

November  
2011



**DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE**

## Children's Ministry Newsletter

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## **EDUCATION MINISTER PLAYS SANTA**

### **STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN STATE SCHOOLS**

NSW Education Minister, Adrian Piccoli (photo right) recently met with representatives of the major Christian providers of SRE. Just twelve months after Ethics classes were legalised, the new minister has moved to strengthen the place of SRE in State Schools.



We are now guaranteed a minimum of 30 minutes teaching time for every one of our lessons. The days of students leaving for reading, band, or fruit breaks are over. The new Education Department guidelines for SRE and Ethics will ensure that every school will allocate at least half an hour every week of the school term to SRE classes.

In addition the Minister has made a commitment to hold an Annual Celebration of SRE as well to provide denominational statistics to ICCOREIS. Furthermore, school enrolment forms are being reviewed in order to remove confusion about religion.

What great Christmas gifts to the school children of NSW! The Christian Churches are looking towards a bright future for SRE in Government Schools.

God bless you and your families  
as we wait upon the birth of our saviour.

*John Donnelly* - Director

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### **Points of Interest**

- 30 minutes guaranteed
- Faith Communities
- New Mass for kids
- Sacraments and RE and SRE
- Churches consider SRE Training
- Planning 2012

## NEWCASTLE & WATAGAN DEANERIES: JENNIE NOLAN

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your commitment to SRE teaching throughout 2011. I know what you do brings so much joy to the children you visit and teach each week.

A number of coordinators from our region attended the Hunter SRE Committee's Encouragement Day to learn about accreditation and to keep up to date with what is happening with the other faith traditions with SRE in the Hunter Schools. It is always good to catch up and share ideas.

A lot of background work has been happening with Secondary Schools to offer Catholic SRE to the children in State High Schools. Some progress is being made.

*Jennie*

### ALL SAINTS PARISH BLACKBUTT SOUTH FAITH COMMUNITIES OF ADAMSTOWN, CARDIFF AND KOTARA

The parish priest of All Saints, Fr. Greg Arnold, teamed up with his catechists celebrating SRE SUNDAY - Invitation to Ministry, Being Good News to State Schools last 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011.

Each faith community's catechists - Adamstown, Kotara and Cardiff, displayed their materials, leaflets, children's works, information etc. for the parishioners to



*Invitation to Ministry display  
at St. Columba's Adamstown*



*SRE display*

see and understand this vital ministry. Brochures and Prayer Partner cards were also distributed. After the Mass, the catechists and supporters were all ears to questions and inquiries.

The DVD recorded by Bishop Bill Wright to promote SRE was played in lieu of the

Sunday's homily. This was well received by the parishioners with interest, reflective silence and full attention. It was truly wonderful to have our bishop promoting our ministry. Our works are highly appreciated and admired!

Reported by Alice Aurisch  
St. Columba's Adamstown



Alice Aurisch, Jennie Nolan and Sr Luke  
at St. Columba's Adamstown

## MYALL DEANERY:

LORETTA HEFFERNAN COORDINATOR

Hello everyone, I hope you are all enjoying the last school term and are looking forward to the Christmas season. This has been a very diverse year with many opportunities offered to help you all continue in your spiritual journeys. The e-conferences and Father Nicholas King are two stand out examples. The e-conferences will be offered again next year; perhaps your group would like to host a session? We at the Children's Ministry office are happy to give support.

Within the Myall Deanery Ethics classes, by all reports, did not impact greatly on SRE classes. In some schools, students did attend ethics classes and were more than happy to return to SRE! Well done to all SRE teachers and assistants, it is a reflection of your hard work and dedication, which has also encouraged school communities to see the value of SRE in State schools.

I hope the end of year school assemblies are a joyous way to end the school year, a lot of extra work for those involved, but well worth the effort. Thank you, to SRE teachers and assistants, SRE coordinators, clergy and religious, parish workers for the active support given to the Ministry. Christmas blessings to you and your families.

*Loretta*

### Recognition of Service

Each year we recognise SRE Teachers and Assistants for each 5 years of service. We are currently compiling information for the 2012 Diocesan Mass. If you are due for a certificate to recognise your service to SRE, please contact our office.

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## HUNTER DEANERY:

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### USING AN INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARD

Both children and adults benefit from a variety of strategies that help revise and reinforce what we need to know but in the end it is having a go and practice that is the key to learning. Fifteen SRE teachers gathered in Greta both to learn and to share ideas on using 'Interactive Whiteboards' to support their lessons. So what did they share?



Mary Smith at Greta

- SRE lessons and activities can be so much easier with most of the preparation done at home and copied to a USB stick or CD to take to the classroom.
- The student worksheets can be scanned as a demonstration copy to work from on the board. Another copy with the answers allows students to correct their work.
- Show the main points of the lessons as needed or use for review or brainstorming.
- Whole class brainstorming to begin the lesson - the students' answers can be written up and deleted later if required.
- Great for showing DVDs or downloading video clips (no extra equipment needs to be organised!!!)

Seeing other ideas and listening to stories inspired participants and gave everyone courage to try other ideas for themselves. Several SRE programs now include a CD with a range of creative lesson supports.



