



NCCD NEWS – OCTOBER 2014

Points of interest



Date Claimer

**Monday, 24th November,
(Note NEW DATE)**

*The next meeting of the
Association will be a 'Virtual
Conference' on Monday,
24th November*

2.00-4.00pm AEDST

*See page 3 for further details
and instructions.*

WELCOME TO NCCD NEWS

Since our last newsletter and our gathering in March at Baulkham Hills, the NCCD Management Committee met in Chatswood on the 20th August prior to the PROCLAIM 2014 Conference.

Inside on page 2 you will find an overview of the meeting in Chatswood in a message from the Chairperson, Pina Ford including an update on the development of the relationship of the NCCD with Bishops Commission for Catholic Education. Page 4 gives a selection from the NCCD response to the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education's call for submissions to its working document on ***'Educating Today and Tomorrow-A Renewing Passion'***. Pina strongly believes the voice of our association needs to be heard in this context.

These items will be discussed further at our next virtual conference which is proposed for **Wednesday the 24th November** from **1.30-3.30pm AEDST**.

Please note that this date had to be changed due to technical difficulties from a number of dioceses connecting to the NCCD Meeting room. There seems to be a connection and security issue associated with CEnet—which is the internet network which most Diocesan offices use. The issue has been logged with CEnet who are investigating the problem. The later meeting date will allow for these problems to be solved.

The problem is not with Adobe CONNECT, but with the diocesan to diocesan internet connection so at this stage we will still use the ADOBE Connect platform as it seems to meet our needs.

Please see the agenda and url address to connect to the meeting room on page 3. Further information and instructions will be forwarded via email.

We are looking forward to gathering for this virtual meeting to strengthen our common bonds and support our national ministry. 'See' you all then. God's blessings be with you all. (Rickie Withers)

Website of interest:



"The Journey" Catholic Radio is a weekly Catholic radio show produced by Jude Hennesy and Daniel Hopper, Diocese of Wollongong and aired on Pulse 94.1FM along the Illawarra and South Coast on Sundays 11am-12pm; repeated Wednesday Evenings from 10pm-11pm. Podcasts of past episodes available at **www.radio.dow.org.au**



Prayer: Draw your Church together, O God, into one great company of disciples, together following our Lord Jesus Christ into every walk of life, together serving him in his mission to the world, on every continent and island.

*(A New Zealand Prayer Book, from
"The Book of A Thousand Prayers", p 203)*

Our Lady of the Rosary—Pray for us.



National Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

Catholic Catechists sharing faith with students who go to non-Catholic schools.

NCCD MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

The management committee had the opportunity to meet face to face in NSW in August when most members gathered for the Proclaim Conference at Chatswood. The following is a summary report of that meeting and other matters of common interest to our work.

1. *NCCD and The BCCE (Bishops' Commission for Catholic Education)*

I received a letter from Bishop Greg O'Kelly, Chairman of the BCCE. The Bishops were pleased to hear the NCCD conference in March was a success, Bishop Kelly offered his good wishes to the new Management Committee and addressed our members: "The Bishops on the BCCE have asked me to express their gratitude and thanks to the NCCD group for their leadership of this ministry." Bishop O'Kelly goes on to say that he would be open to dialogue with us about ways in which the bishops can support our work at a national level. They would be open to meeting with NCCD representatives to discuss matters of mutual interest. Mr. Ross Fox, Executive Director NCEC and Executive Secretary, BCCE would be the normal point of contact.

I have every confidence that we can develop this relationship with the BCCE as different forms and levels of liaison are possible with the Catholic Bishops' Commissions. I will be looking to pursue this further. Matters of national significance for us as a group could include the place of religion in society and the challenges to religious education in Government schools.

2. *NCCD Website Development*

Lorraine Wynne has met with Jacinta Bennett from School Site Solutions (Rosie Harrison was also in attendance) to discuss details around the development of the NCCD website. Progress is being made in this regard—please see further information on the following page. The website development will also be part of our discussion at the upcoming Virtual E-Conference.

3. *Finances*

Patricia McDevitt presented a 6 monthly report on our finances. Patricia also raised the idea that there may need to be an increase in the annual Diocesan subscription fees. This proposal will also be discussed further at the virtual conference. It is important that all efforts are made to ensure that the face to face conference is relatively cost neutral and that all

fore-seeable expenses are covered. A more current report is presented on the following page.

4. *National Statistics and Profile.*

To support our discussions and promotions of NCCD with the BCCE, the Management Committee felt it would be beneficial to have statistics and other information about the ministry to present to the Bishops. In this regard Paul Worthington has gathered information from the 2011 Census outlining the number of Catholic students beyond the Catholic school system based, while Rickie Withers is preparing a survey tool in an attempt to build an up to date picture of the scope of the ministry of catechetics and faith education to Catholic students outside the Catholic school system in its various forms and expressions across Australia.

5. *Face to Face Conference—October 2015*

The Management Committee discussed the October 2015 Conference with regard to location and the possibility of another NSW Diocese hosting the gathering. Subsequently, Paul Worthington has contacted Alison Newell from the Diocese of Broken Bay who has indicated that they would be happy to host the 2014 Conference. More details to come later.

6. *Vatican 'Congregation for Catholic Education' (Instrumentum Laboris) Educating Today and Tomorrow a Renewing Passion.*

Not long after our gathering in March, I was made aware of the above 'instrumentum laboris' -working document of the Congregation for Catholic Education calling for submissions and responses to a series of questions on Catholic education in the context of the New Evangelisation which are to be the basis of a Global Convention to take place in Rome in November, 2015. As we are all involved in the faith education of at least 50 per cent of Catholic students in Australia, I felt that our voice and experience should also be expressed. In that regard I sent in a submission on behalf of the NCCD. You will find a copy of my responses on the back page of the newsletter.

