

CONNECTIONS

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Year of Jubilee



Taking the Gospel to the World

CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE BROKEN BAY

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FROM THE

Term 1 2025 | Welcome Back

A warm welcome to the new school year. Thank you for your dedicated service as an SRE catechist in the Diocese of Broken Bay. Whether this is your first year in the Ministry of Special Religious Education or whether you are returning as an experienced catechist to continue your call to mission as a witness and teacher of faith, together we are privileged to have the opportunity to open the hearts and minds of children and young people to the Gospel message and invite them into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Catechist Sunday

Each year Catechist Sunday is celebrated on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday to recognise and celebrate the gift that catechists bring to a parish community. This year it will be held on Sunday 2 March. Catechist Sunday provides an opportunity for catechists and teachers to be commissioned for ministry for the year ahead and to recognise the good work of those who bring the Good News of Jesus to children, young people and adults. It is appropriate to commission SRE catechists, Sacramental, RCIA and Children's Liturgy of the Word catechists and also any Catholic school teachers from your parish. Your Parish Catechist Coordinator can provide more detail.

Jubilee 2025 | Pilgrims of Hope

In **2025** the Universal Church will celebrate a year of Jubilee with the theme, **Pilgrims of Hope**. Pope Francis in his letter of announcement of the Jubilee theme said:

"We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire..."

The Jubilee year commenced on Tuesday 24 December 2024 with the opening of the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica and will conclude on 6 January 2026.

The Diocese of Broken Bay will celebrate the Year of Jubilee with several events being planned across the year. In each of the three deaneries of the Diocese, there will be a Jubilee Shrine of Hope located at one of the churches. At Manly there will be a Shrine of Hope for Priests and Vocations where there will be a relic of St John Vianney for the year. At Chatswood, with the newly opened Shrine to Blessed Carlo Acutis, including a relic of the soon to be canonised saint, the Shrine of Hope will be for Young People and at Gosford with the relic of Saint John Paul II, the Shrine of Hope will be for Families.

Events are being planned for 2025 at these three shrines, and details will be communicated across the year with everyone invited to participate as Pilgrims of Hope.

In this edition of *Connections*, you will find an article by Michael Tebbutt who has written a thought-provoking piece about how we might contribute to the Jubilee Year, and I commend this to your reading.



HEAD OF CCD



A Jubilee Year brings many blessings on faith communities, so let's work together so that the Catholic communities we minister to in our public schools will be richly blessed during this time. CCD will develop some additional lessons for catechists that will pick up on the theme Pilgrims of Hope.

Lent | Easter

This year, Easter falls on the 20 April. This will allow ample time for Lenten lessons in the SRE classrooms, as we prepare the students for the joy of Easter. If you are teaching Kinder or a combined Kinder and Stage 1 class, please ensure you begin your year of teaching with units on Creation and then follow with the Lenten lessons. Symbols are the most age-appropriate way to introduce Kinder students to the liturgical season of Lent. If you have a combined infants class and are unsure of what to teach first, contact your Regional CCD Coordinator for guidance.

Student Activity Books

The Walking with Jesus Cycle B student activity books have had some colour removed from them in response to feedback from catechists. This will allow students more space to colour-in as they ponder the lessons that you teach them.

Letter From Bishop Anthony Randazzo

Enclosed with this edition of Connections you will find a letter from Bishop Anthony Randazzo, in which he highlights the need for foster carers in the diocese. Bishop Randazzo has asked for our assistance in raising awareness of this need in our parish and family communities. Bishop Anthony holds the CCD community of coordinators and catechists in the highest regard and knows that we understand outreach and mission through the lens of our faith. Let us all pray that suitable foster carers can be found for the vulnerable children and young people in our diocese who are in need of care.

Daily Prayer

As always, my prayers go with you into the classrooms. The CCD team pray for you daily that the Holy Spirit will accompany you as you teach the children and that their hearts and minds will be open to the Word of God. Please pray for us too that the work we do will continue to support you in your ministry and your journey of faith.

God bless you for the year ahead!

Alison Newell



Service Award Applications

Have you been a Catechist for a number of years? You may be eligible for a Service Award at our Annual CCD Mass.

If you have received Connections Magazine in the mail, please find an application form included alongside this magazine. Otherwise, an application form can be downloaded from our website: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/mission/ccd/resources/forms>

If you're not certain about how many years of service you have recorded, please give Maricel a call or send her an email and she will happily help you find out.

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As I begin this year, my heart is filled with gratitude for you, our Catechists. My prayer for you:

**As this year's light begins to shine,
Let us offer thanks for blessings divine.
Grateful for the privilege to serve and care,
Through our deeds, our witness, and the
words we share.**

**We teach the children so precious and bright,
Spirit, please guide us to do what's right.
With hearts open wide, as 'Pilgrims of Hope',
We'll nurture that flame, inspired by the Pope.**

In the Gospel of Luke, we meet the blind man begging by the roadside. Hearing a crowd passing by, he asks, "What's happening?" They reply, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." He calls out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Told to be quiet, he persists until Jesus says, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you."

This story of persistence and answered prayer often leads us to reflect on spiritual blindness. But what if the blind man hadn't asked? What if no one had replied? Both were crucial for the outcome: "Your faith has healed you."