Children need material presented in a variety of ways to help them master the topic. They need to see, hear and do. To this end 'Interactive Whiteboards' play an important part in supporting learning in the modern classroom but there is still a place for craft, drama and bookwork. Follow-up session on May 1, 2012.

*Mary Smith* Parish Coordinator—Singleton

## COORDINATORS NETWORKING MORNING



The Hunter Christian SRE Committee hosted a meeting for school coordinators and contact people on 31st October at St Matthew's Georgetown.

The day began with a time of worship in which Gillian Knight led a reflection upon the story of Gideon who needed reassurance from God.

Committee members presented updates on Ethics and Strengthening SRE in the wake of the introduction of Ethics classes. The meeting discussed the ICCOREIS proposal to mandate training for SRE Teachers. Coordinators raised the issue of recruitment and shared insights on Biblical Storytelling.



As always the fellowship was great among people from various churches of the region and the support and encouragement of the committee was much appreciated. Plans are already in place to continue meeting in 2012.

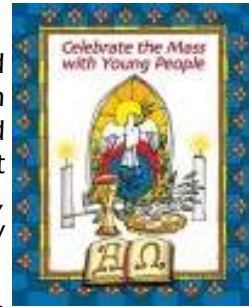
### ICCOREIS Mandatory Training

The Inter Church Commission of Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS) has asked the NSW Heads of Churches for an 'in-principle' agreement on Mandatory Training for all SRE Teachers. We look forward to further developments in 2012.

# RESOURCES

## *Celebrate the Mass with Young People*

The publication of the new Mass text has provided the opportunity for a revitalised Mass Book with colourful, quirky illustrations of real people created by celebrated artist Geoff Hocking. John Garratt Publishing has produced a guide for children, teachers, catechists and parents with the new responses and texts of the Mass.



Children will find this book fun to use as well as a simple way to become familiar with the new prayers. The text and illustrations have been approved by the Australian Bishops Commission for Liturgy and the Archdiocese of Melbourne so parents and teachers can be confident that the contents conform to current Catholic Church requirements.

## *Order of the Mass Laminated Poster Set*

This poster set complements the new Children's Mass Book published by John Garratt. Children will respond enthusiastically to the delightful illustrations and clear layout.

This resource is ideal for use in classroom and parish settings and will prove an invaluable catechetical tool to reinforce the new texts and enhance understanding of the new translation of the Order of the Mass.



## *Prayers of the Mass Laminated Poster Set*

Another poster set with the new text of the prayers for Children's Masses. 6 laminated posters with the Prayers of the Mass includes: Penitential Act, The Gloria, The Apostles' Creed, Holy, Holy, Holy, The Lord's Prayer, Lamb of God.



*Felicity Lee* - Librarian

## SRE COORDINATOR OF ST BRIGID'S PARISH

Being the coordinator of both SRE and the Children's Parish Sacramental Programme in Raymond Terrace has provided me with a great opportunity for a closer working relationship with the teachers in our Parish Catholic School. The Parish Catholic School has always made its resources available to SRE teachers, but working closely with the school's RE coordinator in



Lidy with Raymond Terrace SRE teachers and assistants at Child Protection Training 14 November

preparing the children from both the Catholic and the State Schools in our Parish for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion has given me the opportunity to know what resources the school has available, and also to use the expertise of the RE coordinator in providing a Parish-based programme which is used by all the Catholic children in our Parish, regardless of which school the children are attending. I am also hoping to use this connection with the Parish Catholic school in assisting SRE teachers to know what resources the school has available and how they can be accessed and utilised. We are very blessed in our Parish to still be able to provide Catholic SRE to around

### Resource Service

- Religious Education in the classroom
- ESL and Special Education
- Religious Music and Films

**Librarian** - Felicity Lee

Phone: 4902 9100 Fax 4962 3019

Tuesday 10.00am – 6.00pm

Wednesday 2.00pm – 6.00pm

Friday 9.00pm – 5.00pm

<http://resourcecentre.mn.catholic.edu.au>

400 Catholic children who attend the 6 state primary schools in our Parish. My gratitude goes out to the 20 faith-filled, committed volunteers who provide these children with ongoing faith formation and evangelisation. In the words of Oscar Romero *'We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.'*

*Lidy Waanders - Raymond Terrace*

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## End of Year Celebrations

**Newcastle Region**  
**December 2**  
**The Junction**  
**10.00am**  
Feel free to bring  
some goodies to  
share a light lunch

**Myall Deanery**  
**December 6**  
**Tea Gardens**  
**11am**  
Please bring a plate  
to share for lunch

**Vineyards Region**  
**December 6**  
**Kurri Kurri**  
**9.30am**  
Please bring a plate  
to share at morning  
tea after the Mass

Reflection Day  
and  
End of Year Celebration  
with Bishop Bill Wright  
Thursday 1 December  
**MORPETH**  
10am—2.30pm

**DATE CLAIMER**  
**Level 1**  
**NELSON BAY, 2012**

27<sup>th</sup> Feb  
26<sup>th</sup> March  
30<sup>th</sup> April  
28<sup>th</sup> May

**Diocesan Mass for 2012** will be on Friday 10 February and parishes will be encouraged to celebrate Catechists Weekend in local churches.

Resources for local celebrations will be made available in January.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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John Donnelly: 4979 1329  
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### Newcastle/Watagan Coordinator

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