator keep close contact with the REC of the local Catholic School and Parish Priest with regard to the Parish Based Sacramental Preparation. Catechists should be informed in good time about all aspects of the sacramental program including the dates of the sacraments, the programs to be used in the parish, the liturgies, meetings with parents and children and notices sent out to parents. It is suggested that letters are to be written on Parish letterhead and co-signed by Parish Priest, RE Coordinator and Parish CCD Coordinator.

A major role of the Coordinator is to build a team of enthusiastic, trained catechists. The coordinators should arrange for recruitment notices in the parish bulletin, but also realise that the best results will come through personal contact. They should discuss potential catechists with the Parish Priest. The catechists should be kept informed of the Certificate III in Education Support, Training Days, and Reflection Days and Weekend Retreats that are provided by the CCD Ministry Team at various times throughout the year.

Coordinators need to ensure that catechists are

teaching from the Archdiocesan authorised RE programs and should be ready to offer guidance and encouragement. If necessary, the Parish Coordinators should feel free to talk about individual catechists with the Archdiocesan CCD Coordinator whose support is always available. Information of interest to the catechists will be sent from the CCD Office to catechists throughout the year. It includes the Newsletter, teaching resources and relevant information.

Team building is very important to maintain the enthusiasm of catechists and enable them to learn from each other. How can a Parish CCD Coordinator go about building and sustaining a sense of community in your Catechist Team? There are various things that can be implemented, such as:

- **Information** and support through regular team meetings. These provide an opportunity to get to know each other and share teaching ideas and resources.
- **Training and Formation** through attending CCD Catechist Training Days. These provide the perfect opportunity to meet catechists from other parishes and bring new found 'great ideas' back to your parish.
- **Affirmation** through moments of celebration – big celebrations, for example, the Annual Catechist Masses in the Deaneries during November and December, Commissioning Celebration at the beginning of the year in your parish and smaller celebrations in your parish, for example, birthdays.
- **Unification through prayer.** Prayer nourishes the Catechist Team. It is essential catechists seize opportunities to gather in prayer. Prayer will set in motion **all activities carried out** and sustain the spirit of community

Parish Coordinators need to:
- keep up to date with resources
- order *Jesus Christ our Light & Life, Walking With Jesus, Connect or GodSpace* (depending upon Parish requirements)
- provide teaching materials and resources for the catechists;

- hire or purchase suitable materials and resources and encourage their use;
- collect and complete statistical requirements (June/July).
- arrange parent information meetings at the beginning of the year;
- maintain contact with children and their parents;
- keep parents closely informed about all that is planned for their children (RE program used with the children and Parish Based Sacramental Preparation and other events that may occur from time to time).

The Parish Coordinator's greatest strength, like that of all catechists, is her or his own personal faith and commitment. To allow for ongoing growth and nurturing, every opportunity should be taken for personal and spiritual development. This includes participation in training days, reflection days/weekends and private reading and reflection.

All Parish Catechist Coordinators need to be aware of the Archdiocesan Child Protection Policy. Attendance at a Child Protection Session for all Catechists is mandatory. Copies of the policy are available through the CCD Office, or at www.amazingcatechists.org.au

Finally, if there is a change of Parish Coordinator, please notify the Archdiocesan CCD Coordinator.

- To show the vital role of Parish CCD Coordinators in the parish there should be a changeover ceremony at a Sunday Mass to express appreciation to the outgoing coordinator and welcome the new person.

Catechist Formation and Requirements

CATECHISTS
The catechist should be a person in good standing with the parish community.

The catechist, through the authorisation of the Parish Priest, becomes a member of the Parish School of Religion Team. The catechist needs to be accredited to teach the Religion program in a professional way. There is an opportunity to study the Certificate III in Education Support course. This is a nationally recognised program which gives the catechist training that can lead to further job pathways.

The CCD Team provides professional support to all catechists.