This question resonates with us as Catechists. Are our students and their families asking, "What's happening?" And when they do, are we there to answer and respond to God's call? You, our Catechists, have heard their questions and answered with love and witness.

As you go forth this year, may God bless you with strength and wisdom to invite your students to know Jesus. One day, may they say, "Jesus is passing by," reaching others because you showed up and brought Jesus into the classroom.

Think of this when recruiting, inviting friends to join you in this ministry.

Sue-Anne Sherwood
NORTH SHORE

Hello, wonderful Catechists of the Diocese of Broken Bay!

This year, we're embracing the Vatican's Jubilee theme, **Pilgrims of Hope**. Sounds fancy, doesn't it? But don't worry, you don't need a passport, hiking boots, or to book a flight to Jerusalem. This is a spiritual pilgrimage - a journey of the heart and soul - and you can do it right here, in your own life, and even in your classroom.

So, how do you go on a pilgrimage without leaving your postcode? Easy! Pick three "destinations" for yourself this year:

- 1. Prayer Pit Stop:** Start small. Maybe it's an extra 5 minutes each day to chat with God about the highs, the lows, and the "what was I thinking?" moments.
- 2. Faith Refuel Station:** Dust off that book you bought at a retreat (or maybe borrow one from someone who's more organised). Or, sign up for training or our reflection days to sharpen your skills and grow in your faith.
- 3. Service Scenic Route:** Look for ways to go the extra mile for someone in need—a colleague, a student, or even that stranger who always cuts you off in traffic (pray for them!).

As we grow and stretch ourselves, we become the best Catechists we can be—ready to plant seeds of hope and faith in the kids we teach. Let's make this pilgrimage joyful, purposeful, and full of grace (and maybe a little laughter along the way).

Here's to a year of big-hearted teaching and hopeful journeys. God bless you on your pilgrimage - wherever it takes you!

Kristy Komadina
NORTH SHORE

Dearest Catechists, I hope you are enjoying the gifts of the new year!

Welcome to another beautiful year of sharing the faith with our young ones. It's always inspiring to start fresh, filled with hope and excitement for what this year will bring. We pray that 2025 will be meaningful, productive, and full of joyful moments in your ministry.

Are you ready to meet your students? For some of you, it's a new group—a fresh set of faces and names to learn (no pressure!). Take your time, and before you know it, you'll know each child like they're part of your own family. For others, you'll see familiar faces—what a blessing to continue the journey with these young souls and witness their growth in faith. And for our brand-new Catechists, welcome! You've said "yes" to something truly special, and we are here to walk with you every step of the way.

We're so excited about the opportunities to gather this year—whether it's through virtual training sessions or face-to-face events. When you see those invitations, consider joining us. It's a chance to meet other Catechists who share your mission, learn new ideas, and be inspired by the wisdom of our seasoned mentors. Trust me, the time spent together is always rewarding.

Remember, the CCD team is here to support you. Got questions? Suggestions? Don't hesitate to reach out. There's no such thing as a silly question—every inquiry helps us all grow and improve. We're just a call or email away.

Wishing you a meaningful Lent and Easter ahead. Let's make 2025 a year to remember!

Here to help you shine.

Maricel Malapira
ADMINISTRATION



Some of our parishes have struggled in recent years to maintain their volunteers in the SRE ministry. Often this a part of a bigger picture of declining numbers of volunteers. Some smaller churches have small and irregular congregations and a few 'reliables' who are engaged in many ministries. Other parishes are experiencing growth as a result of population growth in the area.

As we begin 2025 it may be an opportune time to consider new recruitment practices instead of fishing in the same pool. For example, some schools allow recruitment for SRE and SEE in school newsletter and on their website.

Even if the number of volunteers are temporarily low it is important to manage this valuable resource very well. Some parishes have set up fortnightly lessons in order to alternate catechists between schools or classes. This enables the parish community to maintain the pastoral relationship with all its local school communities. This pastoral connection is the most fundamental relationship between the local church and the domestic church. It is essential to our pastoral outreach as a church.

Faith communities across NSW are currently planning to implement a huge push to double the number of students doing SRE over the next 3 years. SRE Vision 2028 will establish new programs in schools without SRE and restore student enrolment in those schools where class numbers have declined. Already we are seeing numbers improve in schools where enrolment processes have been restored.

Let's think about playing our part in growing the SRE ministry in our local community.

John Donnelly
NORTHERN BEACHES

Welcome to the new year of 2025! As we step into this year of **Jubilee: Pilgrims of Hope**, it's exciting to think about the opportunities ahead for us as Catechists.

For those just beginning this ministry, welcome! It can feel a little daunting at first, but remember, you're not alone. The more experienced among us are here to lend a hand, share tips, and offer encouragement. For those of us returning, it's a time to reconnect with familiar faces and welcome new students into our classrooms.

A heartfelt thank you to both new and seasoned Catechists for your dedication and generosity in sharing the Good News with the Catholic children in our state schools. Your efforts are truly inspiring and deeply appreciated.

One of my highlights from last year was our Advent Reflection Day on the Central Coast. What a joyful time it was! We prayed together, created beautiful Christmas crafts, and enjoyed a wonderfully festive meal in the company of so many Catechists. It was a day filled with goodwill, hope, and a reminder of the power of community in our shared mission.