You will find on the back page of this newsletter an agenda and other details for the upcoming virtual E-conference proposed for the 24th November.

I look forward to 'catching' up and 'speaking' with everyone then.

God's blessings to you all. Pina Ford

Virtual E-Conference
Monday—24th November
TIME: 1.30-3.30pm (AEDST)

VENUE: Adobe Connect NCCD Meeting Room
<https://connect.arm.catholic.edu.au/nccd-trial/>

Proposed Agenda:

- Prayer
- Introduction / Welcome – Housekeeping (Pina Ford)
- Chairpersons Report (PINA FORD)
- Treasurer’s Report – update on financial situation (PATRICIA McDEVITT)
- Website Development update (LORRAINE WYNNE)
- National NCCD Statistics and Information survey (PAUL WORTHINGTON, RICKIE WITHERS)
- 2015 Face to face Conference preparation update (PINA FORD)

GENERAL BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION

Website development update report.

Lorraine Wynne (with Rosie Harrison-past member of NCCD) has met with Jacinta Bennett from ‘School Site Solutions’ to follow up on the development of the NCCD website. NCCD have been given a contract from School Site Solutions quoting a website establishment fee of \$800.00 with a \$50.00 per hour maintenance fee (as required).

At the NCCD Management Committee meeting on the 20th August, questions were raised as to the issue of website hosting, location and ownership of the website. Subsequently Lorraine raised these issues with Jacinta who has advised that ‘School Site Solutions’ will only be involved in the development and ongoing maintenance of the website, NCCD maintains ownership of the site and can choose its own hosting services.

Lorraine is currently following up on the availability and costs of hosting services possibly with Catholic Communications Sydney and the development of a domain name etc. More details to be presented and discussed at the virtual conference.

As a group, the NCCD will also have to consider the content of the website and what we want or need to be featured on the site etc.



I never tire of repeating those words of Benedict XVI which take us to the very heart of the Gospel: “Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or of a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction”. Thanks solely to this encounter—or renewed encounter—with God’s love, which blossoms into an enriching friendship, we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelisation. For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others? Evangelii Gaudium, 7-8

NCCD Submission
to 'Congregation for Catholic Education'
'Educating Today and Tomorrow—
A Renewing Passion'
(Instrumentum Laboris)

Identity and Mission

What place is there for the teaching of the Catholic religion in Catholic schools and non-Catholic schools?

The teaching of the Catholic religion in non-Catholic schools varies from diocese to diocese in Australia. In some dioceses it occurs within state schools and in others in parish based programs out of school times. Yet in others it occurs minimally or not at all. The provision of Catholic religious education in state schools and parishes is dependent upon the awareness of its need by the local bishop and/ or parish priest and their willingness to support catechists in doing this work. While around Australia generous people are willing to offer their time they also require formation and training and the provision of religious educational programs appropriate to the context. These are available to varying degrees – depending on the resources of parishes and diocese and the extent to which there is practical acceptance that “every baptized person, precisely by reason of being baptized, has the right to receive from the Church instruction and education enabling him or her to enter on a truly Christian life” (Catechesi Tradendai 14).

2. Subjects

Is there provision for accompaniment in the faith for teachers, students and the families of students who attend Catholic schools and universities?

Again, Catholic students who attend non-Catholic schools, those who provide them with religious education and catechesis and the families of these students need to be considered as ‘subjects’ for the purpose of this question.

The purpose that *Gravissimum Educationis* identifies for education applies equally to them: “A Christian education ...has its principal purpose this goal: that the baptised while they are gradually introduced to the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of faith they have received and that they learn in addition how to worship God...”

Given that parents generally do not feel they have the capacity to transmit the faith in the home, knowledge of that faith is not available to half the future Catholic population without the provision of programs to those children who are outside the Catholic school system. It should be noted that the choice to attend either Catholic or non-Catholic schools is determined by a variety of factors and is not of itself a choice to embrace or reject the Catholic faith for either populations. There are parents who for a variety of

reasons send their children to non-Catholic schools who will still seek out an education in faith for their children, whether in the state school based programs or from parish contexts. It is important that educationally sound programs are available to them.

3. Formation

Is there care to form also those who work in non-Catholic schools and universities?

Some dioceses take great care but in others, due to their resource capacity and/or awareness, there is may be little care given to the recruitment, pastoral care and formation of those volunteer catechists who provide religious education programs to children in non-Catholic schools and in parish programs. While catechists may be generous and willing in order to fulfil their role they need to be formed according to the GDC’s (238) three dimensions: in their very being (formed on Christ), in gaining the knowledge they require (theology/scripture/church traditions etc) and in having the essential savoir-faire (teaching skills). Without highly equipped educators to form and train catechists they are in danger of being ineffective and are often regarded as such. These volunteers come with a strong faith and a desire to communicate that faith but what is needed is formation that as the GDC says at 244 creates a ‘mature an educational capacity in the Catechist which implies an ability to interpret or respond to educational tasks or initiatives in organising learning activities.’

The role traditionally held by religious in the faith education of children has been transferred to lay teachers in Catholic schools and to catechists outside of Catholic schools. There has been less awareness of what this transition requires for catechists than for Catholic school staff.

(responses submitted by Pina Ford on behalf of the NCCD)



**Let the
little
children
come to
me and do
not hinder
them. For
to such as
these
belongs
the
kingdom
of heaven.**

**Matthew
19:14**