The catechist should teach with sensitivity to the child and the family's religious background. It is the catechist's responsibility to ensure the children are safe and happy during their lessons. The catechists should be available for meetings with parents when required. If the catechist should become aware of any serious personal problems, (e.g., child abuse, neglect, injury) they should discuss the matter in strict confidence with their **Parish Catechist Coordinator/Parish Priest.**

What is expected of a catechist?
- Commitment.
- Love for the children they teach;
- Attendance at a mandatory Child Protection Course;
- Attendance at the Parish School of Religion each week;
- Authorisation as a Catechist in your parish; and
- Attendance at training days provided by the CCD Office when able to do so.

Professional Support to Catechists

CCRESS Online Training - current and future Catechists can go online to access this training

to prepare them for the ministry, or to build on their current knowledge. It will also be available to use as learning packs in correspondence style courses for individuals or groups.

This training program with modules in Child Protection, Classroom Management, Curriculum Use and lesson Planning, Teaching Authority of the Church, Introduction to the Bible, Child Development, Mission and Ministry of the Catechist and Classroom Skills /Questioning builds on the work CCRESS and individual Dioceses have been doing in State Schools for over 25 years.

Professional Development Days, Annual Masses, Conferences and Retreats – Throughout the year Deanery events are offered for spiritual, intellectual and professional formation. Every year, celebration Masses are held in each Deanery to give thanks for the amazing work of our Catechists and to pray for this vital ministry. There are also opportunities for catechists to participate with formation opportunities provided by Catholic Education.

Awards of appreciation
Certificates of Appreciation are given after 5, 10 and 15 years. The Archbishop's Medal is given at 20 years and a Papal Blessing after 25 years of service.

In 2007, to mark the Jubilee (50 years) of CCD Ministry in the Archdiocese, additional service awards were inaugurated. These awards have been named after people who have made a significant contribution to the growth and work of CCD over the fifty years, and the founder of CCD, St Charles Borromeo.
• Mona McIntosh Award 30 years of service
• Fr Michael O'Brien Award 35 years of service

•

Sr Elizabeth Denson Award 40 years of service
• Motor Missions Award 45 years of service
• Archbishop Eris O'Brien Award 50 years of service
• St Charles Borromeo Award 55 years of service
• St Mary MacKillop Award 60 years of service

Code of Conduct

Preamble:
The Code of Professional Conduct for catechists is based upon the following four foundational principles:

1. Commitment to the Student
2. Commitment to Parents
3. Commitment to the Community
4. Commitment to Sound Educational Practice

It is expected that catechists in schools endorse the principles of child protection as a fundamental responsibility and it is within this context that this Code of Professional Conduct for catechists has been prepared.

This Code of Conduct will assist to clarify the parameters of appropriate and inappropriate conduct for catechists who work in child related ministry.

Professional responsibilities of catechists: As part of this Code it is expected that all catechists:
• Will support the core values of the school.
• Will avoid, by word or action, any influence upon students that is contrary to the teachings and values expressed by the school, or the Catholic Church in whose name they act.
• Demonstrate a responsibility to meet the high standards of professional and ethical behaviour as required by the State School, students' families and the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.
• Will undertake their responsibilities within the framework of the law, and comply with lawful instructions from the NSW Department of Education and Training,

the State School, the Archbishop and the Archbishop's authorising agent – the Parish Priest.

- Will comply with legislative and industrial requirements, with this code and any policies and procedures implemented by the school at which they teach and the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

- Demonstrate a duty of care to students during their time on the school property. This duty includes punctuality, and taking reasonable steps to protect students from foreseeable risk of injury.

Maintaining professional boundaries:

The catechists should be aware of the following as the basis to the professional boundaries that they must maintain:

- All students should be treated equally with no particular student singled out for particular attention.

- Words and behaviour must be acceptable under all circumstances.

- Standards of dress must be professional when on school property.

- Use of language must be appropriate and non-threatening.

- Catechists must be equally available to all students.

- Personal feelings must not be allowed to affect interactions with students.

- Interactions with a student, which may be seen as demeaning or belittling, are not acceptable.

THE CHURCH NEEDS YOU. YOUR ENTHUSIASM. YOUR CREATIVITY AND THE JOY THAT IS SO CHARACTERISTIC OF YOU.

