



Catholic Education
Commission NSW

PO Box 20768
World Square NSW 2002

(+61 2) 9287 1555
cecsw@cecsw.catholic.edu.au
www.cecsw.catholic.edu.au

ABN: 33 266 477 369

Catholic Schools at a Crossroads

Implementation case studies
July 2014

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON STUDENTS	4
LITURGICAL MINISTRIES TRAINING DAY	4
MAKING JESUS REAL (A)	6
MAKING JESUS REAL (B)	8
MAKING JESUS REAL (C)	10
WORLD YOUTH DAY	12
ONLINE RELIGIOUS LITERACY ASSESSMENT	15
INTRODUCTION OF CSYMA INTO STAGE 5 CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS	19
CATHOLIC SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY	21
PRAYING THE ANGELUS	23
STOP AND PRAY! CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND ANGELUS	25
YEAR 5 AND 6 CHRISTMAS ART STORYTELLING - LOCAL CONTEXT	27
JUNIOR JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATION	29
INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON STAFF MEMBERS	31
LAMPLIGHTER SPIRITUAL FORMATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAM MINISTRY	31
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AS CENTRES OF THE NEW EVANGELISATION	34
CONNECTIONS	36
BEGINNING TEACHER RETREATS	38
FAITH AT THE FIDDLER	40
DIVINE CONVERSATIONS	42
PROCLAIM LISMORE 2013	44
LINK, LISTEN, LEARN, LEAD PROGRAM	46
SALT AND LIGHT	48
SILOAM: FAITH FORMATION FOR PRINCIPALS	50
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION FOR LEADERS	52
INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON SCHOOL/PARISH COMMUNITIES	53
CROSSROADS EVANGELISATION GRANTS	53
CLASS PRAYER BAGS	56
FAMILY EDUCATOR PROJECT (FAMILY AND FAITH PROGRAM)	58
COMPANIONS IN THE FAITH PROGRAM	61
KINDER – TRANSITION WELCOME TO THE CHURCH PROGRAM	63
PARISH – FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER	65
WEBSITE FOR FORMATION OF PARENTS SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN IN FAITH	68

INTRODUCTION

On 8 August 2007, the Catholic Bishops of NSW-ACT released the Pastoral Letter, *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads*. The purpose of this Pastoral Letter was and remains to “reaffirm our commitment to Catholic schooling, while at the same time challenging all those involved to embrace the new evangelisation to which Catholic schools are called in this new century”.

The Catholic Bishops of NSW-ACT invited “all those involved in Catholic education – our educational leaders and staff, clergy and religious, parents and parish communities – to dedicate themselves to ensuring that our schools:

- are truly Catholic in their identity and life
- are centres of ‘the new evangelisation’
- enable our students to achieve high levels of ‘Catholic religious literacy’ and
- are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals”.

In the intervening seven years, Dioceses and Congregational schools have responded to this invitation by introducing a number of initiatives designed to address the key goals of *Crossroads* listed above. This collection of case studies is intended to provide those working in the area of *Crossroads* implementation with ideas and insights on possible projects for implementation by their school and/or diocese. By providing an outline of each activity, including its implementation process, its aims, its cost and its measures of success (whether successful or not), insights can be gained as to how each initiative might be implemented in different settings. By drawing on what others have learnt it is hoped that the case studies will be a useful stimulus for dioceses and/or schools who are embracing the new evangelisation to which Catholic schools are called.

CECNSW thanks all who have contributed to this collection of case studies, particularly those who have kindly agreed to act as contact persons for their diocese.

INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON STUDENTS

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES TRAINING DAY

**Crossroads
areas**

addressed Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Wollongong

Contacts Patricia O’Gorman
Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator, Diocesan Youth Ministry Chaplain and
Diocesan Liturgy Coordinator
Catholic Education Office, Wollongong
Pat.Ogorman@dow.catholic.edu.au

Outline This program is designed to foster the service of secondary students in liturgical ministries. It provides them with formation and training so that they can come forward in the school and/or parish and assist at Mass as lectors, cantors or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC).

Aims

The training day aims to:

- invite students into deeper participation in Catholic life and culture through service of the liturgy
- help students understand the nature of liturgical ministries and their role in serving the prayer of the Assembly
- provide spiritual reflection on the Eucharist
- educate students about the history and tradition of the Eucharist and what is required of an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion
- educate students about the structure of the Church’s liturgical calendar and lectionaries and what is required when publicly proclaiming the Liturgy of the Word
- educate students about the requirements for the sung Responsorial Psalm and how this is to be led by the cantor

**Implementation
Process**

Development

- Proposal discussed with the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, noting diocesan guidelines for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and for relationship of such programs to local parishes
- Application forms developed to include a priest’s endorsement for students applying for training in EMHC
- Content of the training discussed and prepared by the team as defined above
- Links made to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan

Administration

- Information and application forms are sent to Liturgy Coordinators in secondary schools
- Selection criteria (such as being a fully initiated Catholic with regular Mass attendance) are noted
- Students are invited/nominated/volunteer to participate
- Forms are processed at the CEO and records kept
- Certificates are produced for all participants acknowledging training has been completed
- Students who train as EMHC are required to be commissioned within their parish Training

Day

- This is a whole day program and the average attendance is about 70 students

Post-training

- Schools follow through on organising for commissioning of EMHC
- Schools provide opportunities for students to minister at their school Masses

Measures of success

- The initiative addresses the areas outlined in the Crossroads document
- Students become actively engaged in serving at school and/or parish liturgy
- Students deepen their faith through service to the liturgical assembly
- Students further develop their knowledge about the Mass
- Students experience a Mass with other youth from around the Diocese
- Students become strong witnesses in their own communities
- The above are evident in commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, participation on a parish roster, and ministry at school Masses

Cost

Costs are minimal and depend on catering and venue choices

Suitability for other dioceses

This is a program transferable to other Dioceses

Further comment

Each year, the team continues to refine and improve the program. It was initially delivered in two regions of the Diocese with two separate training days but now it comprises one day for the entire Diocese. The travel involved for some schools can present challenges but most schools are able to attend. Improved follow-up needs to be developed with some parishes and the program lends itself to exploring the role of priests in further supporting the young people.

MAKING JESUS REAL (A)

Crossroads areas addressed

Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Wilcannia-Forbes

Contacts

Therese Newell
Administrator of Religious Education
Catholic Education Office, Wilcannia-Forbes
therese.newell@wf.catholic.edu.au.com

Outline

In 2011, as part of the Leadership program for students in Stage 3, staff at a small rural school decided to use the *Making Jesus Real* resource, an initiative of Peter Mitchell from Hobart Catholic Education Office. The school was aiming to promote a positive attitude to student leadership and this resource was chosen as it used Jesus as a role model for the qualities of a good leader.

Aims

- Promote a positive attitude in student leaders through assisting in the development of people skills and life skills
- Provide examples of good leadership and of the qualities of good leaders
- Develop journaling skills with Stage 3 students
- Focus on 'God Moments' in students' lives
- Embed the qualities of Jesus into the students' everyday life

Implementation

Process

Using *Making Jesus Real* as part of the Student Leadership program involved:

Introduction – Year 5 Leadership Day in November

- The resource was introduced to students as they focus on activities that require them to:
 - identify positive and negative attitudes to life
 - reflect on the qualities of good leaders
 - explore examples of great leaders starting with Jesus
 - reflect on the role of student leader
- The day ends with a special prayer ceremony during which the students receive their *Making Jesus Real* books for the following year

Using *Making Jesus Real*, Year 6 throughout their Year of Leadership

- Throughout the year the students use their *Making Jesus Real* books to reflect on 'God Moments' in their lives (these are special times when they pick up Jesus' messages on how to live kindly, cheerfully and with consideration for others)
- They may provide God Moments for other people - (it's about giving and receiving)
- The students complete a reflective journal about these moments throughout the year
- They also use their *Making Jesus Real* book when they face challenges throughout the year and need Jesus' guidance to help solve their issues

Sending Forth – Year 6 two-day retreat in November

- The *Making Jesus Real* book is used at the Year 6 Retreat to focus on the skills that are needed as they embark on the next stage of their journey of life in high school
- At the final liturgy the students are handed their *Making Jesus Real* book and are invited to refer to it in the future for guidance when they face life's challenges

**Measures
of success**

- The initiative addresses the areas specific to the Crossroads document
- The students participated enthusiastically in the Year 5 leadership day and engaged well in *Making Jesus Real* activities
- Students are heard using terms like 'God Moment' and other examples of *Making Jesus Real* language in their everyday speech
- The students participated responsibly in the Year 6 retreat and used their books appropriately
- The aim is to have *Making Jesus Real* language embedded in the school culture in the next few years
- The program is a key vehicle in re-evangelising some staff
- It is key to passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Cost

Each Year 5 student receives a *Making Jesus Real* book as a gift from the school at a cost of \$21 each

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

This initiative could be undertaken in both rural and metropolitan contexts. It is a 'way of life' that can be implemented anywhere by anyone. If well supported and understood at school level *Making Jesus Real* could work in any primary school.

**Further
comment**

- The students relate well to the resource and it is easy to use
- One factor to be aware of is in the passing on of the initiative to new staff. In a school with a high turnover of staff, the school leadership needs to make sure there is an induction for new staff at the beginning of each year
- In this small rural school where the resource will soon be used across the school this is particularly pertinent.

MAKING JESUS REAL (B)

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Wagga Wagga

Contacts

Christopher Cotter
Assistant Director of Schools: Catholic Life & Mission
Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga
cotterc@ww.catholic.edu.au

Outline

The key objective was to create the conditions for discipleship to flourish in Catholic primary schools. The *Making Jesus Real* program was implemented to provide primary school teachers and students with an accessible and common language and set of strategies that integrate faith into the daily classroom routine and influence the culture of the whole school.

Aims

- Allow students to encounter Jesus and engage with his message
- Learn to use a form of the daily 'Examen of consciousness' prayer: 'Where was Jesus in my life today?'
- Learn and use a common and accessible language to express faith and understand the power of a faith-filled life to transform the whole person: body, mind and spirit
- Promote students' personal wellbeing by having a healthy and growing relationship with Jesus

Implementation process

- Initial visits by school and CSO staff to Tasmania for exposure to and training in *Making Jesus Real*
- School principal seconded for 12 months to CSO to launch, initiate *Making Jesus Real* with Year 6 students in the 27 Primary schools
- *MJR* networks established among primary schools
- Training and support provided
- Explicit links made between *Making Jesus Real* and wellbeing programs already established in schools and at system level
- Information and training given to REC's at network meetings
- (2012) Teacher seconded for 12 months to CSO to lead *Making Jesus Real* networks and in-service teachers
- Further training and support provided at these networks
- Network meetings held once per term in clusters
- CSO sponsors *Making Jesus Real* networks in clusters
- (2014) Formal review of the effectiveness *Making Jesus Real* undertaken by CSO

Measures of success

- This initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Fewer than 10 primary schools of a possible 27 have implemented *Making Jesus Real* in an ongoing and sustained program across K-6
- The program is a key vehicle in re-evangelising some staff
- It is key to passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Cost	In Wagga the two secondments have been the most expensive aspects of implementing <i>Making Jesus Real</i> .
Suitability for other dioceses	If well supported and understood at school level <i>MJR</i> could work in any primary school.
Further Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Making Jesus Real</i> was designed exclusively as a leadership program for Year 6 students – in the schools where it is successful a K-6 approach has been adopted • <i>Making Jesus Real</i> is aimed at students and assumes that faith-filled teachers will lead, teach and model it in each school • Resources need to be allocated to teacher faith-formation, and a detailed plan for implementation developed.

MAKING JESUS REAL (C)

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Wagga Wagga

Contacts

Christopher Cotter
Assistant Director of Schools: Catholic Life & Mission
Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga
cotterc@ww.catholic.edu.au

Outline

To provide secondary school teachers and students with an accessible and common language and set of strategies that integrates faith into the daily classroom routine and influence the culture of the whole school. Key objective: to create the conditions for discipleship to flourish in Catholic secondary schools.

Aims

That students will:

- continue and extend the primary *Making Jesus Real* initiative into high schools
- encounter and engage with Jesus and his message
- learn to use a form of the daily 'examen of consciousness' prayer: *Where was Jesus in my life today?*
- learn and use a common and accessible language to express faith and understand the power of a faith-filled life to transform the whole person: body, mind and spirit
- experience improved personal wellbeing by having a healthy and growing relationship with Jesus

Implementation process

2008 Initial visits by school and CSO staff to Tasmania for exposure to and training in 'Being the Good News' and 'Raising the Bar' (*Making Jesus Real – Secondary*)

2009 Follow-up visits to school and check-in from CSO Education Officer, RE. Some random and un-sustained activity to implement *Making Jesus Real – Secondary* at schools

2010 No activity in *Making Jesus Real – Secondary*. Program discontinued

Measures of success

- *Making Jesus Real* is key vehicle in re-Evangelising some staff in 10 primary schools
- It addresses the areas identified in the *Crossroads* document
- No secondary school has implemented *Making Jesus Real – Secondary*
- *Making Jesus Real – Secondary* is not a key vehicle in passing on the Catholic faith, life and culture to students in secondary schools in the Wagga Wagga diocese

Cost:

N/A

Suitability for other dioceses

If well supported and understood at school level *Making Jesus Real – Secondary* could work in any secondary school

**Further
Comment**

The key learnings:

Making Jesus Real – Secondary failed as an initiative because:

- secondary Principals and leadership teams had limited understanding of the program and its purpose
- there was no strategic plan developed at a system or school level to implement the program.

