



# Children's Ministry Update

Year of Matthew

YEAR A : Matthew

Volume12 Edition1: 2017

## From the Team

Hello everyone and welcome to this year's first edition of the 'Children's Ministry Update' newsletter. We hope that you are going well in your ministry with our children and their families.

Welcome to any new catechists who have answered their call to help children build a friendship with Jesus and hear God's Word in ways that greatly benefit the children, their families and the parish community. We hope that you will feel how worthwhile this work is for the children and their families as well as become aware of the benefits that this work has on your own spiritual life. Our reflection on our ministry, the preparation involved and the opportunities we take to nurture our life as a Catechist, can only enhance our Christian living.

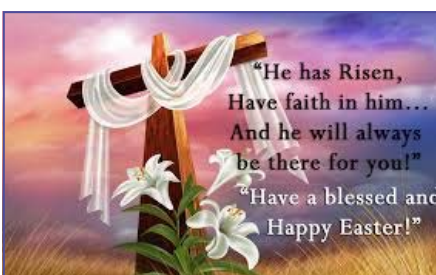
This edition focuses on praying through Holy Week. We know that praying is important but it is especially important during this sacred season. Holy week is an opportunity to focus our minds on, and seek to intensify our affections for, the most important and timeless of realities. Our hope for you in reading this newsletter is that you will gain insight into the need for deep reflection during holy week and extend this to the children and families you minister to.

It has been an unbelievably busy start to the year and looks as though it will continue that way. There have been many parishes requesting our support in various local children's ministries, particularly training in Children's Ministry of the Word. Additionally our catholic school staff members are requesting training in 'Godly Play' and we are delighted that our services are being sought out even more broadly. We look forward to meeting with you to look at the sacraments of Initiation review within your local parish context We are here to support you as you need within your work, it is our vocation, blessed work for us in the Office for Family and Parish based Catechesis.

### Inside this edition

Walking with Jesus	2
Easter activities	2
Praying in Holy week	3
Prayer Mantras	3
Holy week Symbols	4
Sacred Spaces	5
Catechist Prayer page	6
Resources	7
Your Parish story	8
Diary dates	8

EASTER



*May you feel God's wisdom and energy in your ministry,*

*with blessings, Carmen and Sr Jenny*

# WALKING WITH JESUS



We walk with Jesus during Holy Week by accompanying him on his journey through this week. We often ask Jesus to walk with us in our life's situations, be they happy, sad or times of grief and need. We know that Jesus blesses us abundantly and whether we feel it or not, the belief in our heart is that Jesus never leaves us and is always ready to carry us.

During this time of Holy Week, let us walk with Jesus. During his journey of his entrance to Jerusalem and the beginning of the week of his passion and suffering; as he celebrates the Passover meal with his disciples for the last time, knowing that he was to be betrayed; and during the agony of Gethsemane, the journey to Golgotha and the crucifixion.

As people of faith, we believe in the third day – the Resurrection; because of Jesus we will always have, in our lives and beyond, a day of hope and resurrection too.

Throughout Lent, we have journeyed with Jesus. As a family, let us continue to walk with Jesus during Holy Week and Easter.

## **PALM SUNDAY ACTIVITIES**

- Retell the Passion story
- Make crosses from palm leaves.
- Re-enact the story.
- Ask the children to lead the larger procession waving palms.

Share prayers about God's love.

## **HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES**

- Celebrate a 1st century Passover meal.

- Bake bread and share with family
- Write an acrostic poem for Jesus.
- Make a crown of thorns from a paper plate and twigs.
- Research various crosses from different cultures
- Discuss the meaning of sacrifice.
- Have a blessing ritual in the name of Jesus' endless love for us.
- Draw all the symbols of the Easter story.

## **EASTER ACTIVITIES**

The Resurrection is the pinnacle of Easter but we

continue to celebrate the Easter season 50 days after ending with Pentecost Sunday.

- Greet the children with 'Alleluia' instead of 'hello'.
- Write an Easter message on a card for their family.
- Give out Easter eggs and discuss the symbol of new life
- Name those who bring new life to others and pray a thanksgiving prayer for them.
- List how to they can continue to show God's love in their family or school life.

As a family, discuss how you can be of service in your parish or neighbourhood.

# PRAYING through HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is a week of being invited by God to journey with Jesus and be a companion in a deep and personal way. It is an invitation that God offers to each of us to continue through Holy Week and the Easter Season.

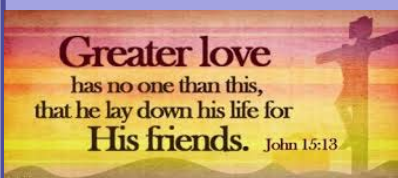
Often, after the community gatherings of Holy Thursday and Good Friday, Holy Saturday can be more of a 'getting ready for Easter Sunday' type of day.

However, Holy Saturday is a day of waiting. Most of life is like Holy Saturday – not always a Good Friday and not always an Easter Sunday – but we can always live in the hope and belief that we will and do experience the Resurrection of Jesus in our lives.