POPE FRANCIS

Professional Relationships - Interactions with Students:

As part of this Code it is expected that catechists:

WILL

- Be caring, compassionate adults who take an interest in their students
- Always treat students with respect
- Set appropriate boundaries for teacher student relationships
- Treat all students in a consistent manner
- Congratulate students in a way consistent with school practice and be aware that physical gestures may be open to scrutiny by others
- Follow policy and procedure with regard to social interactions with students outside of school
- Seek consent of a Parent or Guardian before:
  * visiting students at their home
  * inviting students to visit their home
  * making personal telephone calls or sending personal email or sms (text) messages to students.
- Develop and exercise prudent judgement and sensitivity regarding appropriate physical interactions with students
- Avoid as far as possible being alone with a student. If required to work with a student in a one to one situation they should:
  * have discussed the arrangement with the School authorities previously
  * where possible, interact with the student in an area open to observation and ensure that teacher and student are visible to others
- Do everything within reason to ensure that at school functions, camps or excursions, students on school premises do not consume alcohol, use tobacco, prohibited substances.
- Act in accordance with school policy with regard to the consumption of alcohol at school, or while at school functions.
- Act in accordance with school policy with regard to the administration of prescribed medications to students.
- Be prudent with regard to the content and context of their discussions with students.

WILL NOT

- Use sarcastic, derogatory remarks, offensive comments or other inappropriate behaviours, which may cause emotional distress to a child.
- Use inappropriate locations or social isolation, outside the school's discipline policy, as punishment
- Verbally abuse children and use strategies of targeted and sustained criticism, belittling or teasing
- Share special secrets with individual children
- Show favours or give gifts to individual children when this is not the practice with other students.
- Be inconsistent in applying consequences to or making allowances for a child's behaviour
- Drive students in their cars unless they have specific permission, and do so in accordance with school policy
- Give students or encourage or condone the consumption of alcohol, tobacco or prohibited substances
- Under any circumstances engage in improper conduct of a sexual nature with a student including sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual misconduct including:
  * obscene language or gestures of a sexual nature
  * suggestive remarks, actions or jokes of a sexual nature
  * unwarranted and inappropriate touching
  * sexual exhibitionism or undressing in front of students possession, distribution or display of pornography
  * personal correspondence, emails or sms (text) messages containing sexually explicit, offensive, inappropriate jokes or messages in respect of the employee's sexual feelings for the student.

Student Management and Physical Contact:
As part of this Code, it is expected that catechists:

WILL

- Develop effective, consistent and appropriate student behaviour management strategies in line with the school's Student Management and Discipline policies.
- Exercise caution when physical contact is a necessary part of the teaching / learning experience.
- Ensure that any physical contact is reasonable for the purpose of discipline, management or care of the students. The contact must be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the child, and should be consistent with any specific behavioural management plan for specific children.
- Ensure that any physical contact is appropriate and acceptable for the duty performed. Appropriate and acceptable physical contact include:
  * assessing a student who is injured or ill
  * giving appropriate first aid treatment
  * comforting an upset child
  * guiding a student in a non-threatening manner
  * tapping a student on the shoulder to gain attention after verbal requests were unsuccessful
  * protecting a student from imminent danger to himself/herself or to others
  * demonstrating or guiding a particular action or skill as part of drama or other activities within the lesson
- Use physical interventions (including physical restraint, removals or escorts only as a last resort to ensure safety and protection of students and employees. Physical interventions would be appropriate when:
  * a student is attacking an employee
  * a student is attacking another student
  * students are physically fighting
  * a student is causing, or at risk of causing, injury to self or others
  * a student is misusing dangerous materials, substances or objects and they or others are in danger of imminent harm.

WILL NOT

- Apply corporal punishment or physical force to punish or correct a student.
- Use prohibited behaviour management practices which include:
  * using an object, such as a ruler, book, duster, chalk or whiteboard marker to gain a child's attention in a hostile or inappropriate physical manner
  * hitting or kicking a student
  * holding or restraining a student other than to prevent injury or harm to the student or other students
  * shaking or throwing a student
  * pushing, pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching or poking a student
  * intimidating or swearing at a student
  * humiliating a student
  * criticising a student rather than a student's actions
  * locking a student in a confined space
  * refusing biological needs as a means of punishment
  * applying painful or noxious conditions
  * using practices which instil fear, or using fear as a means to control a student
  * using practices which cause a student to feel alienated
  * using psychotropic medication to manage a student's behaviour as opposed to treatment for a diagnosed condition
  * exposing a student to material that contain violent, inappropriate sexual messages or adult concepts and themes that are inappropriate given the student's age and curriculum expectations

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Catechists should be aware of, respect, and adhere to, the established lines of communication in the school.