WORLD YOUTH DAY

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Sydney

Contacts David Cloran
Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator
Catholic Education Office, Sydney
david.cloran@syd.catholic.edu.au

Outline Following on from the success of WYD08 in Sydney, and in recognition the identified potential benefits of WYD on a student's faith life, a commitment was made to support and encourage as many students as possible to experience this once-in-a-lifetime event. Since 2008, over 850 student and teacher pilgrims have attended international WYD celebrations in Madrid and Rio de Janeiro. Following a thorough formation program, student and teacher pilgrims are immersed in various cultures in the week leading up to WYD. As an addition to the WYD13 project, pilgrims participated in a variety of mission and outreach projects in their country of pilgrimage. Furthermore, after engaging in the events of WYD week, students also participated in a post WYD retreat where they were able to reflect on the experience that they had shared as a pilgrimage group.

Aims

- Give students the opportunity to participate in a pilgrimage of faith, shared by Catholic youth from around the world
- Offer teachers and students the opportunity to explore, nurture and develop their own faith lives through their involvement in this significant celebration of the universal church
- Complement, not supplement, the range of evangelisation and youth ministry initiatives that are currently offered by the CEO Sydney
- Provide students with an opportunity to experience ways whereby other cultures celebrate their faith
- Provide students with practical mission experiences in some of the world's most marginalised and disadvantaged communities

Implementation Process

Preparation

Initial preparations for an international WYD event commence soon after the conclusion of the preceding event. Commencing with an evaluation of the most recent WYD, initial preparations focus on the establishment of a Working Party and the selection of pre-WYD pilgrimage and post-WYD retreat destinations. Conversations with the official tour provider also commence.

Promotion

With the launch of WYD no later than Palm Sunday the year before it is held, schools are supplied with a range of multimedia and hardcopy packages highlighting pilgrimage options, indicative pricing and requirements of pilgrims and pilgrim group leaders (teachers). CEO invites any interested students and parents to attend information evenings which are conducted at each of the secondary schools in the archdiocese. An indication of student levels of interest is obtained by receiving an Expression of Interest form by students who are then invited to attend a One Year Out celebration where further details of WYD and its

associated events are provided.

Pilgrim Registration

Students confirm their attendance by submitting to their school all the relevant paperwork, a copy of their passport, and a \$500 deposit.

Pilgrim Preparation and Formation

Once students are confirmed as pilgrims, Pilgrim Group Leaders (PGLs) are allocated from the most appropriate schools based on student representation and Chaplains are appointed in conjunction with the broader archdiocesan WYD project. Students are kept up-to-date with regards to WYD developments via regular bulletins, the CEO website and the CEO WYD smartphone application.

Students participate in a CEO coordinated formation program which includes modules that teachers present at a school level, supported by a Pilgrim Formation Day and a WYD Commissioning Mass. CEO uniforms (shirts, jackets, caps) and other paraphernalia are organised.

Pilgrimage

Students depart on their WYD pilgrimage, visiting locations of religious significance in their country of pilgrimage, as well as experiencing the broader culture and attractions in various locations. Students engage in WYD week activities, including daily catechesis and the major gatherings with the Pope. Following WYD week, students participate in a post WYD retreat, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their experience and discern how the effects of this pilgrimage can be harnessed in order to motivate further engagement with their faith lives upon return to Australia.

Post WYD

Bus leaders from each international WYD celebration have been responsible for the provision of opportunities for post WYD gatherings and bus group reunions. These gatherings receive overwhelming support from students, PGLs and Bus Chaplains who lead each group in a Mass before all pilgrims take part in a social event.

Measures of success

- In a post WYD11 survey, 51% of respondents strongly agreed, and 34% agreed with the faith-strengthening impact of WYD. Following WYD13, 63% strongly agreed, while 28% agreed (over 95% response rate)
- In a post WYD11 survey, 58% of respondents strongly agreed, and 26% agreed that WYD was one of the best experiences of their lives. Following on from WYD13, 85% strongly agreed, while 14% agreed (over 95% response rate)
- Sydney CEO led a delegation of 524 pilgrims to Madrid. This was the equivalent of 15% of the total Australian contingent
- Sydney CEO led a delegation of 346 pilgrims, which was 66% of our Madrid numbers, and represented 25% of the Australian delegation
- In 2013, the CEO Sydney sent the largest delegation from anywhere in Australia to the ACYF in Melbourne. In 2014 there are 4 major catechesis events being coordinated by schools and the offices of the CEO Sydney
- Chaplain-Student engagement was overwhelmingly positive with all Chaplains readily available for follow up events upon return from WYD
- WYD addresses the areas identified in the Crossroads document

Cost

As with any overseas immersion, costs for this project are significant. In 'off' years (e.g. 2014 and 2015) the CEO allocates \$100,000 for expenses relating to WYD preparation and promotion. In 2011, the CEO WYD project cost just under \$1,000,000 while in 2013, due to the fewer pilgrims attending, a budget of \$750,000 was allocated. With anticipated numbers for WYD16 set to surpass those from Rio, an initial budget of \$1,000,000 will once again be made available. Costs are minimal and depend on catering and venue choices.

Suitability for other dioceses

The WYD project at a national level has been coordinated to ensure that WYD remains accessible to smaller groups and diocese from across Australia. The appointment of a national tour provider ensures that many of the logistics involved are coordinated on behalf of all dioceses.

Furthermore, larger groups and dioceses have consistently made their resources available to smaller groups as a means of ensuring their safe, well-organised and fruitful participation. While the financial commitment is significant, a systematic, 3-year cycle of preparation should ensure participation is both realistic and worthwhile for smaller groups and diocese.

Further comment

- Following on from the success of WYD in Rio, the CEO Sydney is currently in its preparation phase for WYD in Krakow. A Working Party has been established and consideration is being given to possible pilgrimage locations which will be secured once a tour provider is appointed.
- Qualitative and quantitative research has clearly identified the significant social and psychological impact that a WYD pilgrimage has on young people, particularly among those searching in their faith.
- An organisation like the CEO and the church more broadly, must ensure that the enthusiasm and renewed passion that exists among the young people that return from a WYD experience are harnessed and embraced.
- Student participation in mission work projects was, for most, a highlight of their WYD experience and therefore must remain central to any future WYD pilgrimages.
- Such is the pace of a WYD pilgrimage, there is little time for reflection on the daily encounters and experiences that student's witness. A post-WYD retreat provides this opportunity and as such, should be retained as yet another essential requirement of any WYD pilgrimage.

ONLINE RELIGIOUS LITERACY ASSESSMENT

Crossroads areas

addressed Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Parramatta

Contacts Anthony Gordon
Team Leader, Evangelisation and Religious Education (ERE)
Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta
agordon3@parra.catholic.edu.au

Outline Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta entered into a partnership with Creative Ministry Resources to assemble the first online, system-wide religious literacy assessment tool. Online religious literacy assessment is efficient and convenient in that the testing and results are accessed through the one interactive site.

This religious literacy assessment project provides at a diocesan level a sustained and systemic approach to the documentation and reporting of students' learning in the key learning area of Religious Education, specifically religious literacy. Thus, assessment of religious literacy focuses on students' knowledge and understanding of the key concepts that are being addressed by the Religious Education program and the students' ability to communicate with their religious tradition.

The religious literacy assessment is placed in Year 4, Year 6, Year 8 and Year 10 of schooling. The report data are used by schools to assist them in improving religious literacy and teaching strategies in religious education.

Aims

The purpose of the online religious literacy assessment instrument is:

- to profile and understand the extent and level of religious literacy with regard to students' learning across Stages 1 through to 5
- to improve teaching, learning and accountability within religious education and drive a culture of reflection on learning and pedagogy in RE
- to use data to report back to key stakeholders including parents, students, schools, Bishop Anthony Fisher OP, the Diocesan Schools Board and the system in general

Implementation Process

2009-2010 Consultation with RECs and first bank of questions written

Dec 2010 Partnership established between Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta and Patrick Nisbet, Creative Ministry Resources (Content - CEDP, Technology - CMR)

Aug/Sept 2011 online trial and test for all Year 4 and Year 8 students across the diocese

Oct 2011 individual student, class and school reports generated

2012 continued development including refinement of reporting; school-generated reports; 'change answer' feature; more questions written, validated and added to the bank of questions

2013 Year 6 and Year 10 online trial; feature added to allow test to be completed on tablet and smartphone; wider range of report data offered to schools including cohort trend data; more questions written, validated and added to the bank of questions

Measures of success

- This initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Online religious literacy assessment instrument functional across the system in Year 4 and Year 8 since 2011
- Year 6 and Year 10 added in 2013
- Individual Student Report sent to each student's parents recording student achievement 2011-2013
- Student, class and school report data available online for schools to access on the Parramatta Catholic Literacy site 2011-13. Breadth of data expanded each year
- Increased use of religious literacy strategies in the classroom. Schools using religious literacy data to inform the school-wide formation goal
- System-wide improvement in results across all year levels and cohort growth from 2011-2013 e.g. Year 4 results improved by 3.6%, Year 8 results improved by 1.2%
- The initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

- Teacher release for question writing and training
- Fee to Creative Ministry Resources 2013 (first 2 years free as part of the partnership):
- Funding for project is sustainable. Training costs will become minimal as the project continues as most teachers have been trained and are now familiar with the instrument

Suitability for other dioceses

- High level of transferability of this project dependent upon the budget available to each diocese
- Creative Ministry Resources can adapt the instrument to suit local needs

Further comment

- Online religious literacy assessment is an ongoing successful initiative across the systemic Catholic schools of the Diocese of Parramatta
- The system is efficient in being the site upon which students are tested and where schools can access report data
- Various 'teething' problems have been experienced at times with system-wide online testing. Most problems relate to server outages and conditions outside of the control of the online literacy site
- It is recommended that dioceses who adopt online religious literacy assessment work closely with their own IT department in ensuring that they are included in preparatory and ongoing conversations in order to establish feasibility of local IT support.

SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR EUCHARIST PROGRAM

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Maitland-Newcastle

Contacts Ray Collins
Director of Schools
Catholic Schools Office, Maitland-Newcastle
ray.collins@mn.catholic.edu.au

Outline Prepare and implement a program of school based Eucharistic
Liturgies at a rural Catholic high school

Aims

- To celebrate the Eucharist regularly at the school
- To prepare all students for the Eucharist providing information on the history and meaning of Eucharist
- To include students in planning parts of the Mass, their Eucharist celebrations, including composition of prayers and rehearsal of hymns
- To involve RE Teachers, Student Coordinators and Administration Teachers in the information and preparation sessions, as well as participating in the Eucharist celebrations
- To expose students to wide-ranging and to relevant styles of prayers and worship, linked to significant church and school calendar feasts and events
- To expose students (including non-Catholic students) to Church rituals, and celebration of the Mass

Implementation process

- Meetings of school Executive Members and Chaplain to plan calendar of events
- Publication of proposed calendar of activities to all stakeholders displaying the schedule of class Masses
- Half-hour information session per class conducted by the ministry coordinator on parts of the Mass
- Half-hour information and question and answer session per class conducted by the Chaplain
- Half-hour preparation period run by Administration teacher/RE teacher to plan for their class mass e.g. develop the Prayers of the Faithful/select readers/plans for the hymns
- 40 minute class Mass in local church, with dialogue homily
- Masses for full school held with frequent stops to explain what is happening e.g.
 - Mass for opening of school year
 - Mass for Ash Wednesday followed by distribution of Ashes
 - Mass for Catholic Schools Week
 - Mass for St Joseph's Feast Day

Measures of success

- The initiative addressed the areas identified in the *Crossroads* document
- Year 7, 8 and 9 experienced the program and knowledge outcomes were incorporated into RE Assessment structures
- Years 7, 8 and 9 and later Years 11 and 12 through their retreat program were able to prepare celebrations
- Students in years 7, 8 and 9 took part in effective celebrations and whole school Eucharistic Liturgies which were very positive
- Feedback from Form liturgies conducted by a visiting priest has been more negative, commenting on students lack of awareness of what is going on
- Students continue to respond positively and prayerfully to school-produced liturgies but plans to introduce a wider range of prayer experiences have been abandoned due to the absence of the Parish Priest/School Chaplain

Cost

- Time and resources of Chaplain and school staff, especially the Ministry Coordinator and RE teachers
- Purchase of new Roman Missal and other Mass equipment

Suitability for other dioceses

Projects would be difficult without an enthusiastic priest with a charismatic personality who can establish bonds with secondary school students and be prepared to attend RE lessons. Success is very dependent on the capacity of the priest to connect with and command the respect of the students.