Let's carry that same spirit of joy and hope into 2025. This Jubilee year calls us to be pilgrims, walking together in faith and sharing God's love with those around us. As we prepare for another year of SRE lessons, let's reflect on our Yes to God's invitation and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us as we teach with confidence, hope, and love.

Here's to a year of meaningful ministry and shared blessings!

Michael Tebbutt
CENTRAL COAST

Greetings Catechists!

Welcome to the new year. Can you believe it's 2025?!

How did you spend your Christmas and New Year? I pray that you had a very Happy and Holy Christmas and enjoyed some special time with your loved ones.

I enjoyed a couple of weeks off to spend with my family. We loved our sleep-ins, lazing by the pool and having nowhere to be! Now that the new year is here, the CCD Broken Bay Team is looking forward to another year of supporting you as SRE Teachers by providing training and curriculum resources. This term, our training includes two CCD Ministry Induction courses, one during the day and one in the evening. The CCDMI is primarily for new catechists but some of you might have one or two units to complete – if so, we'll be in touch soon to organise that with you.

Later in the year, we'll be offering our Level 1 'Tools for the Classroom' course, and our Level 2 'The Church in the 3rd Millenium' course; both are optional. We will distribute details in future issues of Connections, on our website, and via your Parish Coordinator. We encourage you to register for one or both of these courses, when the time comes.

Don't forget, we use our Cycle B curriculum this year, so head to our website to download our Walking With Jesus Cycle B Powerpoints and quizzes, ready to use in the classroom! Click here to access them: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/mission/ccd/curriculum/walking-with-jesus-powerpoint/walking-with-jesus-powerpoints>

Wishing you all a wonderful start to the school year.

Alicia Klein
ADMINISTRATION

Why is the Jubilee Year Themed Pilgrims of Hope?



Let us look at what is happening globally. There are wars in Ukraine, in the Middle East, a civil war in Sudan, the Myanmar civil war, and in Haiti, and gang warfare in various locations around the world. The world is in a time of despair, following the aftermath of the covid pandemic and in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. People are suffering mental health crises, young people are said to be in a state of confusion, struggling with the relatively new phenomenon of social media.

Pope Francis is saying that it's time for us to regain a sense of who we are, to rediscover the meaning of hope and to restore our relationship with God, our creator. This jubilee is the opportunity to do these things and more.

Pope Francis said, "Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. ... For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God's word helps us find reasons for hope."



In the Bull of Indiction of the Year of Jubilee, *Spes Non Confundit* (Hope does not disappoint), the Pope goes on to say:

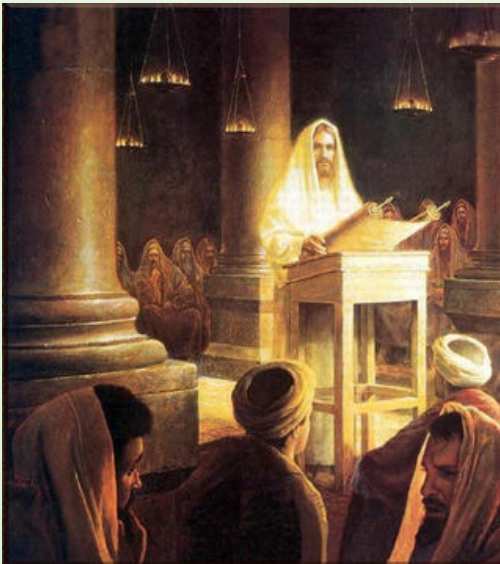
"In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring." (n. 1)

"Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love." (n. 3)

We must be people of hope and we are invited in this Jubilee Year to exercise charitable action as signs of hope. As people who are signs of hope, we will be the light at the end of the tunnel for others, so we must take on the ministry of Jesus as presented in Luke's Gospel when Jesus read from the prophet Isaiah,

The Lord's Spirit has come to me, because he has chosen me to tell the good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, 'This is the year the Lord has chosen.' Lk 4:18-19

We are to be Signs of Hope, that is, we are to be people who fight for amnesty and pardon for prisoners, visit the sick and housebound, bring hospitality of spirit to exiles, displaced persons and refugees, reach out to the youths afflicted by dangerous drugs, gangs and violence and work to alleviate the poverty of those who are inflicted with impoverishment.



That sounds a big ask, but is it really? The Catholic Church has been involved in these areas for centuries. To be a pilgrim of hope, we need to journey from where we are at the moment, our comfortable space, to an encounter with Christ through reaching out to those who suffer.

As SRE Catechists, we are already living as pilgrims of hope by stepping out of our comfortable spaces and journeying into public school classrooms to share the love and truth of Christ. While our students may not be suffering in obvious ways, we know they face a world often filled with confusion, challenges, and a lack of deeper meaning. By reaching out to them, we bring the light of Christ to hearts that long for connection and hope, even if they don't yet realise it. This is the heart of our ministry: leaving behind the familiar to walk in faith and trust, sowing seeds of hope and transformation in the lives of young people who might otherwise never hear of God's boundless love.

There are other ministries in our parishes that open us up to this journey of reaching out. The St Vincent de Paul chapter would love to have more helpers. As a St Vinnies person you could be helping the homeless, providing people in immediate crisis with food, clothing, other everyday essentials, helping with bills, being a friendly face to listen and importantly assisting these people by connecting them with other helpful services. You could often chat and enjoy a cup of tea with these people, maybe do some shopping for them or even a chore or two around the house. It is in these people we can encounter Christ and also be a beacon of Hope to them at the same time.