  Where matters arise in a school under Child Protection Legislation, catechists are bound to maintain the confidentiality of all parties concerned.

UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

- Conduct, which is contrary to this Code, may amount to reportable conduct and may result in disciplinary action within the meaning of Child Protection Legislation and will be dealt with in accordance with the Archdiocesan Policy.

CLARIFICATION OF THE CODE

- If there is any conflict between this code and applicable legislation, the legislation will prevail. If a catechist is in doubt about the interpretation of this code, then the matter must be discussed with the school principal, or Archdiocesan CCD Coordinator. If this matter cannot be clarified at a local level, the matter may be referred to the Professional Standards Officer Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

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GLOSSARY

Child Protection Legislation is defined to include the following:

1. *Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)*
2. *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 (NSW)*
3. *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*
4. *Children and Young People Act 1999 (ACT)*

Employee means anyone employed by a school and any individual engaged by a school to provide services to children; this includes volunteers (catechists).

School (NSW) means services provided to children undertaken on school property and other school related activities such as school sport, excursions, camps, or billeting. In the ACT it is the local Parish School of Religion.

Catholic Education Authority means the body responsible for the governance of each school including the Parish, and Office of the Religious Education in Government Schools, canonical administrator, or a religious institute.

Principal means the Principal or the Principal's delegate.

Student means any child under the age of 18, regardless of whether he/she is a student enrolled at the school (NSW) or Parish School of Religion in the ACT.

Reportable Conduct does not extend to:
- Conduct that is reasonable for the purpose of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or
- The use of physical force that in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures, or
- Conduct of a Class or Kind exempted from being reportable conduct by the Ombudsman under section 25CA of the Ombudsman Act 1974.

This is periodically updated and details can be found at **www.amazingcatechists.org.au**

Relationship of Parish Programs with Parish and Catholic School

PARISH PRIEST
By reason of his office of pastoral leadership in the Parish, the Parish Priest has the responsibility to provide Catholic education according to circumstances that will assist parents to fulfil their responsibility. It is also his responsibility to provide Christian formation of young adults and children. The Parish Priest authorises the catechists to teach the Parish Programs, and is

responsible for providing the approved teaching materials.

It is the responsibility of the parish to support the catechists of the Parish Programs. Parishes should have a budget for the Parish Programs in their larger parish budget. It is important that the Parish Catechist Coordinator is aware of the arrangements in the parish.

PARISH CATECHIST COORDINATOR

The Parish Catechist Coordinator undertakes the leadership of the day-to-day operations of the Parish Programs. The Coordinator is responsible to the Parish Priest for the recruitment, selection and arrangements for the induction of Catechists at the beginning of each year. The Coordinator appoints catechists to appropriate classes.

CATECHIST

All Catechists are authorised by the Parish Priest to teach the approved and authorised Archdiocesan Religious Education Program, Jesus Christ our Light & Life, Walking With Jesus, Connect or GodSpace to the children attending the Parish Programs. The catechists are volunteers, who, once they accept the position of religious educators, have an obligation to prepare and teach their class according to the approved course of study. All catechists must have a current name badge.

CATECHIST HELPER

The Catechist Helpers are volunteers who agree to help the catechist in the classroom until they feel more confident to take on a class themselves. They assist the catechist in the classroom by helping slower children, correcting work, arranging aids and so forth. All catechist helpers must be registered with the CCD office.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR AT THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The Religious Education Coordinator (REC) in the Catholic School is often a member of the Parish Team. The REC works closely with the Parish CCD Coordinator and catechists informing them of the Parish Based Sacramental Preparation and preparation needed so that all children in the parish community celebrate the sacraments together. Meetings should be arranged between teachers in the Catholic School and catechist.