Also requires:

- a priest who is patient and understanding of where the students, many of whom are 'unchurched', are up to in their faith journey
- a flexible school staff

Further comment

- After a term and a half of successful implementation, the Chaplain was withdrawn from active ministry and not replaced. Apart from major events such as the Year 12 Graduation Mass where senior clergy from the Diocese are willing to take part, no other clergy were available or have the skills and ability to communicate effectively with students. The program has lost its momentum, and to reintroduce it, staff will be required to 'start from scratch'
- The school has a solid tradition of non-Eucharistic prayer and this continues since the departure of the Chaplain
- On reflection, it is clear that the project was too dependent on the personality and drive of one man, the Chaplain, and when he was withdrawn from active ministry, no alternative personnel or structures were available to assist students to take part in Eucharistic Celebrations
- In the future, we intend to focus on other ways to support the project. For example, develop liturgical music group/prepare a report of suitable music to engage students.

INTRODUCTION OF CSYMA INTO STAGE 5 CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Crossroads areas addressed

Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation

Diocese

Lismore

Contacts

Matt de Dassel
Student Discipleship Formation Consultant, SEACS Team,
Catholic Schools Office, Lismore
mdedassel@lism.catholic.edu.au

Outline

CSYMA is a New Evangelisation initiative to build student discipleship through peer to peer ministry. This is implemented through the introduction of a secondary school curriculum-based program. Units within this program develop the concepts of Youth Ministry, Student Discipleship and Student Faith Leadership. Students within this program conduct liturgies and retreats within their school and in feeder primary schools.

Aims

- Evangelisation: to offer students the opportunity to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- Nurture: to enable students to become Disciples of Jesus through a daily walk of faith, prayer, fellowship, service and mission
- Education in faith: to offer teaching to students in areas of doctrine, scripture and spirituality so that faith experience might find understanding
- Initiation: to incorporate students into the life of the Church, and to develop in them Catholic identity, including drawing young people into Sacramental participation
- Mission: to participate in areas of mission and beyond the school
- Leadership: to develop Christian leadership attributes and skills
<http://csyma.com.au/about/vision-and-framework-guide/>

Implementation process

Phase One: Retreat experience is offered as an annual Diocesan Gathering of students

Phase Two:

- 2011 - Key staff from the Catholic Schools Office and Parish Secondary schools attended a CSYMA Staff Conference
- 2012 - Five pilot schools trialled the CSYMA Program
- 2013 - The number of classes in the five pilot schools doubled
- 2014 - An additional six secondary schools (representing the remainder of secondary schools in the Diocese) commenced the program

Phase Three: the establishment of Senior Youth Ministry Teams in Parish Secondary schools. This initiative is currently being implemented

Phase Four:

- Two Ministry Trainees were employed in Parish Secondary Schools in 2013
- Seven Ministry Trainees are employed in Parish Secondary Schools across the Diocese of Lismore in 2014

**Measures
of success**

- This program addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- 100% of Parish Secondary Schools now offering 1 or 2 CSYMA classes in Year 9 and/or 10
- 2012 – 150 students attended gathering
- 2013 – 300 students attended gathering
- 2014 – projected 500 students attend gathering
- 2013 – 2 School Based Ministry Trainees
- 2014 – 7 School Based Ministry Trainees

Cost

Initial and ongoing annual cost is \$12,000-\$15,000 for Diocesan membership of CSYMA giving access to website and resources to twelve Parish Secondary schools.

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

This model has been successfully developed in the ACT and now transferred to several Dioceses across the state including the Lismore Diocese. Implementing as a diocesan initiative allows for economies of scale when purchasing membership to the program as well as networking and skill sharing among staff implementing the program in schools.

**Further
comment**

- CSYMA has grown from being in one school in the diocese in 2011 to twelve Parish secondary schools conducting a total of twenty CSYMA classes in 2014
- Schools across the diocese have differed in the way they have completed Phase 1 of the Four Phase Model. While students at some schools are presented with an interactive information session including the 'Catch the Wave' video-clip and testimony from past students before filling out their application forms, students in other schools experience a retreat experience before officially starting the program
- In any case it has proved crucial to the ongoing success of the CSYMA Ministry classes that students are involved voluntarily
- Gathered together, with like-minded students and teachers offering authentic witness, these classes have managed to build critical Catholic mass in schools in a very short timeframe. This critical mass is evident in the fact that the ministry classes are becoming a sought-after opportunity by younger students coming through the school
- As a result of the CSYMA classes, students are taking key roles in the planning of major school liturgies, involvement in social justice groups like St Vincent de Paul, and planning and implementing retreat days for primary and junior high school students.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Broken Bay

Contacts John McGrath
Assistant Director
Catholic Schools Office, Broken Bay
john.mcgrath@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Outline The initiative set out to provide a learning and formation program differentiated for those Years 10-12 students who freely opt to follow a curriculum and ministry pathway focused on participation in the wider life of the Church.

Aims

- To build on the momentum of WYD08 by responding to the System Strategic Goal (Develop an integrated school evangelisation, curriculum and youth ministry plan to build on World Youth Day initiatives)
- To adapt and contextualise the Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia (CSYMA) four-phase program to the youth ministry settings of Broken Bay Catholic schools
- To provide relevant and grounded formation and outreach programs to students who express a commitment to greater involvement in the religious life of their school
- To provide a structure that enables to students to build on school experiences and continue be connected to the life of the Church in their post-school years

Implementation process

- After the Phase 1 Retreat at a coastal college in 2010, the curriculum unit in Year 10 *Youth Ministry and Leadership* was introduced to a group of over 30 students. This group of students bonded wonderfully together and experienced great prayer, sharing and growth in faith and leadership skills
- In 2011, forming a Senior Youth Ministry Team commenced. 23 students joined the team in Year 11 and were commissioned in front of the College during a liturgy by the laying on of hands. Each team member received an official team polo shirt including the College and CSYMA logos
- The first Senior Youth Ministry team joined together for weekly Tuesday lunchtime formation and planning meetings. In its infancy, plans were put in place for a number of events for the team to prepare and facilitate including: Social Justice Week, Year 6 Transition day, Year 6 Spirituality Day, Year 7 Year Group outreach, Senior Retreat, *Catch the Wave* event to Year 9 students at the College as well as at a nearby college
- Year 10 students were invited during an event in Term 2 to complete the Board Endorsed elective RE unit *Youth Ministry and Leadership* in two classes in Term 3. These students were invited to form the second Senior Youth Ministry Team starting in 2012
- The team structure across 2012-2014 included one Year 12 SYMT, Year 11 SYMT and two Year 10 teams totalling over 100 students at a time with expanded outreach and formation programs within the school and the Parish
- In 2012 the College hosted the first Broken Bay CSYMA Regional Training Day

- In 2013, 50 students commenced a voluntary ministry as Catechist assistants in the local State primary schools, working with Parish volunteer Catechists. Team members have also assisted with the Ash Wednesday liturgy and led the Stations of the Cross liturgy including a dramatisation of the 14 stations. The Year 12 team performed the Lighthouse *Everything* drama at the 'Broken Bay Year 12 Event' (BYTE)
- Strategies are in place to keep students connected to College, Parish, Diocese and the wider Church through Phase 4 of the CSYMA model. This includes: the new Ex-Student's Association (facilitated by two ex-Year 12 team members), invitations to participate in Parish youth ministry events, College student retreats, team formation and wider diocesan events

Measures of success

- This program addresses the areas identified in the Crossroads document
- One team member has said: 'This opportunity has allowed me to strive for a closer relationship with God. Youth ministry has boosted my confidence and leadership skills'
- Another team member said 'My time in the SYMT has strengthened my faith, as I am surrounded by people who have the same faith as me'
- As Youth Minister I am continually amazed to see the impact of peer to peer ministry on the lives of students and the changes it has made to the culture of the College
- Curriculum pathway was piloted in 2010 and adopted in 2 schools for 2011
- Peer to peer ministry expanded in 3 schools and formalised senior youth ministry teams were operative in the 2 pilot schools by 2012
- CSYMA (as adapted) expanded to 4 schools by 2013
- Greater participation in diocesan youth ministry events across 2011-2013

Cost

- The cost is moderate to low once the unique Broken Bay Youth Ministry Coordinator staffing is overlooked
- The YMCs (3.6FTE across 7 colleges) exist independently of the initiative
- The CSO paid the CSYMA subscription for each college (payable according to school size)
- There are some generally low local costs

Suitability for other dioceses

CSMA is eminently transferable across all contexts. For example, all colleges in the Diocese of Sale in Victoria participate. However, transferability does rely on adequate leadership and staffing, which is an issue in settings in which it is not clear whose job it is. Transferability needs System leadership to ensure the group Board Endorsements in Stage 5 and Stage 6 provide for the curriculum component.

Further comment

- The initiative has flourished. It is now embedded in five colleges and planned for the other two. Congregational colleges have also considered participation
- It has also moved to another phase. It is now so enculturated to Broken Bay that it has minimal dependence on CSYMA
- At the outset the partnership with CSYMA was defined in terms of Broken Bay's *adaptation* of its program. However, over time CSYMA developed expectations about Broken Bay's ongoing contribution to CSYMA regional leadership. Clarity in any MOU is important.

PRAYING THE ANGELUS

**Crossroads
areas
addressed**

Identity of the Catholic School

Diocese

Parramatta

Contacts

Anthony Gordon
Team Leader, Evangelisation and Religious Education (ERE)
Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta
agordon3@parra.catholic.edu.au

Outline

From 2013 Bishop Anthony asked that all staff and students of each Catholic systemic school stop in the middle of each school day, preferably at noon, to pray the Angelus. The Angelus should interrupt the activity of the normal school day.

The Angelus only takes a couple of minutes to pray, but is an important reminder that there is more to life than the toil of everyday routines. All in the school community should pray the Angelus with a sense of unity, reverence and dignity.

Aims

- Strengthen the prayer life of each Catholic school in the Diocese of Parramatta
- Be united as a diocese each day in the praying of the Angelus
- Students, staff and parents to engage in formation to deepen their understanding of the history and significance of the Angelus including reflecting on the Incarnation and the importance of following the example of Mary in saying 'yes' to the will of God

**Implementation
process**

- Formal launch by Bishop Anthony Fisher OP at the System Leadership Day, Rosehill Gardens, 23 January 2013
- Staff formation resource Praying the Angelus, developed by ERE team made available to principals at the System Leadership Day for distribution to every member of staff. The resource to be used as a stimulus for staff professional learning
- Principals ensure that all staff members are well prepared and informed of local processes that facilitate the praying of the Angelus. Director of System Performance to be consulted around local implementation issues
- Principals are asked to facilitate a professional learning afternoon/meeting dedicated to deepening the knowledge of staff with regards to the biblical/theological underpinnings of the Angelus and its practical implementation
- The Religious Education Coordinator Professional Learning afternoon is focused on the implementation of the Angelus
- Two-stage specific religious education lessons on the historical, theological and spiritual significance of the Angelus produced by ERE team. RE teachers to teach these lessons to every student before the end of first term 2013
- Posters containing the words of the Angelus produced by the ERE team distributed to every classroom and staffroom and a prayer card distributed to every student and member of staff
- After schools had a term to make preparations and conduct formation of staff and students, implementation took place at the start of Term 2

**Measures
of success**

- This initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Successful implementation across the system as evidenced from observations of CEO Parramatta staff on school visits
- Interviews with school leaders, teachers and students indicate that the prayer life of the school has been strengthened by praying the Angelus each day
- Interviews with school leaders, teachers and students indicate a deeper understanding of the history and significance of the Angelus, including reflection on the Incarnation and the importance in following Mary's example of saying 'yes' to the will of God

Cost

- Production and printing of posters and prayer cards
- This project is fully sustainable as the financial outlay has occurred in the establishment phase with the production of posters and prayer cards

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

There is a high level of transferability to other dioceses. The financial outlay for this project is affordable and occurs only in the year of establishment

**Further
comment**

- One of the reasons for the success of this project was leaving the way that the Angelus was implemented as a local decision of the school leadership team. As a result, schools felt ownership over the way formation was carried out and the way in which the prayer was prayed each day
- Another key factor in the success of this project was the production and delivery of the resources for each school, including staff formation, student lessons, posters and prayer cards.

STOP AND PRAY! CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND ANGELUS

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Bathurst

Contacts

Angelo Belmonte
Team Leader
Catholic Education Office, Bathurst
a.belmonte@bth.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Stop and Pray! is an initiative the school introduced in 2013 whereby the whole school embedded a culture of daily prayer in the busy-ness of daily school routine. Whilst not diminishing the importance of whole school and class Masses, liturgies for special feasts and other prayers, *Stop and Pray!* is a time where the whole school stops and engages in a loving relationship with God each day.