Maybe your parish has a team of people who assist families that have suffered a bereavement. Again, you would be a listening ear and someone to give comfort and support over a cup of tea. There is also the need for the sick in hospital and at home to be ministered to. Those who take communion to the sick often do more than just administer Communion to these folk. Each of these groups of people belongs to Jesus family and about His family He says, in Matthew's Gospel,

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me'. Mt 25:40

In 2025, the Year of the Jubilee, named "Pilgrims of Hope" may we discern how we can truly be people who bring hope to those in our community who are in need of hope and comfort.



Michael Tebbutt

Caritas Lenten Resources

Once again, Caritas Australia has generously provided beautiful teacher and student resources for catechists. CCD has developed three sets of lessons plans and student activities for Kinder/Stage 1, Stages 2 and 3, and Stages 4 and 5, using the Caritas resources.

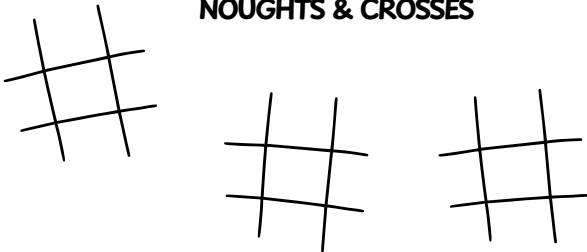
Lessons plans, student activities and videos will be available for download from the CCD website from early February. The resources have been developed to be age-appropriate and sensitive so be sure to download the correct resources for your students' age group.

Learning about challenges to health, wellbeing and safety of others and our earth can be hard at times for some students. Please ensure you are sensitive to this as you teach and encourage students to discuss from the positive perspective of the outreach work of Caritas.



★ THE LORD'S PRAYER

NOUGHTS & CROSSES



I SPY
HOW MANY STARS
CAN YOU SPOT?



UNSCRAMBLE THESE WORDS

- AFREHT _____
- KMIONDG _____
- RPEYAR _____
- REBDA _____
- ORLD _____
- GFEVIRO _____
- LHLAODEW _____



Pray like this:



"Our _____ who art in _____

Hallowed be thy _____

Thy _____ come, thy will be done,

On _____ as it is in heaven.

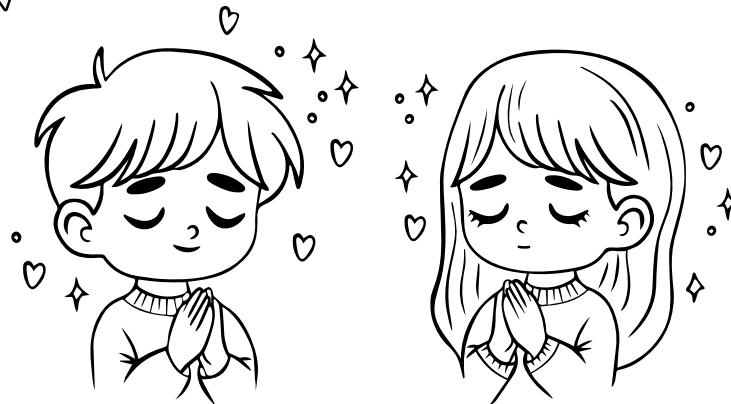
Give us this day our daily _____

And _____ us our tresspasses,

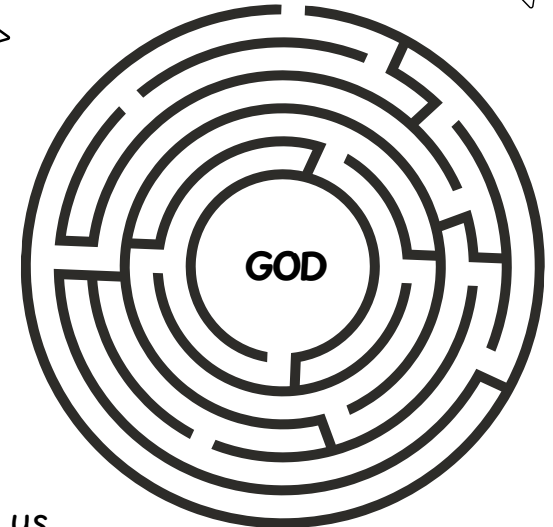
As we forgive those who _____ against us,

And lead us _____ into temptation,

But _____ us from evil."