PARISH SACRAMENTAL COORDINATOR

In some parishes there may be a person who is a member of the Parish Team who liaises between the Parish Catechist Coordinator and the REC at the Catholic School, for Parish Based Sacramental Preparation.

The links between the Parish School of Religion and the Catholic School are important in building a strong parish community. The children need to be involved in the parish community. This can be done through promotion of Parish Programs at Mass on Sunday and Parish School of Religion. Otherwise, there is inadequate outreach to those who most need it at the Parish School of Religion.

Further Details:
Can be found at

www.cgcatholic.org.au/catechists/home/registration-forms/

Religious Education Programs

Jesus Christ our Light & Life, Walking With Jesus, Connect or GodSpace SRE programs are the authorised and approved Religious Education Program to be used in Catholic Special Religious Education classes throughout the Archdiocese. The curriculum to be used is decided by the Parish Priest and Catechist Coordinator.

All programs are designed to support the catechist in their delivery of quality Special Religious Education to Catholic children attending Parish Schools of Religion. A SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CHART illustrates the entire program in terms of which learning outcomes are appropriate for the various age levels of the groups of children participating in the program.

The model for the whole curriculum is based on the Shared Christian Praxis approach to Religious Education. The fundamental goal of each unit of work is a discipleship response appropriate to the child's faith development. To this end, the curriculum is designed to

encourage students to respond in action as through their lessons they are led to RECOGNISE life experiences, RELATE the Christian Story, RESPECT the Christian/Catholic Vision, REFLECT upon one's life experience and/or the Church's story and Vision, RESPOND as a disciple of Jesus and REJOICE in a celebration liturgy.

Classroom Management for Catechists

PREPARING YOUR LESSONS
A successful lesson requires thorough preparation.

Helpful Hints:
1. Allow yourself plenty of time.
2. Pray for yourself and for your students.
3. Read through the lesson notes in the Teacher's Manual.
4. Read through the relevant pages in the Student's Activity Book.
5. Be clear about what the lesson aims to achieve.
6. Be clear about what the children are to know, understand and reflect on at the completion of the lesson.
7. Ensure the introduction to the lesson 'grabs' the attention of the students.
8. Highlight the key points of the lesson so that you know what needs to be emphasised.
9. Ensure you take note of suggested times so you are able to give the correct amount of time to the parts of the lesson.
10. Ensure the activities are suitable for the particular age group and learning styles of the students.
11. Ensure the conclusion draws together the theme of the lesson.
12. Complete the pages in the Student's Activity Book yourself.
13. At the end of each lesson ask yourself –
    What worked well?
    What could be improved?
    Was the aim of the lesson achieved?

14. At the end of each unit use the evaluation sheet. This can be useful for future years.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE RE CLASSROOM
Students come to your RE class with their own understanding of religious terms and concepts which may be different from your own. Language is a very powerful tool and needs to be used carefully. Therefore, when teaching RE, remember to use the curriculum as your guide.

1. Language and concepts must be appropriate to the child's stage of development.
2. Our religious language may contain words and phrases, which will provoke a range of responses from children, e.g., "Jesus is the Lamb of God". Be prepared to explain or rephrase the concepts in words that are more clearly understood by children.
3. It is appropriate to own what you say so that students know where you stand on a particular issue, e.g., "I believe . . .", "I feel . . .', "I think . . . ", and so forth.
4. **Ground** what you say so it's clear from where a statement comes, e.g., "Many Christians believe . . . ", "For Anglicans . . . ", "The Bible says . . .".
5. Fact type statements are those, which can be scientifically, historically, empirically proven, e.g., "Many people worship as part of their religious observance". These do not require **owning** or **grounding**.
6. Belief-type statements are those, which require an element of faith to be accepted as true, e.g., "There is life after death". These should be **owned** or **grounded**.
7. Use language that allows students the freedom to consider belief statements and accept them if they wish.
8. It's appropriate to use **owning** and **grounding** with all year levels.
9. Explain or simplify religious terms or 'jargon' where appropriate, e.g., grace.

WAYS CHILDREN LEARN

We should not assume that all children learn in the same way. An understanding of different learning styles will help children benefit most from our time spent with them. Children learn best from catechists who love, respect and build relationships with them.