Aims

The aims of *Stop and Pray!* are:

- for the whole school to develop and foster our relationship with our loving God every day
- to foster the prayer of Christian Meditation and the traditional prayer of the *Angelus*

Implementation process

- Meditation had been part of this small rural school's prayer culture for 4 years. Enlisting the help of the local priest, staff and students were trained in the values of meditation and more importantly the skills needed. Students' first experiences of meditation were with the local priest with teachers observing the process
- The program was initially successful, but as external pressures encroached time devoted to meditation diminished. Meditation became an 'if we have time' moment
- In the Year of Faith, and with encouragement from the Bishop, the school introduced the *Angelus* at 12 noon each day. With a call to prayer, that is a short mantra played over the schools' sound system, every class is prompted, to stop the current activity and pray the *Angelus*. The call to prayer has been the successful tool to make this daily recital of the *Angelus* a daily habit
- The school secretary is charged to call the school to prayer and sets a daily alarm on her phone to remind her to play the mantra at 11.58
- Following a powerful professional day on Christian Meditation in Sydney in 2013, attended by the REC and sponsored by the Catholic Education Office, and with the great success of the *Angelus*, the teaching staff decided to re-introduce Christian Meditation once again, 10 minutes before lunch
- Again the call to prayer is key to its success to remind everyone to *Stop and Pray!*

Measures of success

- This initiative addresses the areas identified in the *Crossroads* document
- When first introduced, daily Christian Meditation was successful but the practice quickly diminished and became sporadic
- Introduction of *Angelus* to be a prayed each day
- With a call to pray, Christian Meditation was re-introduced as a daily habit in the school

Cost

Nil

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

Though this school is relatively small school with just 192 students, there is no reason why other schools cannot duplicate this practice. The key for success is that all staff must support and see its value and that the principal is seen as its key driver. However what made this practice sustainable is the call to pray where all in the school are reminded to *Stop and Pray!*

**Further
comment**

- The *Angelus*, and after its initial demise, Christian Meditation, are whole school initiatives and are now part of the school timetable and more importantly the school's culture. Praying the *Angelus* and meditation are now a daily habit in the school.
- While the initiative seemed to work well at the start, the busyness of school routine led to a decline in its practice. The practice was left to individual class teachers who invariably neglected that time for prayer.
- What has made *Stop and Pray!* successful again, is the Call to Prayer and the habit that is embedded into the school routine where the whole schools stops and prays together at that time.

YEAR 5 AND 6 CHRISTMAS ART STORYTELLING - LOCAL CONTEXT

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Bathurst

Contacts Angelo Belmonte
Team Leader
Catholic Education Office, Bathurst
a.belmonte@bth.catholic.edu.au

Outline In 2013 the Diocese of Bathurst entered the Christmas Art Story Telling competition with the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Diocese of Wollongong. Though collaborating with the two other dioceses, the Christmas Art Storytelling took a distinctively local experience with the aim of engaging students and teachers with Scripture in a creative way.

Aims

- The predominant aim of the Christmas Art Storytelling was to engage students with Scripture in a creative way. Participants were asked to reflect on a number of Advent and Christmas verses from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke for inspiration for their art
- In relation to this aim, it was hoped that the significance of the Christmas Story would be highlighted in the school community, with particular engagement to the parent community

Implementation process

- Keys steps were taken to ensure maximum participation from students from local schools, and that though student artworks were destined to compete with other students from the Archdiocese of Sydney and Wollongong, the focus remained within the local context
- During Primary Religious Education Coordinators Cluster Meetings, RECs were informed of initiative and of its purpose. Gospel verses were distributed and reflected upon with key images, themes and values shared amongst the group
- During this meeting, an experienced Visual Arts teacher from a diocesan Secondary School was seconded and facilitated a workshop on the various techniques and media that students could be encouraged to explore
- Given the tyranny of distance in the diocese, three centres for workshops were then established in Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo for teachers who would facilitate the initiative with students. In all 52 teachers attended the workshops
- During the teacher workshops, teachers themselves engaged in the process of reflecting on Gospel verses and then creatively representing the verse on canvas using various techniques
- Now motivated, teachers returned to schools to work with students. Once the projects were completed, schools were encouraged to hold a local exhibition where all students artwork from the school went on display for other students and parents
- Schools were requested to select a maximum of 4 pieces of artwork to form part of the diocesan exhibition from which artwork would be selected for the next stage in Sydney
- Artwork selected from schools were collected and brought together in Bathurst where they were displayed to the wider diocesan community for one week. In all, 122 pieces of art were submitted

- An official opening to the exhibition was held at one of the schools in Bathurst
- Judging for the final stage to Sydney was conducted by lecturers with experience in Visual Arts from Charles Sturt University and the teacher from the local secondary school

Measures of success

- The initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Every school in the Diocese participated in the Christmas Art Storytelling and submitted pieces of art
- Each school was requested to send 4 selected pieces of art - 122 pieces of art were submitted from the 29 schools
- Parents, grandparents and other parishioners attended the exhibition
- Scriptural interpretations and artwork were of a good standard. Overall, the scriptural interpretations were prayerful and perceptive. Judges noted the high quality of artwork in the exhibition

Cost

Costs for this initiative included:

- Release of Visual Art teacher for 8 days. This included facilitating workshops for RECs and teachers as well as for preparation of the judging and exhibition
- Release of teachers to attend workshop
- \$2000 of art supplies that were used during workshop
- The major cost for this initiative was the cost of release of teachers, including the facilitator of the workshop. In 2014, as this initiative progresses, only three days of teacher release will be required. It is expected that no further professional development will be needed after 2014

Suitability for other dioceses

Though this initiative is run in conjunction with the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Diocese of Wollongong, the success of the program is very dependent on the local context and the use of local resources such as the use of the Visual Arts teacher.

Further comment

- The Christmas Art Story Telling has generated great interest in the diocese and with the experience of 2013, the diocese can expect greater participation and enthusiasm from teachers and students alike in 2014
- Our learnings would suggest the focus should not be on the competition with but rather a celebration and process at the local level
- Individual dioceses using local people and resources could duplicate this process.

JUNIOR JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATION

Crossroads areas

addressed Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Bathurst

Contacts Angelo Belmonte
Team Leader
Catholic Education Office, Bathurst
a.belmonte@bth.catholic.edu.au

Outline In 2011 the Primary students at a small rural primary school joined a local Junior Josephite Association which was developed following the canonisation of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. The association incorporates three main aspects: Learn, Pray and Practise. The students study the inspiration of Mary MacKillop; they pray for the needs of others on a local, national and international level through Mass, prayer services and novenas. The final aspect of the association is that of practice - some form of outreach to others.

Aims The training day aims to:

- For students to be inspired and carry on the work of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop by learning, praying and in practice
- For students to recognise social justice and so play their part in making the world a better place for all

Implementation Process

Students are initiated and commissioned by receiving badges and a blessing at the opening school mass.

Learning

Following the 10 Lessons included in the initial Junior Josephite pack

Praying

- at Mass
- prayer services
- novenas

Practise

- School Level - focus on recycling and the environment
- Community level - working with the elderly at the local hospital e.g. Meals on Wheels, Bingo and singing performances. Preparing the Church for Sunday Mass for one month during the year
- National level - participating in Green and Gold Day to raise money for the Mary MacKillop Foundation
- International level - raising money through sewing, art and craft and card making for the Brett Lee Foundation, which brings music therapy to children with cancer in Mumbai India

**Measures
of success**

- This initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- In its second year, more than half the students are now Junior Joeys
- No student who has become a member of Junior Joeys has left the Association
- Junior Joeys are involved at school and local community level
- Involvement at international level with Brett Lee Foundation

Cost

Minimal – the buying of canvas for the artwork and handkerchiefs to sew. One of the teachers has set up a bank account to help cover these costs and have a place to store the amount raised.

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

Though this school is a relatively small school with just 28 students, there is no reason why other schools cannot duplicate this. The key for success is that all staff must support and value the project. The Principal especially should be available for support and discussion of initiatives.

**Further
comment**

In 2014 two new students have become members of the Junior Josephite Association. The total number total number is now 15 students. Students will continue their work improving recycling in the school, working with the elderly in our community, participating in new ventures with the Mary MacKillop Foundation and raising money for the Brett Lee Foundation in Mumbai India.

The key to its sustainability is the enthusiasm of teachers and students.

INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON STAFF MEMBERS

LAMPLIGHTER SPIRITUAL FORMATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAM MINISTRY

Crossroads

areas

addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Wollongong

Contacts

Ken Bryant
Head of Religious Education & Service Services
Catholic Education Office, Wollongong
ken.bryant@dow.catholic.edu.au

Suz Marden
Staff Spiritual Formation Team Leader
Catholic Education Office, Wollongong
suz.marden@dow.catholic.edu.au

Outline

The *Lamplighter* Spiritual Formation Leadership Program is a three-year school based leadership program aimed at further developing staff communities by forming school 'Lamplighter Leadership Teams' that have the confidence and capacity to teach, challenge and transform their communities. The program has a two-fold focus: to offer spiritual formation and to develop skills for use in school communities.

Aims

- To provide a sequential and developmental program that sits within a larger spiritual formation framework for adults employed in Catholic Education
- To develop a deeper understanding and practical application of the Lighting the Way Spiritual Formation Framework
- To continue growing and deepening catholic identity in both primary and secondary schools through the formation of *Lamplighter* teams led by the principal
- To develop the confidence and competence of these teams to initiate and lead spiritual formation based on the Catholic faith tradition

Implementation Process

Phase One: Review of the current scenario

- Consultation Process involving the Bishop, members of clergy, CEO leadership team, relevant CEO personnel, principals and all staff in all schools and relevant personnel in selected diocesan Catholic Education Offices

Phase Two: Recommendation

- Formation of advisory committee
- The committee's role was to analyse the data and create a proposal that was submitted to the CEO Leadership Team

Phase Three: Action

- Development and publication of framework:
 - Development of programs
- Schools and individuals invited to participate in a range of personal and targeted spiritual formation programs
- The *Lamplighter* program is one of a number of successful and continuing spiritual formation programs offered

Phase Four: The *Lamplighter* Spiritual Formation Leadership Program

- Principal and three members of staff, drawn from across teaching or non-teaching roles (who have been identified as having an interest and potential to be leaders in the area of Staff Spiritual Formation) form a core team
 - As far as possible this team does not change over the three years
- The school's *Lamplighter* team attends nine days of formation over three years
 - Each formation day is based on a formation capacity that sits within the spiritual formation framework
 - The nine formation capacities reflect core characteristics of a Catholic school community and are practical and discernible hallmarks for ongoing development of strong Catholic Identity
 - They are the practical ways for living out the vision and mission of Catholic Education
 - The aim of these days 'is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ.' (Catechesi Tradendae 1979)
 - The formation days are based on prayer and scripture, each day building on the day before
- Teams acquire skills and resources to form staff in their place of work based on the model 'Information leads to formation leads to transformation'

Measures of success

- The program addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- The program has been easily adapted to specific school contexts
- *Lamplighter* teams have been enthusiastic, grounded and committed to the program and 'taking it back' into their school environment
- The reflective comments at the end of each day suggest that participants find the program worthwhile, challenging and in some cases life-changing
- Transformation in schools is seen in the area of staff prayer, staff reading of scripture, staff annual retreat days, social outreach, confidence in articulating matters of faith and leading formation of staff... which all result in developing rich Catholic identity and commitment to the mission of the school within the wider parish
- In the Catholic Education Office different teams are leading staff prayer
- There has been a positive change in attitude and response to staff spiritual formation across schools since the initiative has been in place. Staffs want more!

Cost:

The greatest cost is in the release from face-to-face teaching. Principals who see these programs as a priority are prepared to commit the funds needed to maintain them in their schools.

Suitability for other dioceses

The Model used for spiritual formation in the Wollongong Diocese was first used in the Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Brisbane, and was easily transferred and adapted to the Wagga Wagga diocese Spiritual Formation Framework and diocesan context.

The model works on a team led by the principal which is formed to lead staff and potentially parents in the area of adult spiritual formation.

The **Lamplighter** program is only one initiative.

- It sits alongside the **Shining Lights** program, a three-year program where 3 teachers from each school (involved in Lamplighters) attend a two-day overnight retreat based on the same processes focused on prayer and scripture
- A third and important program is the **Align for the World** early career program that is a four year program for beginning teachers

**Further
comment**

The *Lamplighter* program is still in operation in the Wollongong diocese and will be until all primary and secondary schools have had the opportunity to participate.

A further development to this program, initiated in 2014, is a **Facilitator's Training Program** for participants who have completed the three years of spiritual formation. This program trains participants to design, implement, facilitate and critique formation in spirituality within the Catholic faith tradition.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AS CENTRES OF THE NEW EVANGELISATION

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Wilcannia-Forbes

Contacts Therese Newell
Administrator of Religious Education
Catholic Education Office, Wilcannia-Forbes
therese.newell@wf.catholic.edu.au.com

Outline

Workshops for staff:

- to inform and in many cases educate them as to what was meant by the New Evangelisation and how they as baptised members were called to be agents of evangelisation
- to provide an opportunity for them to discuss documentation and its relevance to the role of Catholic educators in today's world. The workshop allowed participants to identify practices of evangelisation already happening in their school and to explore further opportunities in their local context

Aims

- To educate staff on the meaning of the 'New Evangelisation'
- To reflect on Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
- To acknowledge and celebrate practices of New Evangelisation embraced by the school
- To challenge staff, as a member of a Catholic school community, to take up their role in furthering the new evangelisation

Implementation Process

STAGE 1: Development of the workshop

- The workshop was developed by the CEO RE Team to cover at timeframe of approximately two and half hours
- Current documents pertaining to the new evangelisation were sourced and included in the workshop
- The resource, *What it means to be Catholic* (DVD, CEO Sydney, 2012) was included to develop links between our baptismal call and the New Evangelisation
- A workbook was developed strategies for individual and group work

STAGE 2: Workshop trialled at REC cluster meetings

- The workshop was delivered to RECs at their cluster meeting
- The RECs gave feedback and additions/adjustments were made
- Presenting the workshop to the RECs enabled a 'Train the Trainer' approach giving RECs the option to present the session to their school staff

STAGE 3: Delivery of workshop

- The workshop was delivered at the 18 schools either by the school's REC or member of the CEO RE team

**Measures
of success**

- The initiative addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Workshops were held in all 18 diocesan schools
- 50% of RECs acted as facilitators
- Written evaluations and verbal feedback indicated staff gained a better understanding of the new evangelisation and its implications
- Participants named current practices and these were shared throughout the diocesan schools. The development and implementation of other opportunities for evangelisation are occurring for example, in family prayer bags and family workshops for sacraments

Cost

The cost of the workshop and resources is minimal. A DVD, *What it means to be Catholic* was purchased for each school.