PRAYER



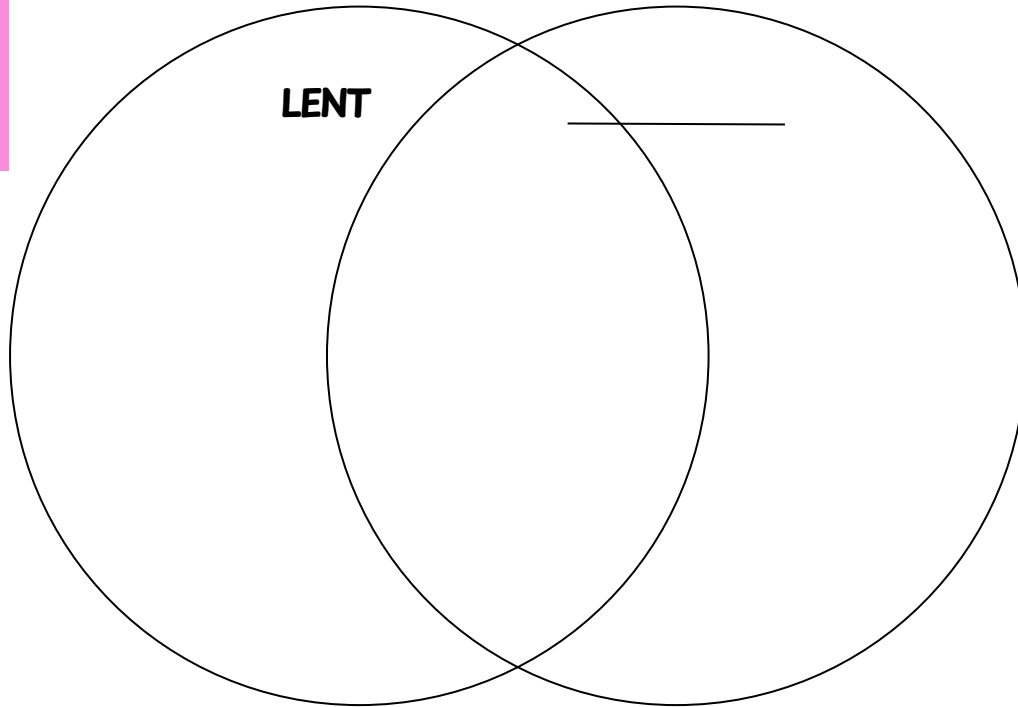
WORD SEARCH



W	I	L	L	P	B	H
P	R	A	Y	E	R	E
G	A	E	M	H	G	A
O	L	N	T	D	B	V
D	R	R	N	T	I	E
E	A	L	O	A	E	N
E	B	R	E	A	D	D

PRAYER BREAD EARTH
HEAVEN GOD WILL

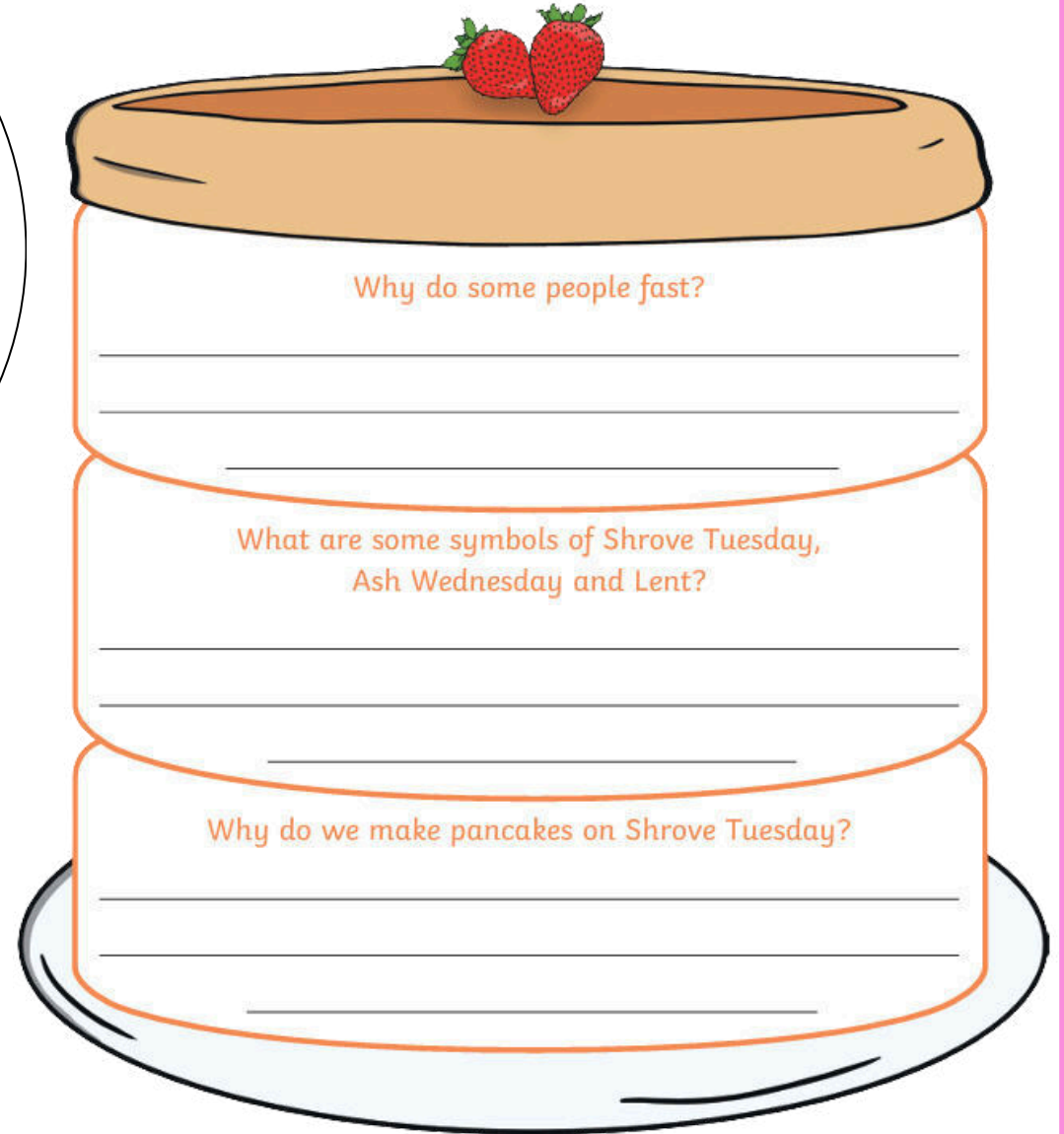
USE THIS VENN DIAGRAM TO COMPARE AND CONTRAST ANOTHER CELEBRATION OF YOUR CHOICE.