1. Ways of Learning:
• Thinking - What we know and believe.

• Feeling   - Our internalised responses (emotions and intuitions)

• Doing   - Actions and activities.

2. The Learning Process:
• *In Infant Classes* – Early Stage One and Stage One - the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn from immediate experiences and activity.

• *In Middle Primary classes* – Stage Two - the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through research and discovery.

• *In Upper Primary* – Stage Three - the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through group work and discussion.

3. Learning Styles:
Children have different preferences for the way they learn best.

• Auditory - Learning by listening.

• Visual   - Learning by seeing.

• Tactile   - Learning by doing.

4. The Journey of Faith
Children are at different places in their faith journey –

• Imitative Faith – a view of God and faith adopted from significant others.

• Affiliative Faith – a sense of belonging to , and participation with, a faith community.

• Searching Faith - Seeking integrity between teachings and practice.

• Owned Faith - Expressing faith in words and actions.

CREATIVE TEACHING IDEAS
RE should never be boring! Here are some ideas to add variety and interest to your lessons.

1. 'Get to Know You' activities
A short game or activity can help to establish relationships with the students.

2. Physical settings
Use posters, banners, charts, music and so forth to enhance the learning experience.

3. Stories
Use a range of stories:

• personal stories, Bible stories

• children's stories, dramatic stories,

• stories that use props, video stories, puppetry stories, felt board stories and so on.

4. Music
• Use CD, DVD, or play an instrument.

• Display the words on an attractive chart or overhead transparency.

• Explain the words and apply them to your lesson objective.

• Encourage involvement with singing, clapping, dancing, or using percussion instruments.

5. Visual Aids
Pictures, personal memorabilia, puppets, DVDs, everyday items and so on.

6. Use the Bible
Let the children see you use your Bible. Allow hands-on opportunities for children to use Bibles as well. Use a Bible that is appropriate to the children's understanding.

7. Prayer
• Keep it short

• Use inclusive language

• Invite students to participate

• Use a variety of styles, e.g., spontaneous prayer, responsive prayer, formal prayer, prayer chains, prayer books, journals, prayer circles.

8. Games and Activities
Use games that advance the flow of the lesson, are appropriate to the age group, are inclusive, and need not be bound by the classroom setting.

9. Linking lessons to life
Look for relevant events in the lives of the children that relate to the lesson content, e.g., clip from TV show, pop song and so forth.

10. Talk with other teachers
Find out what worked and let them help you.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT
Many behaviour problems will be avoided if your lessons captivate the students. Therefore, good preparation and presentation will form the basis of a good behaviour management strategy. However, instances may arise when the following hints will be helpful.

1. Find out the recognised signals used for gaining children's attention, or develop your own, e.g., one raised hand, hands on heads, clapping a pattern.

2. Reinforce the classroom rules or alternatively set your own with the help of the class. Enforce these rules consistently by thinking of creative ways to do so. E.g., have the rules written up on a sheet and make a point of displaying it at the beginning of class. Focus in on the particular one that may be causing concern at the moment.

3. When asking questions of the class, expect raised hands before allowing an answer. Discourage students from calling out by ignoring those who do.

4. Ask teachers if there are students with special needs in the class, e.g., hearing impaired, limited reading ability, or behavioural issues. Cater for these students in your planning.   An extra classroom helper may be an asset to you.

4. For minor disturbances, keep the lesson flowing by:
   • standing near the child
   • establishing momentary eye contact
   • using a simple gesture
   • removing distractions
   • praising positive behaviour.

5. For major disturbances, be sure the child understands why the behaviour is wrong. Questions such as "What are you doing?" and "What should you be doing?' may help. Know the School Discipline Policy at your local school.

6. Share your feelings about the child's misbehaviour, not the child's personality. Don't jeopardise your relationship with this child by being negative about them as a person.

7. Outline the choices and the consequences of the misbehaviour so as to place the responsibility for the student's actions on their shoulders, not yours. Encourage them to make a good choice.

8. "Time Out" is a useful strategy for some children, but it must not become a reward for certain behaviour. "Time Out" should be much less appealing than staying with the rest of the class.