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

The workshop could be facilitated in both rural and metropolitan schools. Proper understanding of the New Evangelisation is critical for all who work in Catholic Schools. The workshop could be adapted for parent sessions.

**Further
comment**

Now that the workshop has been completed the next phase of this process consists of:

- making connections between the New Evangelisation and the diocesan *Statement of Faith and Mission*
- keeping new practices/initiatives pertaining to New Evangelisation on the agenda in schools, e.g. sharing of practices at RECs' or Principals' gatherings
- the implementation of *Making Jesus Real* as a diocesan initiative for all schools.

CONNECTIONS

Crossroads areas

addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Wagga Wagga

Contacts

Christopher Cotter
Assistant Director of Schools: Catholic Life & Mission
Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga
cotterc@ww.catholic.edu.au

Outline

To provide a suite of residential retreat experiences that is tailored to meet the needs of school and CSO staff at different stages of their faith and life journey. The key objective is for school and CSO staff to 'encounter and engage with Jesus and his message' and make vital 'connections' between faith and life and culture and faith.

Aims

That staff will:

- encounter and engage with Jesus and his message
- experience a variety of prayer forms
- be met 'where they are' in terms of their faith and life journey (the four experiences are tailored to meet staff at different stages of their journey in Catholic education and each has a 'discipleship' theme selected from scripture)
- know more deeply the story of Catholic education in Australia (in particular in the Wagga Wagga diocese) and consider their personal contribution to the story
- build relationships across schools and the CSO

Implementation Process

2005-2008 Small groups of Wagga Wagga school staff attend Wilcannia-Forbes 'Journey' program, provide positive feedback to Bishop and Director of CSO, and request something similar within diocese

Oct-Dec 2008 Planning is commenced for three experiences to be conducted during 2009. A consultant is employed for the initial planning days and consultation is also sought from Wagga school staff

2009 Three experiences are prepared and conducted with about 40 staff in total taking up the invitation. Feedback, both formal and informal, is overwhelmingly positive

2010-2013 Two experiences conducted per year on a rotating basis. Decision taken to time experiences during Week 2 and 3 of Term 4

A fourth experience is added to the suite in 2011. Staff who have participated in any *Connection* experience are invited to attend twilight 'ReConnect' gatherings conducted in three centres during the following year.

2014 A fifth experience is under development and will be presented for Middle Leaders so that they can meet the requirements of Accreditation for Leadership

**Measures
of success**

- From 2009 until 2013 an average of 40 staff from schools have attended *Connections* each year and have referred two staff members to attend in the following year
- Feedback from evaluations indicates that staff who attend nominate *Connections* as an experience where their faith is nurtured and deepened
- After attending *Connections* the majority of staff believe that the experience has empowered them to evangelise fellow staff and students
- The *Crossroads* areas have been addressed

Cost

Providing casual relief teachers is the single largest cost of this initiative. Due to the success of *Connections* the CSO has committed cash reserves (if necessary) to maintain the viability of the experiences.

**Further
comment**

A new *Connections* experience is presently being developed for middle leaders to gain Accreditation for Leadership (Category C). It will be run in a different mode, viz. non-residential, 4 days over 12 months with one Saturday included.

BEGINNING TEACHER RETREATS

Crossroads areas addressed

Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Sydney

Contacts

Robert Haddad,
Head, New Evangelisation
Catholic Education Office, Sydney
robert.haddad@syd.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Beginning Teacher Retreats are experiences offered to all teachers (permanent, temporary or casual) in their first 3 years of teaching to foster within them an understanding of the Church's teachings and to encourage a commitment to the ethos of Catholic schools.

Attendance at Beginning Teacher Retreats is compulsory for all teachers in their 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of service. The RE&E team pays for the entire cost of all retreats as well as providing release funding to all schools to cover absent 1st and 2nd Year teachers (but not for 3rd Year teachers).

There are five separate 1st Year overnight retreats, five separate 2nd Year overnight retreats and four separate 3rd Year day retreats to provide as many options throughout the year for Beginning Teachers to attend. Two staff from the RE&E team attends each retreat; external presenters are also engaged from time to time.

Aims

The aims of the Beginning Teacher Retreats initiative are four-fold:

- to satisfy accreditation requirements to work, teach and lead in systemic Catholic schools
- to provide all new teachers to the System with a sense of being welcomed and of belonging
- to provide spiritual formation to all teachers new to the System according to the themes of 'Called', 'Formed' and 'Sent'
- to strengthen the fidelity and witness of young teachers to the teachings of the Church

Implementation Process

Early 2010 Establishment of a new position within the RE&E team, namely, Head: New Evangelisation

First pilot retreat conducted in late 2010 for targeted graduates

2011 First Beginning Teacher Retreats conducted

2012 Full roll-out of Beginning Teacher Retreats for teachers in their first, second and third years of teaching

Study on effectiveness of Beginning Teacher Retreats completed and presented by Professor Philip Hughes

2013 Revision of Retreats for teachers in their third year of teaching

Measures of success

- The program addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document
- Over 300 teachers in their first and second years of teaching attend the Beginning Teacher Retreats each year. This represents an over 90% attendance level. Schools have generally embraced the concept and inform teachers and encourage attendance
- On-site evaluations are conducted at the end of each retreat event. In general, all retreat experiences are positively viewed and valued. All completed evaluations are retained for future reference and action
- Attendance at retreats for teachers in their third year of teaching is much lower – approximately only 80 teachers enrol each year. Very few secondary teachers and males show interest. 3rd Year retreats are seen by many as either not necessary or useful
- The study conducted by Professor Philip Hughes found that the retreats scored 83.6% for effectiveness and value. Common descriptors included 're-energising', 'amazing', 're-charge'
- This same study reported that most participants found the retreats to be a faith re-affirming rather than faith-changing experience. Only 10% of participants indicated the retreats had little impact on them

Cost

- Costs of running Beginning Teacher Retreats are very significant and are borne entirely by the RE&E team budget. The costs of paying for teacher attendance and providing release funding to schools total over \$200,000 annually
- The 'cost' to young teachers is the attendance burden they have to shoulder which is in addition to all other requirements they need to meet to satisfy the requirements of the NSW Institute of Teachers
- The 'cost' to staff of the RE&E team is the amount of overnight time spent away from home and family

Suitability for other dioceses

This initiative being large-scale, can only be conducted by a team with multiple employees having skills in retreat organisation and delivery. Also, other dioceses that are large geographically would have difficulties arranging all new teachers to come to a central point, while smaller dioceses might not have sufficient numbers of new teachers to constitute an appropriately sized retreat group. Other dioceses might also have a large percentage of teachers from non-Catholic backgrounds.

Further comment

Over the last four years a number of significant learnings have been drawn from the Beginning Teacher retreats:

- There is the need to commence the initiative with professional and experienced retreat leaders who are present and available for the entire retreat
- At the same time, 'visiting' speakers should be kept to a minimum
- The retreats for teachers in their first and second year of teaching should be at different venues to reinforce the sense of variety in the retreat experiences
- The retreat materials should be professionally produced from the outset and should together form a connecting series of related themes
- Primary and secondary teachers should be mixed together to facilitate the sharing of different contexts and experiences
- There is value in providing learning experiences in quality liturgy, prayer styles and music
- The process of evaluation at the end of each retreat is vital and the data collected therefrom should be retained, analysed and acted upon.

FAITH AT THE FIDDLER

Crossroads areas addressed

Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Parramatta

Contacts

Anthony Gordon
Team Leader, Evangelisation and Religious Education (ERE)
Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta
agordon3@parra.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Faith at the Fiddler is an official evangelisation initiative of Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta designed for teachers in Catholic schools. It provides an opportunity for teachers in the diocese to gather together to discuss issues of faith in the friendly and warm atmosphere one of Sydney's most famous pubs, The Mean Fiddler.

Aims

The training day aims to:

- To provide faith formation for teachers in a relaxed and casual setting
- To provide an opportunity for fellowship and networking for teachers in a casual setting

Implementation process

- Four guest speakers/performers from different backgrounds are asked by the ERE team to speak about a topic of faith at one of the four events scheduled for the year
- Each event is advertised to schools and also through the diocese
- One *Faith at the Fiddler* is held in each term
- Each event begins at 5pm with social/meet-greet time. Speaker commences around 5.30pm. Q&A runs approximately from 6.20pm – 6.45pm
- Announcements and social time and optional dinner follow

Measures of success

- From establishment in Nov 2011 until Sept 2012 audience averaged between 20 and 50
- Audience numbers have steadily grown to current average of between 80-100 per event since Nov 2012
- Generally speaking, at each *Faith at the Fiddler*, around 50% of the audience is attending for the first time
- This addresses the relevant *Crossroads* area

Cost

- Costs are minimal room hire plus bar staff for all four events
- Occasional speaker fees (rarely incurred)
- Advertising

Suitability for other dioceses

This is easily transferable in a metropolitan diocese. There may be some challenges for regional dioceses in attempting to assemble a large gathering across all the schools in a vast diocese.

Further comment

- Great consideration needs to be given to the timing of the event. *Faith at the Fiddler* has the talk beginning at 5.30pm so that teachers can attend after school. The idea is that many teachers can choose to enjoy each other's company afterwards at dinner, while others can still go home to their families. This approach has resulted in a regular attendance of 80-100 teachers. Some consideration may be given to a later start, say around 7pm, which may better suit some teachers
- Advertising is extremely important
- Equally important is ensuring that leadership teams support the event by advertising and encouraging their staff
- Regular communication with principals and RECs is recommended
- The quality of speaker is hugely important. *Faith at the Fiddler* has been fortunate to attract some outstanding people of faith such as Bishop Anthony Fisher OP, Attorney-General of NSW, Mr Greg Smith, ex-rugby league star, Jason Stevens, Catholic priest and musician, Fr Rob Galea and Catholic musician, Gary Pinto
- It is very important to find a relaxed setting which still works well as a place to hold a talk.

DIVINE CONVERSATIONS

Crossroads areas addressed

Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Maitland-Newcastle

Contacts

Ray Collins
Director of Schools
Catholic Schools Office, Maitland-Newcastle
ray.collins@mn.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Creating an opportunity for teachers to gather to experience a variety of prayer and to be provided with resources for classroom use; developing a local prayer community.

Aims

- To experience a variety of prayer styles
- To allow teachers to reconnect with God through prayer
- To develop a prayer culture and community across the region
- To help teachers realise that just as they appreciate different styles of prayer, so do children
- To skill teachers in leading a variety of prayer styles including some they may not have experienced
- To provide resources for teachers

Implementation process

- Through the principals and religious education coordinators of the region teachers across the region were invited to attend a program once week over an eight-week period
- In order to encourage teacher attendance it was arranged through the CSO to have faith accreditation provided for those staff attending
- Each week the organising team met to organise the sessions in detail
- Sessions lasted about an hour and a half with teachers arriving for afternoon tea. During this time the outline for the afternoon was provided, with an explanation of what style of prayer was being used
- Teachers would then move to the chapel and participate in the prayer
- At the conclusion teachers discussed personal implications and implications for the classroom
- Evaluations were gathered at the conclusion of the program
- The following prayer styles were experienced: Christian meditation, imaginative prayer, journaling as prayer, lectio divina, partnering prayer, prayer of the church, Taizé prayer

Measures of success

- The evaluations showed that this opportunity had allowed teachers to identify with a form of prayer with which they were more comfortable
- They developed an appreciation of the different styles and purposes of prayer
- The group attended regularly and faithfully over the period of the 8 weeks and grew in number as the time went on
- The opportunity provided a guided, modelled and then independent introduction to prayer, which teachers felt more confident about implementing in the classroom

- The teachers received resources and shared each week how they had implemented the type of prayer in the classroom and how the children responded
- The program addressed the *Crossroads* areas specified

Cost

Very cost effective except it needed personnel to continue the project.

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

The intention was to see if the community could/would continue after the experience ended. The group was certainly keen for this to happen. However, because the main organisers of the group then had to move onto planning other events like WYD and the Melbourne convention, follow up was impossible to achieve and the group did not continue.