WRITE A LENTEN ACROSTIC POEM

L _____
E _____
N _____
T _____

LENT



Broken Bay SRE Curriculum Awarded For Excellence

CCD Broken Bay's SRE curriculum *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* was recently recognised for excellence in teaching and learning for special religious education in New South Wales. The Minister for Education, The Hon Prue Car, MP awarded a certificate of excellence which was received by John Donnelly from the CCD team, on behalf of the Diocese of Broken Bay at a Celebration of SRE held at Parliament House Sydney in November 2024.



Sticking to the Curriculum is Essential

As catechists, we carry the profound responsibility of guiding young Catholics on their journey of faith. This mission, entrusted to us by the Church, is one we should approach with dedication, reverence, and a commitment to teaching faithfully. The Diocese of Broken Bay has developed the *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* curriculum to support this mission. As catechists, it is crucial to use this authorised program, not only for its theological soundness but also to ensure we meet the legal requirements of delivering Special Religious Education (SRE) in NSW schools.

The *Walking with Jesus* program is based on the K-12 Special Religious Education Curriculum of the Diocese of Broken Bay and carries the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur, official declarations that guarantee it is free from doctrinal and moral error. But this curriculum is not only a religious guide—it is also a legal safeguard. The teaching of SRE in NSW schools is governed by strict guidelines, and failure to adhere to the authorised curriculum may have consequences for both the catechist and the program.

The Legal Framework for SRE

In NSW, the delivery of SRE is subject to government legislation and policies and procedures set by the Department of Education. As an approved provider, the Diocese of Broken Bay must ensure that all lesson content taught in schools adheres to authorised materials. The *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* program has been developed and authorised to meet these requirements, ensuring that it complies with both diocesan teaching standards and state regulations.

Catechists are required to use only the materials that have been authorised by the Diocese. This means following the unit outlines, lesson plans, student resources and PowerPoints that have been specifically authorised for use. Going “off-script” and introducing unauthorised materials—whether from online sources, personal preferences, or supplementary resources—can not only confuse students but also breach legal requirements.

Why This Curriculum Works

The *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* program is not just a set of random lessons. It is a carefully mapped-out spiral curriculum designed to guide students through their faith development from Kindergarten to Year 12. Each year builds on the last, increasing in complexity as students progress. The curriculum covers key strands—such as God, Revelation and Human Destiny; Jesus: Human and Divine; Church and Discipleship; Prayer and Sacraments; and Sacred Scripture—ensuring that by the time students complete SRE, they have received a broad Catholic education.

The lessons are age-appropriate and structured to meet students where they are in their faith journey, gradually leading them to deeper understanding and discipleship. By deviating from the authorised curriculum, we risk undermining this carefully constructed progression. We may inadvertently omit key teachings or introduce concepts that are not appropriate for the students' level of understanding.

Creativity Within the Framework

Of course, teaching should not be rigid or devoid of creativity. The *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* program encourages catechists to bring their unique gifts and talents into the classroom, particularly through the use of art, drama, music, storytelling, and other sensory experiences. However, these creative elements must always serve the greater goal of reinforcing the authorised curriculum. But these should always point back to the **AIM** in the lesson plans and the core teachings that have been authorised. Creativity can be a wonderful tool to bring the lessons to life, but it must remain within the boundaries of the authorised materials.

Let's stay the course, remain faithful to the curriculum, and trust in the resources provided. By doing so, we not only fulfill our mission as catechists but also ensure that the *Walking with Jesus: Pathways of Discipleship* program continues to thrive in our schools, bringing students closer to Christ for generations to come.

Kristy Komadina

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Catechists Farewell Year 12 Students at Cheltenham

At Cheltenham Girls High School, the Year 12 Catholic students marked their journey of faith with a heartfelt farewell liturgy prepared by their dedicated catechists. These students have been attending Catholic scripture classes at the school since Year 7, and the farewell liturgy offered a fitting conclusion to their years of faith-based learning. Led by catechist Mary O'Byrne and supported by Year 10 and 12 catechists, the liturgy featured a gospel reading, prayers, hymns, and a homily by Cliff Brennan. Reflecting on the day's gospel story of "Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand," Cliff encouraged the girls to become "passers-on of the good news," drawing connections between the compassion shown in the gospel and their own potential to bring Christ's love to those around them.

The spirit of giving continued through the students' offerings of pantry items for the Jesuit Refugee Service and St. Vincent de Paul, reinforcing the gospel's message of community and care. To commemorate the occasion, each Year 12 student received a personal Bible gifted by the parish, a gesture that brought joy and gratitude to the faces of all the recipients. The farewell liturgy was not only a moment of celebration but a reminder of the catechists' long-standing commitment to sharing the Catholic faith, fostering a lasting spiritual foundation for these young women as they move forward into new chapters of their lives.