## PRAYER MANTRAS

Choose a phrase from Scripture and repeat in time with your breath:



*I love you with an everlasting love*

*I am your rock and refuge*

*I will never forget you*

*I am the way the truth and the life*

*I seek you with all my heart*

*I will carry you close to my heart*



## HOLY WEEK SYMBOLS IN THE HOME

Enable the home to be a place of the sacred with symbols that raise the mind and heart to God. Our world is full of images that nurture our minds and hearts elsewhere.

**BIBLE** The Word of God is our guide and inspiration in our faith and daily life. The prominent presence of a Bible in the home represents our desire for God's Word in our lives

**SAND** Place a small bowl of sand to remind us of our journey. God led the people in their journey through the desert to the Promised Land. Jesus himself a time of prayer in the desert where he faced. The desert can be a place of retreat and reflection

**PALM OR OLIVE BRANCH** A symbol of Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem on a donkey at the beginning of the week of his Passion

**OIL** Place some oil in a small bottle or dish as symbol of the oils of chrism and healing consecrated at the Chrism Mass

**BREAD OR SMALL ROLL** Symbol of the Holy Thursday Mass

**CRUCIFIX** Place the crucifix in a central spot where it can be obviously seen, even a child's drawing of Jesus's death for us can be a powerful stirring reminder of God's love.

**WATER:** Place a bowl of water in a central spot as a reminder of our journey to the font of baptism for the renewal of commitment and life in Christ. Pray over the bowl saying: "Lord, may this water remind us of our baptism and be a blessing for our home. Bless us as we sign ourselves with it each day"

**CANDLE:** Place a candle in a central spot and pray together saying: "Lord, thank you for the gift of Your light and let this candle be a symbol of our faith in Your presence among us." Light the candle as a symbol of the light of Christ we all receive in our hearts and world this Easter.



*Christ  
is  
Risen!*

# SACRED SPACES

Being an important week in the life of Christians, setting up a sacred space to reflect upon and ponder is an idea which parish communities can take up and be invitational to other churches or neighbours in the parish parameters.

This can be set up in, for example, the parish hall, one day at a time so that a Holy Week visual image is simply set up, one day at a time, for reflection. Families from the school can be invited, or parents as they bring their children to school and then take them home in the afternoon.

An added idea would be for a different school class and some parents or parishioners to set up the different spaces each day.

## For the Monday of Holy Week, set up Palm Sunday:

- Table with red cloth or on the floor (colour of Palm Sunday)
- Palm branches or crosses made from the palms or from cardboard
- The words on a card in large print: Hosanna to the Son of David!

**Reflection question:** *I wonder how Jesus would have felt with the crowd supporting him and waving palm branches?*



## For the Tuesday of Holy Week, set up the Washing of the Feet

Table with purple cloth or on the floor

- Bowl of water
- White towel or hand towel
- Cardboard cutouts of footsteps on floor near table
- The words on a card in large print: As I serve you and wash your feet, so you must do too.

**Reflection question:** *I wonder how the disciples felt when Jesus washed their feet?*



## For the Wednesday of Holy Week, set up the Last Supper:

- Table with white or gold cloth
- Bread, red cordial or juice in a glass (wine)
- Pictures of some of the disciples and of Jesus
- The words on a card in large print: This is my Body. This is my Blood given for you.

**Reflection question:** *I wonder how the disciples felt when they heard these words?*



## For the Thursday of Holy Week, set up Good Friday

- Table with purple cloth or no cloth.
- Cross or crucifix
- The words on a card in large print.: I rest my spirit in you

**Reflection question:** *I wonder how you can respond to the love of Jesus?*



Have a pot nearby with the invitations to plant a seed to symbolize the new life we await for at Easter.



# CATECHIST PRAYER PAGE

## Scripture

*'So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them' (Jn 19:17-18).*

**Reflect** In times of need, do you ask Jesus to accompany you as you accompany him in Holy Week?

## Scripture

*'But the two men said to them, 'Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen.'* (Lk 24: 5-6)

## Reflect

Reflect on situations and give thanks to God for the times you have experienced the Easter joy and peace of the Risen Jesus.

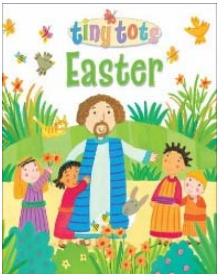
## Image find image of art risen Christ

Allow the image to speak to you in your silence and take your personal time with Jesus this Easter Season.