The next intention had been to transfer this model into school communities, regions, and parent bodies, but failed because of the inability of the organising group to sustain it.

**Further
comment**

High cost programs are not necessary to promote effective reconnection with faith. This program appealed to a variety of teachers, new, experienced, young old, church, unchurched. They expressed a great appreciation for being able to spend time in prayer and with others in community. They are obviously looking for something to renew them, reconnect them with their faith and assist them as they deal with highly complex learning environments. There are wonderful resources available in the community which can be readily utilised. Small groups worked extremely well, and the participants built strong relationships. Having experienced positive prayer moments, people went to great lengths to attend each week. They were thirsty for more. A program such as this needs to have someone to drive it and provide follow up.

PROCLAIM LISMORE 2013

Crossroads areas

addressed Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese Lismore

Contacts Gary Reen
Operations Manager, School Evangelisation Catechetical Services Team
Catholic Schools Office, Lismore
green@lism.catholic.edu.au

Outline *Proclaim* Lismore 2013 was the first year in a three year process to engage all staff in parish schools and the CSO in co-designing a stronger Catholic 'roadmap' for education. *Proclaim* seeks to build a common language, understanding and shared purpose for Catholic education centred on the New Evangelisation. The intended result is to nurture a new generation of students who are passionate about their Catholic faith and are committed to active membership of the Church and service of others.

The Bishop, clergy, teachers, parish school staff and CSO gathered together in four regions across the Diocese to spend time in prayer, access contemporary information, reflect and discern as to how collectively they could build a stronger Catholic future in education and that students may come to a deeper faith in Jesus Christ and passionate commitment to his Church.

Aims It was intended that by the end of 2013 every person involved in Catholic education was aware of these aims:

- Knowing they are a part of a year of change, growth and development for Catholic education and that this growth could not happen without them
- Bringing all their gifts, passion and talents to this challenge
- Embracing the New Evangelisation and being co-designers of what this means for Catholic education
- Feeling empowered, confident and on fire for the mission of Catholic education
- Working as one in promoting a more vibrant and engaging Catholic culture in our schools

Implementation process

- Develop a common understanding and sense of urgency around the need for change, initiated by the clergy and developed by the Catholic Schools Office
- Develop a communication strategy of twelve ebulletins, accessible to every staff member in the Diocese. The ebulletins were highly visual two minute vignettes in the form of animations, school themes and discussions to highlight initiatives. Each E-bulletin contained a message from the Director
- Organise the Lismore *Proclaim* days across four venues for 3000 attendees including parish school executives, teachers, ancillary staff, CSO staff, as well as the clergy. The day featured three guest speakers: the Bishop of Lismore, author Chris Lowney, presenting on the topic 'Heroic Leadership' and Jude Hennessy from the Diocese of Wollongong on the topic of New Evangelisation. Participants engaged in group activities and all data was collated for future planning

- Monitor ongoing work by principals on a continuum planning to identify the current and desired situation in parish schools regarding Catholic identity and mission
- Produce a report to be sent to all clergy and parish school principals containing the collated data from the *Proclaim* days group activities
- Provide parish school executives with copies of Chris Lowney's book 'Heroic Leadership'. This was to be the basis of the executives' professional learning in term three. Guidelines and focus questions were provided together with support from the SEACS team consultant
- The report was shared with all stakeholders and a Consultative Reference Group (CRG) was formed to engage in future planning
- Develop through the CRG the first draft of a plan for a stronger Catholic future for education in the diocese
- Continued planning and implementation of the Culture Change Model for 2014-2020 including *Proclaim Lismore Parents* (2014) and *Proclaim Lismore Students* (2015)

Measures of success

- 'Heroic Leadership' was well accepted in schools with many executives including the four pillars in their school planning and retreats
- The Culture Change model has become a focus for schools. The ongoing task is the monitoring of the Culture Change Continuum planning document which is addressed twice yearly. The parish priests have voiced their great support for this and are heavily engaged in the dialogue regarding reinvigorated catechesis and best practice
- There has been much animation in the schools regarding school evangelisation, student discipleship and teacher witness. Ongoing monitoring and surveys will be needed to ensure this was not a post event 'surge' but a lived reality
- There is renewed collaboration between and within the School Resources, Education Services and the School Evangelisation Catechetical Services teams and schools. School principals have reported on the effectiveness of the *Proclaim* ebulletins and website and were resounding in their praise of the two key speakers. It was recommended that Chris Lowney be invited back to lead the diocesan retreat training days
- The identified areas of the *Crossroads* document were addressed

Cost

The initial costs were significant. However, the outlay predominantly related to the logistics of involving every staff member in the Diocese. The cost of the media resources was also significant but their ongoing use has justified this.

Suitability for other dioceses

The process could easily be transferred to metropolitan and rural contexts but the venues would need much consideration.

Further comment

The process has moved into the second phase of *Lismore Proclaim Parents* in 2014 and *Lismore Proclaim Students* in 2015. The ongoing culture change model will remain in focus until 2020. The ebulletin production was very testing with regard to deadlines and as a result scheduling for *Lismore Proclaim Parents* has been planned with attention to this. The need for a stronger female presence on stage on the days was also acknowledged.

LINK, LISTEN, LEARN, LEAD PROGRAM

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Canberra and Goulburn

Contacts

Patrick McGrath
Team Leader: Catholic Identity, Religious Education and Faith Formation
Catholic Education Office, Canberra and Goulburn
patrick.mcgrath@cg.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Implementing initiatives to strengthen the Catholic identity of Archdiocesan Schools and strengthening leadership

Aims

- To provide opportunities for the spiritual growth of staff
- To develop pathways for spiritual leadership and wellbeing

Implementation process

- Archdiocesan teachers invited to make application to attend the *Link Listen Learn Lead* Program consisting of four three-day spiritual formation sessions held at a Retreat Centre
- Teachers must commit to full attendance at the four sessions
- Teachers who are undertaking postgraduate study at ACU are eligible to gain credit for this program as part of their Masters providing there is full attendance and they successfully complete the required assessment tasks
- All participants of the *Link Listen Learn Lead* Program are required to develop a Spiritual Formation Day for their staff as the final assignment. These Spirituality Projects developed by participants are published on the System Intranet
- One session is conducted in the joint school holiday period
- One day's relief per session, as well as registration and accommodation costs and all meals is covered by the Catholic Education Office. Schools cover the cost of one relief day per session. Participants/schools cover the cost of travel
- A Spiritual Companion is appointed to each group to celebrate Mass (x2) and the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- A guest facilitator is engaged to present the theology and to mark the assignments as required by ACU

Measures of success

- A significant majority (> 95 %) of participants responded positively to the program
- External validation endorsed the quality of the Staff Faith Formation Programs
- The program had attained maximum enrolment for each session
- The program addressed the areas specified in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

The System funded the project at around \$2,000 per participant for the total program.

**Suitability
for other
dioceses**

Able to be easily transferred and adopted by another jurisdiction.

**Further
comment**

The program is currently in its 5th year of operation and almost 200 staff have participated to date. The uptake for a position in each cohort remains strong. The program relies on a partner agreement with ACU to fulfil the Masters Unit requirements.



SALT AND LIGHT

Crossroads

areas

addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Canberra and Goulburn

Contacts

Patrick McGrath
Team Leader: Catholic Identity, Religious Education and Faith Formation
Catholic Education Office, Canberra and Goulburn
patrick.mcgrath@cg.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Faith Formation Program for middle managers to implement initiatives to strengthen the Catholic identity of Archdiocesan Schools and to strengthen leadership.

Aims

- To provide opportunities for the spiritual growth of staff
- To develop pathways for spiritual leadership and wellbeing
- To assist executive staff members to come to a deeper understanding of their call to leadership in a Catholic school
- To enable executive staff to reflect on their personal growth and faith formation in the context of their call to mission and ministry in the Catholic school

Implementation process

- Archdiocesan religious education coordinators, assistant principals and coordinators are invited to attend one of four spiritual formation experiences in 2014. These spiritual formation programs are all held at a retreat centre
- Each spiritual formation program commences at 5pm on a Wednesday and concludes at 3.30pm the following day. There are a maximum of 28 places offered on each program
- One day's relief, accommodation and meals are covered by the Catholic Education Office. Schools/participants cover the cost of travel
- The program is centred around the call of Pope Francis to explore the meaning of missionary discipleship
- Participants explore theological reflection and the techniques of journaling. Quiet prayer and contemplation and exploring scripture form an important part of the program
- Participants are given the option to return for a second period of prayer and reflection later in the year
- It is intended that this become an annual program that is linked with the professional and personal leadership development programs on offer

Measures of success

- All participants to date have responded very favourably to the program
- The depth of the reflections indicates that the input workshops and discussion have been pitched at the appropriate level
- The program is receiving favourable uptake for each of the sessions
- The program addresses the identified *Crossroads* areas

Cost	A system-funded project at around \$500 per participant for the total program
Suitability for other dioceses	Able to be transferred easily and adopted by another jurisdiction
Further comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new initiative commencing in 2014. At the time of writing, one group has completed the program on offer • It is too early in the development of this program to make any conclusive statements as to the impact of the program. However, it has already become clear that the leaders targeted in this program have a strong thirst to explore their faith • Further to this, the facilitators will need to listen to the needs of the groups and become flexible in developing future sessions.

SILOAM: FAITH FORMATION FOR PRINCIPALS

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture
Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Canberra and Goulburn

Contacts

Patrick McGrath
Team Leader: Catholic Identity, Religious Education and Faith Formation
Catholic Education Office, Canberra and Goulburn
patrick.mcgrath@cg.catholic.edu.au

Outline

A faith-formation program for Principals to implement initiatives strengthening the Catholic identity of archdiocesan schools and to build leadership capability

Aims

- The training day aims to: to enable principals and other executive staff to reflect on their personal growth and faith formation in the context of their call to mission and ministry in the Catholic school. To provide opportunities for the spiritual growth of principals
- To develop pathways for spiritual leadership and wellbeing
- To assist principals come to a deeper understanding of their call to leadership in a Catholic school
- To encourage Principals and executive staff to develop a relationship with a spiritual director

Implementation process

- Archdiocesan principals are invited to attend 3 spiritual formation experiences throughout the year. The programs are titled Siloam and are themed on Jesus' miracle of sight at the pool of Siloam. These spiritual formation programs are held at a retreat centre
- Each spiritual formation program commences at 5pm on a Wednesday and concludes at 3.30pm the following day
- Principals are grouped in 4 groups that do not change. A member of the archdiocesan clergy has offered to act as spiritual companion to each group
- Accommodation and meals are covered by the Catholic Education Office
- Participants cover the cost of travel
- The theme for each session is decided by the Faith Formation Team in conjunction with each of the spiritual companions. The groups are consulted in developing the plan
- Elements of the broader leadership framework are incorporated into the development of the program

Measures of success

- All participants to date have responded very favourably to the program. The depth of the reflections has indicated the significant impact of the program
- Most programs average a 80-90% participation rate
- The Principals Association made representation to the Director at the end of 2013 to ensure that the program continues
- The program addresses the identified *Crossroads* areas

Cost	A System-funded project at around \$700 per participant for the total program.
Suitability for other dioceses	Able to be transferred easily and adopted by another jurisdiction.
Further comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative has been running for 4 years. The basic structure is flexible enough to allow modification to support other initiatives and system priorities without compromising on the Faith Formation component • The program has built strong relationships between the principals and the clergy. Several principals participated in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a result of the <i>Siloam</i> experience. The strong desire of the principals' group to maintain this program is testimony to the thirst for regular and ongoing faith formation at this level.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION FOR LEADERS

Crossroads areas addressed

Leading and staffing our schools in this new era

Diocese

Armidale

Contacts

Lee Herden
Assistant Director, Mission and Evangelisation
Catholic Schools Office, Armidale
lherden@arm.catholic.edu.au

Outline

This project aimed to provide a spiritual director for principals to assist them in their personal faith journey.

Aims

- The Spiritual Direction program aimed to:
- provide opportunities for principals to consult a personal trained registered spiritual director on a monthly basis to assist them in their faith journey
 - provide a reflective prayerful aspect to school leadership

Implementation process

- School principals were surveyed to see the level of interest for spiritual direction
- Those interested (6) were matched to the nearest available spiritual director
- Times and locations for the direction were negotiated

Measures of success

- This program addressed the identified *Crossroads* area
- 6 out of 23 principals expressed interest
- None of these principals wished to continue beyond the initial 12 month period
- The program was not evaluated at the mid-point and end-point to gauge its effectiveness

Cost

The CSO budgeted to fund the cost of the spiritual director plus travel and accommodation.

Suitability for other dioceses

The program failed because of the lack of spiritual directors who were Catholic and able to travel to the areas in which the principals were located. For the project to be successful Dioceses would need to have a good supply of directors in the areas needed.

Further comment

- The project failed at the second hurdle which was the point at which directors were to be allocated
- Had there not been a requirement to use Catholic spiritual directors the project would have taken off, so there needs to be openness to an ecumenical approach
- If the project had advanced directors would have been chosen who were not connected to the Catholic school system so that the principal had an additional layer of anonymity
- It was interesting to note that there was a genuine openness to the concept of spiritual direction.