Passing the Torch: How One Catechist's Faith Inspires Generations



Helen Walsh from the Parish of Lower North Shore has been a Catechist for 28 years and in that time she has taught thousands of Catholic children who have come through Northbridge Primary School SRE classes.

One of these students is Adeline Kassis who had Helen as her Catechist 3 times over the years. Adeline fondly recalls Helen as a wonderful teacher who was influential in her early formation as person of deep faith in Christ.

These days both Helen and Adeline devote their lives to serving Christ using their many gifts. In addition to being a Catechist, Helen is a Senior Altar Server, gives Communion to the sick, visits the needy in Waterloo each week for Vinnies and washes dishes for the Alpha program run in the parish. Adeline leads the Youth Ministry, is an incredible singer and cantor in the parish, volunteers for Vinnies and is a member of the Parish Missionary Council.

Helen and Adeline's story is a beautiful reminder of the lifelong impact Catechists can have on the faith journeys of their students. By sharing her love for Christ and modeling a life of service, Helen inspired Adeline to follow in her footsteps and find her own calling in the Church. Every lesson, every word, and every small act of kindness can plant a seed that may one day grow into a life of faith and devotion. As a Catechist, know that your presence and example can inspire the next generation to walk with Jesus and serve others, creating bonds in faith that last a lifetime.

Teach, Love, Inspire

Your Roadmap to a Successful Catechist Year

As Catechists, we have a unique opportunity to guide young people's spiritual growth and assist parents in their faith journey. To make a lasting impact, it's essential to approach each lesson with prayer, preparation, and purpose. Here are some key tips for a successful year:

1. Pray Before You Teach

Begin with prayer to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance. Prayer grounds you and reminds you that your role is about forming hearts in faith, not just delivering information.

2. Build Relationships

Learn your students' names and interests. Greet them warmly and show genuine interest in their lives. When students feel known and valued, they're more likely to engage.

3. Set Clear Expectations

Establish classroom rules that reflect respect for one another, God, and the learning environment. Simple guidelines like "Listen when others speak" or "Respect God's Word" create a positive atmosphere. Consistent reminders reinforce these expectations.

4. Use Time Wisely

With limited class time, stick to the authorised curriculum and resources. PowerPoints, quizzes, and additional worksheets are available to support engaging lessons. Active learning tools like props, songs, or drama can make Scripture memorable and meaningful.

5. Encourage Positive Behaviours

Praise students when they listen, participate, or show kindness. Positive reinforcement builds a supportive atmosphere and motivates engagement.

6. Engage the Senses

Incorporate visual aids, music, and hands-on activities to make lessons come alive. For example, a toy sheep can illustrate the Parable of the Good Shepherd. Active learning can make lessons more memorable. Adapt your approach to suit different learning preferences. Why not try drama, music, stories, power point quizzes?

7. Stay Calm and Consistent

Address disruptions with patience and mutual respect. Model Christ-like behaviour and maintain consistent responses to help students understand expectations.

8. Smooth Transitions

Transitions between activities can be tricky. Give clear instructions and a one-minute warning before moving to the next task. Offering choices can also help students stay focused.

9. Foster Prayer and Reflection

End each lesson with a prayer or reflection, encouraging students to connect Scripture to their lives. Leave them with a simple takeaway message to ponder.

10. Partner with Parents

Engage families by sending home the 'Classroom Family Resources' at the end of each Unit which tells parents what we are learning about. Follow up on sacramental notices and ensure parents feel informed and involved.

11. Use Scripture to Guide Behaviour

When addressing disruptions, refer to Scripture. For instance, remind students of Jesus' command to "love one another" (John 13:34) to promote kindness and respect. Bible stories naturally provide opportunities to reinforce Christian values.

12. Seek Support

If challenges arise, reach out to fellow Catechists, your Parish Coordinator, or CCD Regional Coordinator for guidance. Collaborate with peers to share strategies and insights. Pray with your fellow catechists before class!

Starting a new year as a Catechist is both a privilege and a responsibility.

With prayer, patience, and love, your teaching will leave a lasting impact on the young hearts entrusted to you.

Sue-Anne Sherwood

Training and Formation

CCDMI in Term 1

Two CCDMI courses will be run in Term 1, 2025.

This Zoom course will be held weekly over 8 weeks, with the Monday daytime course commencing on **Monday 17 February 2025**. The Tuesday evening Zoom course will begin on **Tuesday 18 February 2025**.

Provisional (yellow) Card catechists can register for the units they have not yet completed - please call CCD Registrations on 8379 1643 or email registrations@bbcatholic.org.au if you need to check your training record.

Click the image on the right to open the flyer, which provides the unit names and dates. Even though the sessions are delivered via Zoom, we do have capacity limits so please register as soon as possible so that you don't miss out.

Email us at registrations@bbcatholic.org.au or call 8379 1643 to register your spot or request a copy of the flyer.



Advent Reflection Days 2024

Thank you to all the incredible Catechists who joined us at our 3 Advent Craft and Reflection Days in December. These days were extremely popular and well attended in each of our 3 regions. Catechists prayed, reflected, crafted and relaxed - the perfect way to cap off another year of sharing our faith. Keep an eye out for more reflection day opportunities this year.