9. Always look behind the presenting problem to consider the real reason for the negative behaviour, e.g.,
   • rejection from friends, not belonging
   • home situations
   • emotional instability caused by grief, loss, etc.
   • lesson not engaging enough.

EXCELLENT RESOURCES
Classroom Management - https://www.prodigygame.com/blog/classroom-management-strategies/

Great Teaching - http://www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/the-five-ingredients-of-outstanding-teaching

Self Care - http://www.wewillflourish.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/flourish-self-care-book-press-2017-1.pdf

Information for Parents with Students Attending CCD Programs

The catechists of the parish are a group of enthusiastic volunteers, specially trained by the CCD in the Archdiocese of Canberra/Goulburn to run regular weekly classes for children attending Government/State and Independent schools.

The Parish Programs follow the requirement of the Archdiocesan CCD Ministry. Each lesson builds on what has been learned already. Students benefit most through attending classes regularly. One very practical way you can help and make sure your child gets the most out of each lesson, is to ensure that your child is there on time for every lesson. Each stage of the program follows on from the one that went before it, therefore the best way to derive most

benefit from the program is to enroll your child in Kindergarten and ensure that your child does

not miss any lessons right through primary school. In this way, your child/children will also be taken naturally, step by step, through preparation for the reception of the sacraments when they are ready.

Reception of the Sacraments (Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation) is an ongoing preparation through participation in Parish School of Religion plus a more intensified time of Parish Based Sacramental Preparation prior to the particular sacrament your child will receive.

You can help greatly by ensuring that your child attends regular Parish School of Religion. You can also help by:

- **assisting** during lessons as a catechist helper
- **attending** parent meetings
- **talking** regularly with your child's catechist
- **establishing** a consistent routine of celebrating within your Parish community

The most practical way you can help **is by your example**. You have the most important role in seeing that your child grows in love of God. Your child will value the faith just the same way that he/she thinks that **you** value it. If what you do shows your child that the faith is important to you, then your child will know it is important too. You cannot expect your child to participate in the Eucharist each Sunday if you do not go to Mass regularly yourself and you cannot expect your child to be a friend who talks to Jesus each day if you do not join him/her in prayer.

To help you and your child get the most out of the lessons given by catechists we ask that you note the following points:

1. Classes will be held at regular times each week. Late or irregular attendance is disruptive and not fair on your child or the other children.
2. The catechists have the duty to care for your child during class times but cannot take responsibility for your child outside these times.
3. One focus of the program is the initiation of the child into the Catholic Church. The Sacraments mark stages in the growth of your child in their life of faith and so your child needs to complete each stage in his/her preparation before receiving Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation. This preparation is part of the ongoing program, which takes place in your parish.
4. Parents will be invited to attend parent gatherings from time to time. Your role in your child's development in love of God is crucial and we know that you will make every effort to attend these meetings.
5. An enrolment time may be held for parents and children at the beginning of each year. This is a great opportunity for you and the catechist to get to know each other and plan the best way to help your child. Please make use of these enrolment times when they occur.
6. Your catechist will let you know about any fees to cover expenses or materials. These will be very modest, but please tell us if they cause any problem to you.

Information for Parents with Students Attending CCD Programs

DETAILS OF CLASSES

Parish Priest _____ Phone _____

Parish Catechists Coordinator _____ Phone _____

Catechist _____ Phone _____

Location of Classes _____

Day of Classes _____

Time of Classes _____

Contacts

Archdiocesan Catechist Coordinator
The Archdiocesan Catechist Coordinator has the overall responsibility for the CCD Ministry in the Archdiocese.

Contact:
St Christopher's
Pastoral Centre
GPO Box 3089
Canberra, ACT., 2601
Phone: 02 6239 9832

CCD Prayer

Father God,
We gather in response to your love,
to plant and nurture the seeds of faith.

As Special Religious Educators of
children in our schools, may we
spread the Good News and reveal
a Christ-centred vision by being
welcoming, reassuring and inclusive.

Help us to live our Christian
values, so that we may be a visible
expression of God's Kingdom in
today's world.

We make our prayer being
One in Christ Jesus.

Amen.