INITIATIVES WHICH FOCUS ON SCHOOL/PARISH COMMUNITIES

CROSSROADS EVANGELISATION GRANTS

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Wollongong

Contacts

Patricia O’Gorman
Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator, Diocesan Youth Ministry Chaplain and
Diocesan Liturgy Coordinator
Catholic Education Office, Wollongong
Pat.Ogorman@dow.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Crossroads Evangelisation Grants were set up in 2009 as a post WYD08 initiative and in response to the *Crossroads* document. Secondary schools were able to apply for a grant of up to \$15,000 and nominate how they would use it to further the goals set out in *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads*, over a one year period.

The grants ceased at the end of 2012 due to CEO budgeting constraints.

Aims

The CEO aimed to:

- empower schools to engage in a reflective process and identify evangelisation needs for their own communities
- have schools become very familiar with the *Crossroads* document and respond to its challenges
- encourage parish-school connections by requiring schools to address this in their application and goal setting
- encourage the creation of initiatives that could become sustainable beyond the life of the grants

School initiatives had a wide variety of aims that were local-school specific, and were broadly to either:

- employ a youth minister to deliver a program/s in the school or
- to provide for teacher release to oversee and develop evangelisation initiatives

Implementation Process

Grant applications

- School applications made to CEO at end of school year for following year using a template that required a proposal description, identification of aims and outcomes, links to the *Crossroads* document and School Review and Improvement, target group, the duration of project, a budget breakdown of how the money would be used, nominated project managers, proposed evaluation strategies
- Applications received, reviewed, confirmed

System support

- School-based meeting: CEO/Diocesan staff met with key driver in each school at the commencement of year regarding plans and implementation
- Diocesan network meeting: CEO/Diocesan staff provided a half-day meeting attended by teachers/youth minister from each school in the second term of the school year
- Schools shared how they were progressing with their initiatives and resources shared

On-going communication

CEO/Diocesan staff informally connected with the Evangelisation Coordinators at various school and Diocesan events throughout the year, including some of the local initiatives that they were invited to attend.

Grant applications

Schools provided a written report and evaluation of their use of the Evangelisation Grant over the year.

Measures of success

- Year 7 Scripture group ('Break Open') run by Youth Minister
- Youth minister participated in classroom RE program and sacramental program
- Youth minister fostered lunch group with youth ministry activities. (YM hours now funded by school)
- Development of Twilight Youth ministry program, called SPARK, offered after school hours once a term, involving staff and students. (Time release for teacher coordination now funded by school)
- Development of a school youth group called WISH (Witnesses in Spirit and Hope), promoting religious leadership and mission to peers. (Time release for teacher coordination now funded by school)
- YM connecting some students to parish youth group
- YM assisted some involvement of students in parish liturgy
- Evangelisation Coordinator organised for students to participate in parish morning Mass in home parishes. The grant helped fund bus transport
- Evangelisation Coordinator organised a trip to a significant religious art exhibition in Canberra, with school, clergy, parent involvement
- participation in Catholic Aboriginal ministry in Western Australia
- EC/YM involvement in World Youth Day Madrid preparations
- Supporting students to attend Diocesan Youth Group weekends
- These projects address the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

\$120,000 p.a. As the grant was optional, it was taken up consistently over the four years by 7 of 8 schools. Thus the full cost of the initiative to the Diocese was not always operative.

Suitability for other dioceses

This program is transferable to a Diocese that can supply the necessary funding. The initial aim was that the Grant would provide seed funding for self-sustainable programs.

Further comment

This initiative was discontinued in 2013 when CEO funds were reviewed due to government funding cuts. The concept of the grant was very innovative as it required schools to engage with the document *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads* and identify how their local community could answer the challenges presented by the Bishops. This saw a wide variety of experiences and structures set up by schools. There was a strong sense of ownership of the initiatives and they included fostering of parish connections in a variety of ways.

Two schools used their grant to employ a Youth Minister and in one school this has continued (after the grant ceased) with the school funding the position. A youth minister has a special appeal for youth as they have a different status to teachers. A member of staff is required to liaise with and supervise the work of the youth minister.

The teachers and youth ministers were very committed to youth ministry and some participated in formal youth ministry training opportunities (such as the 'Youth Essentials' program run by the Diocesan Youth/Young Adult Coordinator, as well as the CSYMA Teacher Conferences).

Developing a network of teachers/YM was helpful for communication of information e.g. The release of 'Anointed and Sent', reports from CSYMA Conferences, youth ministry resources.

CLASS PRAYER BAGS

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic Faith, life and culture

Diocese Wilcannia-Forbes

Contacts Therese Newell
Administrator of Religious Education
Catholic Education Office, Wilcannia-Forbes
therese.newell@wf.catholic.edu.au.com

Outline The class prayer bags are designed to create prayerful opportunities at home, to link the importance of faith in the school and home environment and to carry out the mission of Jesus in all aspects of our lives.

Each week a different student is invited to take home the prayer bag and share the experience of prayer within their families. During the week, students create their own special prayers and write them in the journal to be shared with their class peers when the bag returns at the end of the week.

Aims

- To encourage students to continue their faith journey through prayer at home
- To engage students in the process of prayer
- To introduce parents to special prayer time and formal prayers taught at school
- To invite students to share their faith, life and culture through a prayer of their own that would be shared with their class peers
- To make a distinct connection between school and home, identifying the importance of carrying out Christian values and spreading the Good News
- To invite parents to be involved in their children's faith journey and to share special times of prayer together

Implementation Process

Prayer bags were created

One prayer bag per class was issued for student's home for the week. The bag consisted of:

- A welcome and instruction sheet
- A colourful cloth (colour depending on the liturgical season)
- A battery-operated candle
- A special journal book
- Prayers (age appropriate for each grade level and during special times of the year children learn and pray the Rosary, information on feast days, information on Nano Nagle and Saints)
- Rosary beads, a wooden cross

Prayer bags were introduced to students and parents

- A snippet in the school newsletter was designed to introduce the prayer bags to parents and encourage their participation at home
- Students were shown how to set up their prayer space at home using the items in the bag and instructed on how best to choose a prayer each night

Prayer bags went home

- Each week a different student is invited to take home the prayer bag and share the experience of prayer within their families
- During the week, students create their own special prayers and write them in the journal to be shared with their class peers when the bag returns at the end of the week

Measures of success

- All students including Year 5/6 participated and enjoyed the experience of taking home and sharing prayer time with family and friends. Every student who took the prayer bag home came back to school with their own prayer written in the journal books
- All students have chosen to share their prayers with their peers and prayers that have been suitable for the end of the day have been shared at afternoon assemblies and read by the student who created them
- A few parents have commented on their support of the prayer bags adding that they have learned the sign of the cross and formal prayers students have been exposed to
- However, a survey needs to be completed by parents to assess whether parents see the bags as a success and positive initiative within the School
- The project addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

The cost of the prayer bags and resources is minimal and sustainable.

Suitability for other dioceses

The prayer bags could be introduced in any school however, the participation level of parents would vary between schools. At this school only 20% of the parent community attend Mass on a regular basis and therefore, for a lot of parents the concept of prayer and worship is new. The prayer bags provide an opportunity for parents to make that connection and to enjoy their own faith journey with their child. It encourages active participation and opportunities to reflect in order to write a special prayer of their own.

Further comment

It is important to ensure the prayer bags are age appropriate. Next time, students should be allowed to create their prayer in any way. This may mean through drawings, pictures, reflections, quotes etc. not just writing a prayer.

During Sacramental preparation it would be an idea to include suitable material pertinent to the Sacrament being prepared for. This would inform and guide parents on the journey of sacramental preparation at home not only at school.

FAMILY EDUCATOR PROJECT (FAMILY AND FAITH PROGRAM)

Crossroads areas

addressed Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Sydney

Contacts Meredith Lemos
Advisor, Family Educator Project
Catholic Education Office, Sydney
meredith.lemos@syd.catholic.edu.au

Outline The Family Educator Project is a means of developing strong and meaningful parish/family/school relationships and of exploring new models of nurturing and supporting the spiritual, social and educational formation of families.


Aims

- To develop strong and meaningful parish/family/school relationships
- To explore new models of nurturing and supporting the spiritual, social and educational formation of families

The Family Educator seeks to:

- strengthen the faith life of parents
- engage families into the faith life of the school community
- lead initiatives which connect/reconnect/and further the relationships of families to the local parish
- promote and strengthen family wellbeing

Implementation process

- Discussion paper presented outlining a proposal for the position of Family Educator to strengthen the relationships between the school/families/parish as well as to support the development of resilience within children and the overall emotional and social wellbeing of the family unit
 - Role description prepared, industrial aspects considered
 - EOIs called for from principals and parish priests
 - 6 Family Educators employed 0.5 FTE
 - Regional Directors, the Director of RE&E, the Head of New Evangelisation, the Executive Director and the Archbishop of the Sydney Archdiocese discern which 6 communities will be part of an 18 month pilot period to begin in Term 3, 2010
 - CEO Advisors meet with principals and priests in each location to inform them of the role and expectations of the pilot project
 - A logo and a working title (Family & Faith program) for the Family Educator Pilot Project are created and approved
- 
- CEO Advisor begins working as the first Family Educator in the Sydney Archdiocese at (0.4 FTE) as well as coordinating the pilot project (0.1 FTE)
 - Two Formation/Orientation Days are held for the Family Educators
 - A 'Connecting and Sharing Meeting' is scheduled once per term, to share initiatives and challenges and provide support for Family Educators (FEs)

- The Family Educator Pilot Project is extended for a further 18 months with 6 additional Family Educators in 6 new locations
- The process outlined above (steps 3-6 and 9) is employed for this extension of the project
- The project is extended a third time and a similar process is used
- The time-allocation of the Advisor is increased to 0.6FTE
- An evaluation involving the first nine communities which were part of the project is conducted using the Most Significant Change Technique
- The Leadership Team of the Catholic Education Office Sydney accepts a proposal for the Family Educator Pilot Project to become a substantive project, with the aim of having a Family Educator in every Catholic systemic school in the Archdiocese of Sydney by 2012
- The process outlined above is used to determine which schools will be involved
- A proposal requesting more system support for the increased number of FEs in the project is accepted. Three Family Educator Regional Mentors (FERMs) are appointed (0.2FTE) for a pilot period of 18 months to assist the Advisor for Family Faith and Evangelisation, to commence in Term 3, 2013

Currently (2014) 59 Family Educators are working in Catholic Schools in the Sydney Archdiocese.

Measures of success

- The project has increased from an initial pilot project of 6 Family Educators and 1 Advisor (0.1FTE) to a substantive project with 59 Family Educators, 3 Family Educator Regional Mentors and 1 Advisor (0.6FTE)
- A number of priests who now work with a Family Educator have given feedback at Deanery meetings, directly to Directors (Regional and RE) and the Executive Director concerning the effectiveness of the FE role
- The number and creativity of initiatives and events planned under the Family & Faith program expands each year. Although not all of them are implemented in every school, there are many meaningful opportunities to encounter God/Christ/Spirit, being provided throughout the archdiocese. New Evangelisation is about bringing the message of Christ in a new, fresh, more inviting way (relevant to time, place and culture) and this is what many of these initiatives and events achieve
- It is difficult to assess whether or not people's faith has deepened through the opportunities planned and implemented through the Family Educator role. However, as part of the evaluation after the first 12 months of the pilot, parents were given opportunities through surveys, questionnaires and interviews, to share how the initiatives and events had affected their faith and impacted on their life. Feedback was very positive and often quite heart-warming
- The initiative has addressed the areas identified in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

Initial and ongoing costs are significant. Family Educators are on a three year contract so if the cost for this project cannot be met, the FE role can be withdrawn from a school/parish community once the contract has expired.

Suitability for other dioceses

Due to the significant cost of employing a Family Educator per school, the project would be difficult for CEOs in small diocese to fund. Some of the Family & Faith initiatives and events to support family evangelisation are easily implemented in most locations. Obviously, if there is no FE, then a staff representative or leadership team member would have to oversee the implementation of such initiatives and events, some of which are easier to implement than others.

Further comment

- The process of implementation was well thought through by the Head of New Evangelisation (2009-2012)
- The issue around the difference in salary and working hours for FEs who are not trained teachers is something which possibly needs attention.

COMPANIONS IN THE FAITH PROGRAM

Crossroads areas addressed

Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic Faith, life and culture

Diocese

Lismore

Contacts

Danny Hatchman
Primary Consultant, SEACS Team
Catholic Schools Office, Lismore
dhatchman@lism.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Companions in the Faith is a program which seeks to develop in Catechetical/Religious Education a strong faith-sharing relationship between adult companions (either catechists or parishioners) and young people in the Catholic school. Companions come into the school once a fortnight and join small groups of children. Parishioners and students get to know each other and speak about life and faith.