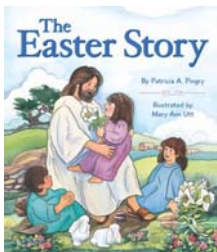
# RESOURCES

## Holy Week/Easter



**Tiny Tots Easter**  
[Picture book]

by Lois Rock  
Call No. : 232.96 ROC



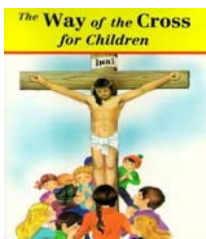
**The Easter Story**  
[Board Picture book]

by Patricia A. Pingry  
Call No.: 232.96 PIN



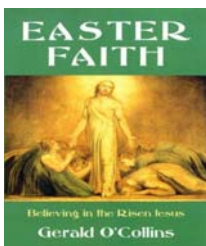
**My First Story of Easter**  
[Picture Book]

by Tim Dowley  
Call No. : 263.93 DOW



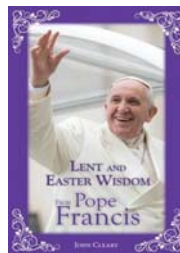
**The Way of the Cross for Children**

by Rev. Jude Winkler OFM  
Call No. 264.0274



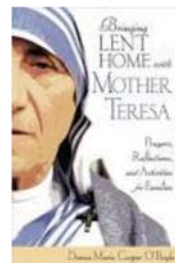
**Easter Faith: Believing in the Risen Jesus**

By Gerald O'Collins  
Call No. : 232.97 OCO



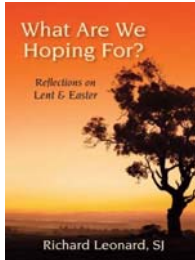
**Lent and Easter Wisdom from Pope Francis**

By John Cleary  
Call No. : 242.34 CLE



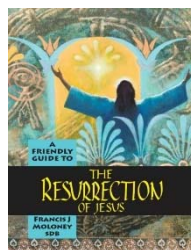
**Bringing LENT HOME with Mother Teresa**

by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle  
Call No. : 242.63



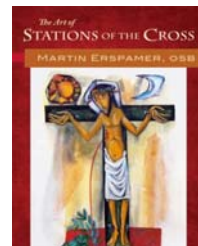
**What are we Hoping for? Reflection on Lent & Easter**

By Leonard, SJ  
Call No. : 263.92 LEO



**A Friendly guide to The Resurrection of Jesus**

by Francis J Moloney  
Call No. : 232.97 MOL



**The Art of Stations of the Cross [DVD]**

by Martin Erspamer, OSB  
Call No. : 264.0274 ERS

*Catholic Resource & Information Service*  
112 Kintore Street Thebarton SA 5031  
T: 08 83016869  
E: [cris@cesa.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cris@cesa.catholic.edu.au)

New Opening times:  
Monday–Wednesday: 9am–5pm  
Thursday: 9am–12:30pm  
Friday closed



# Your Parish Story

## DIOCESAN CATECHISTS COMMISSIONING MASS

The annual commissioning mass was celebrated in March whereby catechists from our Adelaide Archdiocese gathered to be formally commissioned in their great ministry for this coming year. It was so lovely to see many catechists there representing all the generous catechists working in our Parishes near and far. It was a great opportunity to publicly acknowledge the good work happening within the many ministries with children and families. We also celebrated a 25 years



of service award in the form of a very special Papal Blessing presented to Franco Zardo by the new Cathedral parish administrator, Father Charles Gauci. Franco flies under the radar, quietly following his calling as a catechist with love and dedication. **Congratulations Franco!!** We continued the celebration after Mass with a happy gathering sharing a delicious supper and a slice of cake! Many thanks to those who attended, it was joy filled!



## PARISH VISITATION

We have begun the process of contacting and then visiting parishes to meet with the key people involved in preparing children and their families for the Sacraments of Initiation and those co-ordinating children's ministries. This is an action that is part of the Archbishop's review of the Sacraments process within our Archdiocese. It is also an opportunity to meet face to face over a coffee to discuss how we can best provide support in these vital ministries. Many thanks to those who have made and given their time to meet with us, it is greatly appreciated as we understand just how busy life is. Both Jenny and Carmen look forward to seeing you over the upcoming months.

## Children's Ministry Update

### Office for Family & Parish Based Catechesis

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112 Kintore Street Thebarton

PO Box 179  
Torrensville Plaza SA 5031

Carmen Balales Ph: 08 8301 6110  
carmen.balales@cesa.catholic.edu.au

Sr Jenny Seal fdnsc Ph: 08 8301 6195  
jenny.seal@cesa.catholic.edu.au

Office Fax: 08 8301 6842

We're on the web



[www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ParishandFamilyBasedCatechesis](http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ParishandFamilyBasedCatechesis)

### Detailed Diary Dates 2017

#### **MAKING MEANING WITH MATTHEW**

**When:** Thursday: April 27  
9am-4pm

**Where:** Catholic Education Office  
Conference Centre,  
116 George Street, Thebarton

#### **LEADING CHILDREN'S LITURGY of the WORD training workshop**

**When:** Thursday: May 4  
6:45pm-9:15pm

**Where:** Croydon Park Catholic Parish,  
286 Torrens Road, Croydon

#### **MEETING JESUS AT THE WELL**

**When:** Saturday: May 6

**Where:** Loyola Centre of Ignatian Spirituality,  
137 William Street Norwood

#### **RETREAT DAY: "YOU ARE PRECIOUS IN MY EYES": MINDFULNESS & SELF COMPASSION**

**When:** Saturday: May 27

**Where:** Mary MacKillop Centre,  
4 High Street, Kensington