Combined Easter Assembly Ideas

In 2025 all Christian denominations and churches will celebrate Easter Sunday on the same day (20 April). This is because our leaders have agreed to use the dates offered by the Gregorian calendars rather than the Julian Calendar. This is a remarkable gesture which highlights the unity that exists amid the diversity of Christianity. A clear sign of that the Holy Spirit is guiding the Church of Jesus Christ in the world today.

Given the significance of this Easter, it is more appropriate than ever that school assemblies include elements of many Christian traditions. Some of these ideas will be suitable for infants, some for primary and others for high school students one or two might work for all - we shall leave it to you to decide according to the composition of the school community and the variety of SRE classes offered. eg: Catholic, Coptic, Orthodox and Protestant.

When it comes to an assembly for students it is important to focus upon the central event of the **Resurrection** and the beliefs that come from it namely Jesus Christ saving us from sin and death (salvation).

Tell the **Easter Story**. Using Eggs shapes with symbols on the back as each part of the story is told the symbol is revealed. An age appropriate version of the bible is essential.

Sharing various **Easter Traditions** is also an interesting way to explore the meaning of Easter including meals, lights, eggs, crosses. It is such a big story that we may need to make a 3 to 5 year plan with other SRE Teachers about which part to tell each assembly.

With older students the significance of **fasting and feasting** may be explained in the context of the Lenten fast. Many Christian churches encourage fasting as a means of focusing our attention of the significance of the approaching celebration.

High school students may be interested in knowing some of the origins of the Easter Celebrations as a counter to some of the cynicism around the adoption of pagan festivals by the early Christian church. Even if this were true it does not change the significance of the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ for us.



There is now widespread consensus that the word derives from the Christian designation of Easter week as *in albis*, a Latin phrase that was understood as the plural of alba ("dawn") and became eostarum in Old High German, the precursor of the modern German and English term. The Latin and Greek Pascha ("Passover") provides the root for Pâques, the French word for Easter. Once again, we witness a diverse set of influences converging to create a way of celebrating the central event of salvation the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

John Donnelly



Get to know Luce and Friends

Jubilee Prayer for Kids

Dear God,

You are our loving Father in heaven.
Thank you for sending Jesus, your Son, to
show us how to live, and for filling our hearts
with love through the Holy Spirit.

Help us to walk together as Pilgrims of Hope,
trusting in your promises and sharing your love
with the world.

Teach us to plant seeds of kindness, faith, and
peace, so that your message of hope can grow
in every heart.

Help us to keep shining your light
and spreading the good news of Jesus
wherever we go.

We praise and thank you, God, now and
forever.

Amen.



Meet 'Luce', the Bright Guide of Jubilee 2025.

The Vatican's 2025 Jubilee introduces Luce, a cheerful mascot symbolising the Jubilee's theme, Pilgrims of Hope. Created by Simone Legno, Luce—meaning "light" in Italian—is designed to inspire young people on their spiritual journeys. Wearing a yellow raincoat and muddy boots, Luce's look reflects the journey of faith and hope through life's challenges. Accompanied by her loyal dog, Santino, Luce will guide youth and pilgrims toward compassion, resilience, and faith throughout this Holy Year.

Luce is more than just a fun character; she represents the Church's outreach to younger generations. The Vatican aims to connect with young people by embedding Luce in events, festivals, and even pop culture conventions. For Catechists, Luce offers a relatable and engaging way to introduce students to the Jubilee's themes of hope and pilgrimage. By sharing Luce's journey, Catechists can bring the spirit of the Jubilee into the classroom, helping students see themselves as pilgrims on a hopeful path of faith.

Ways to incorporate the Jubilee into your teaching...

- Stay informed on our Diocese's dedicated [Pilgrims of Hope Website](#) for all the latest news and events happening near your students.
- Pray the Jubilee Prayer for Kids
- Talk about ways we can go on our own spiritual journeys this year eg through prayer, through reaching out to our families, through kindness and resilience
- Brainstorm ways that as a class, we can focus on HOPE throughout the year. Make a poster using key themes of Hope, Family Love, Honouring Human Dignity, Caring for Creation, Responding to Poverty, Serving in Solidarity, Living as Peacemakers
- Write a class prayer for the year and pray it every week.



Download your free printable
Luce and Santino
bookmarks!

(click on the picture)

Stay tuned for more
Pilgrims of Hope activities
throughout the year.





2024 Annual Mass Highlights

At the CCD Annual Mass, Fr. David Ranson delivered an inspiring homily that reflected on the mission of catechists as sowers of divine seeds. Drawing from a parable of a woman who sought peace and was offered seed packets to nurture, Fr. David reminded the congregation that our role is not to produce immediate results but to plant, tend, and trust that God will bring growth in His time. He emphasised that Jesus entrusts His mission to imperfect and struggling followers, showing that faith, even with doubts, is enough to answer His call.

Fr. David outlined three key aspects of this mission: to "Go" beyond comfort zones and actively reach others, to "Make disciples" by accompanying them on their faith journey, and to "Baptise" as a sign of belonging to God's family. He reassured catechists with Jesus' promise to be with them always, encouraging courage, community, and trust as they fulfill their calling. The homily was a powerful reminder that catechists are partners in Christ's mission, sowing seeds of faith and hope in the lives they touch.