Aims

- To develop 'heart' experiences for young people, important for their faith development
- To develop relationships between parishioners and children, thereby building the parish community
- To learn to wait for a 'teachable moment' before making a faith point rather than teaching to a formal religious education curriculum
- To provide for young people real experiences of a lived faith

Implementation process

- The Parish Priest and Principal agreed on the need for the program
- The Parish Priest meets with staff to gain their support and requests the assistance of the parish assistant and parishioners/catechists
- The Catholic Schools Office agrees to provide support through formation of parishioners in their role as catechists
- Trialling the program begins with children in Year Five
- Following a review, in the following year the program is offered to students in years three and four
- The parish assistant assumes responsibility for the overall coordination of the program and works closely with the parish priest, principal, religious education coordinator, Catholic Schools Office, companions and teachers of years three and four
- Companions came into the school once a fortnight and join small groups of children to get to know them and speak about life and faith
- At the beginning of each year, companions are invited to a preparation meeting which is facilitated with the support of the Catholic Schools Office
- At the end of each year, a review of the program is held with companions and some teaching staff

Measures of success

- The program has made a significant contribution to the emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing of children
- It has aided in strengthening the religious education program

- It has contributed significantly to the intergenerational religious education/catechesis of young people
- The companions gained a deal of personal satisfaction and sense of purpose through their participation in the program
- Strengthening the relationship between children and their companions, companions and school community, school and parish communities
- The school administration and teachers continue to see value in the program and are more than happy to also play their part in ensuring its success
- The program has addressed the areas specific to the *Crossroads* document

Cost

The initial and ongoing monetary costs are minimal. The most important contribution is in terms of time given by the parish assistant, the parish priest and principal and staff of the school.

Suitability for other dioceses

The program would need to be adapted to cater for local conditions (eg. student numbers, companion numbers). However, the principles behind the structure and the functioning of the program are transferable to other educational settings. The number of companions and catechists dictates the number of students to be accompanied at any one time. The program continues as a direct result of the enthusiasm of the parish priest and school personnel and the dedication of the parish assistant.

Further comment

The implementation of *The Companions in the Faith* program requires a change of culture. Within the parish, the parish priest had to trust the laity and the laity had to be prepared to assume responsibility for catechesis. In the school, teachers had to allow outsiders to invade their space and trust these non-teachers with the education and welfare of their students. Finally, the parish and school had to develop a collaborative working relationship based on trust.

The project needed a driver (the parish priest) with vision and passion, a school administration open to new ideas as well as companions willing to take a risk and move out of their comfort zone. The parish assistant provided both enthusiasm and organisational skills.

The common denominator in program success in both schools appears to be a driver who provides initial and continual support for the program.

KINDER – TRANSITION WELCOME TO THE CHURCH PROGRAM

**Crossroads
areas
addressed**

Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese

Armidale

Contacts

Lee Herden
School Principal and CSO Assistant Director: Mission and Evangelisation
Catholic Schools Office, Armidale
lherden@arm.catholic.edu.au

Outline

The Kinder-Transition Welcome Program of this rural primary school is designed to help connect kindergarten and transition parents to the Catholic church community by allowing them to feel comfortable within the church and to gain a better understanding of what their children are experiencing in a Catholic school.

Aims

In consultation with the CSO, the parish priest and the school principal, a pilot program was developed that aimed to:

- connect new parents enrolling into the school with Catholic practices that their children would encounter upon enrolment
- develop the parents' knowledge of these practices so that they could support their children once they were enrolled
- utilise existing Kindergarten parents to mentor transition parents
- be low impact on the school in terms of staff involvement and cost
- develop a program that would enable the transition parents in 2013 to become the mentor parents in 2014

Implementation

Process

The program has been successful in 2013 because of the use of the following strategies:

Welcoming

Parents were personally invited to attend by the Principal and were made to feel welcome.

Informality

Discussion centred around parents' experience of Church and their children's experience of Catholic education lead by the EO:RE from the CSO

Short time frame

Three meetings were scheduled early in the year each of one hour's duration followed by morning tea. The meetings, which took place in the church, identified three key liturgical moments, Lent, Easter and Advent.

Welcoming priest

The parish priest was not involved in the initial meetings so that the parents could become comfortable with engaging in Catholic conversation. The priest however was involved in welcoming and conversing with the parents at the morning tea.

Communication

Evaluations from parents were positive with suggestions for the following year acted upon. Thank you letters for attendance and input were sent out.

Sustainability

Parents were targeted to run the program the following year and asked to focus on its sustainability. Initially the program was set up by the principal and the Catholic Schools Office. This had low impact on the school as the training and leadership was provided by the CSO. The principal and parish priest were key in encouraging parents to come along.

Phase two

The second phase of the pilot program is has recently commenced with a Catholic parent working with the principal and another parent to continue to enhance the program and its sustainability.

Measures of success

- 79% of parents attended at least one of the three sessions of the program and made contact with the parish priest and the parish Church
- Parents asked if they could attend Mass and have parts explained to them. They would like in future to attend Mass with their children
- Program attracted a parent volunteer mentor very quickly and the mentor is working with the school for Phase 2
- Enrolments into transition at the school have increased to a maximum in 2014
- Engagement with the parish priest is positive
- The project addressed the areas identified by the *Crossroads* document

Phase two indicators of success:

- Project will continue for at least three years
- Increase in attendance of these parents at school
- Organised prayers and reflection afternoons
- The formation of prayer groups by parents
- Attendance of these parents at Sunday Masses
- Attendance of these parents at school Masses
- Baptisms of non-Catholic students/parents

Cost

The project is dependent on finding good parents to become mentors for the following year. It will also need to be well documented so that subsequent principals will be able to support the program.

Suitability for other dioceses

Although this program was run in a small rural school with parents from a diverse range of occupations and distances from the school, it could be transferable to metropolitan and larger schools. Parents are keen to be part of their child's early education and connected to a community. This program connects them with their Catholic Church community.

PARISH – FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER

Crossroads areas addressed

Identity of the Catholic school
Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation
Passing on Catholic faith, life and culture

Diocese Maitland-Newcastle

Contacts Ray Collins
Director of Schools
Catholic Schools Office, Maitland-Newcastle
ray.collins@mn.catholic.org.au

Outline The role of the Parish-Family Liaison Officer is to provide support to families by connecting them to the life of the parish, their school communities and new or existing networks of families so as to enable these families to participate in family faith, social and educational activities of the local community. A pilot project was conducted in 2012 in 11 primary schools and 3 secondary schools and expanded for a further 2 years.

Responsibilities

- Assist with linking families to the life of the parish
- Initiate new forms of family ministry as well
- Liaise with relevant groups and organisations that support families in the parish and schools through the PFLO
- Strengthen the sense of family and community
- Provide opportunities for the formation of families
- Work collaboratively with the PFLO, parish priest, parish staff, pastoral council, school principals and the SRE co-coordinator

Aims

- Form relationships with key stakeholders in schools/parishes
- Update parishes/schools on the progress of this project through newsletter/parish bulletin
- Arrange for parish schools to come together with mass centres
- Foster community hospitality and welcoming
- Link family to Eucharistic life of the parish
- Support sacramental programs
- Arrange/attend school Masses especially those where parents are welcomed
- Conduct spirituality mornings at schools for community members
- Encourage people to share their faith in a variety of ways
- Promote sense of social justice in students through various initiatives
- Communicate project's progress to parish priests
- Update staff on the project
- Foster effective Christian leadership and role modelling for students and parents

Implementation Process

Consultation

With key stakeholders including parish priests, principals, members of the teaching staff, Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) Diocesan Vice Chancellor Pastoral Support, Director CSO and Bishop.

Implementation

Diocesan Vice Chancellor Pastoral Support met with project officer to outline objectives and aims of the project based on the recommendations of the targeted schools/parishes.

12 month pilot

Monthly reports were sent to key personnel and were tabled at the DPC meetings. At the end of the twelve-month period a survey was sent to 100 people affected by the project with the response uptake of 67.

Recommendation

The project officer submitted a recommendation based on the survey results that a further 2 years in an expanded form would be valuable.

Reporting

A monthly update in the form of a diary and commentary was sent to key personnel.

Sustainability

Several of the initiatives have forged ahead allowing the project officer to move into other areas.

Future

To roll the project out into all areas of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Measures of success

- Identity and Community - Christian community has been fostered; hospitality, welcome and respect grounded in 'communio' are evident
- Worship and prayer: people have gathered for prayer, sacrament and liturgical celebration
- Formation and education: spiritual growth has been facilitated and empowerment through education and formation has been promoted
- Mission and outreach: people are engaged in the transformation of society through mercy and justice
- Leadership and structure: effective Christian leadership, communication, organisational and maintenance structures have been fostered
- The project addresses the areas outlined in the *Crossroads* document

Cost

The project officer's salary is funded 50% by CSO and 50% by Diocesan office. All administrative costs are absorbed by the diocese.

Suitability for other dioceses

The project is sustainable and could be transferred to all areas but local knowledge of the schools and parishes is desirable. Gaining the respect of the students and forming relationships with parents, teachers and parishioners is vital. A high level of energy is desirable as there is a need to be enthusiastic about spreading the Word. There is ample documentation about the life of the project along with monthly diaries which would ensure transferability of the project.

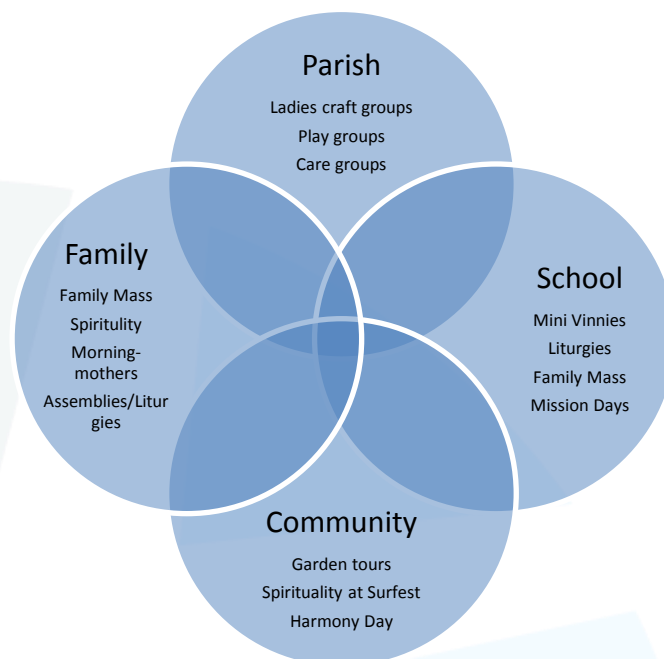
Further comment

The project was established as a pilot in 2012 in 11 schools. Following evaluation it was expanded for a further 2 years and now involves 15 primary schools and 4 secondary schools.

Currently it is into the second year of the extension phase

- The absence of priests' visits to schools makes it impossible for the students to form a relationship with their priest hence it is difficult to see any significant increase at Mass on Sundays. Priests thus need to:
 - Take some initiatives to where the families are e.g. the priest blessing the opening of the Nippers (beach) season
 - Encourage students to have involvement in the life of their local church in a variety of ways
- What would I do differently? Very little but perhaps work more closely with the CSO's RE & Spirituality Team so a real sense of belonging to the faith community is enhanced through both the curriculum and practical events.

FRAMEWORK



Stewardship

Communion

Mission

WEBSITE FOR FORMATION OF PARENTS SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN IN FAITH

Crossroads areas addressed

Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation

Diocese

Broken Bay

Contacts

John McGrath
Assistant Director
Catholic Schools Office, Broken Bay
john.mcgrath@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Outline

Responding to the system strategic plan and formation experiences in 2011, education officers for faith formation proposed the development and maintenance of an online site for parent formation. The opportunity arose to partner with Church Resources as its host in a pilot project in 2012.

Aims

To provide simple, invitational and relevant formation materials for parents in an accessible, agile online environment in order to support them as first educators in the faith of their children.

Implementation process

- The System Strategic Plan (2012-14) identified parent faith formation as a priority. An Education Officer had been appointed in 2011, supplemented by the appointment of another Education Officer, who is a priest, in 2012
- The commitment to an online resource for parents arose out of the experience in 2011 of providing cluster formation experiences for primary school parents who requested further simple, accessible materials to support them. Opportunities for online offerings were investigated
- A pilot program with Church Resources was developed along with an MOU for 2012 only. Church Resources would host the site, which it named 'The Faith Project' and the Broken Bay team provided relevant materials each fortnight. Church resources added a number of its own published items to complete the site
- Late in 2012 it was amicably decided not to advance past the pilot phase because from Broken Bay's perspective the relative number of 'hits' could not justify the considerable time and effort put into the site each fortnight

Measures of success

- This project addressed the areas of the *Crossroads* document
- Insufficient numbers prevented the continuation of the pilot
- There was little feedback of any kind
- It took a lot of time and ingenuity and the outcome was insufficient to justify participation past the pilot phase

Cost

Actual cost was minimal. Contributed service by already employed personnel was considerable and if quantified would be significant.

Suitability for other dioceses

The idea may be transferable. However, it is not feasible for a school system to attempt it alone.

Further comment

- Broken Bay has discontinued the project. The partner organisation is seeking means of reactivation as it is 'coming soon'
- The challenge of partnerships. The formation materials appeared to be appropriate. The 'other stories', 'news' and the website 'style' were like CathNews
- There is no research (to Broken Bay's knowledge) on why participants did not return.