

MAKING CONNECTIONS

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

YEAR B : Mark

Volume 16, Edition 2



**Sacraments of Initiation:
Where to Next?**
see page 8

From the Team

Dear Catechists and friends

Welcome to our term 2 Newsletter for 2021! We trust that you had a wonderful Easter Season and were filled with many blessings!

Just like each term, there is so much that has happened and plenty more events and opportunities ahead. Take time to browse through our latest edition of *Making Connections* where you will find updates as well as useful and enriching content of the following:

- ◇ The Call of the Catechist
- ◇ Catechist Enrichment Day
- ◇ Sacraments of Initiation Workshop and Resource
- ◇ Liturgy of the Word with Children Training
- ◇ New Resources at CRIS
- ◇ Your Parish Story

With every blessing and thanks for all that you do in children and family ministry **Sr Jenny Seal and Amanda Razon**

Inside this edition

From the Team	1
The Call of the Catechist	2
Let Us Wonder	3
Sacraments of Initiation	4
Families	5-6
Parish Story	7
Updates and News	8-9
Prayer & Reflection	10
Resources	11
Formation Opportunities	12

THE CALL OF THE OF CATECHIST

"The Spirit is calling men and women to set out and encounter all those who are waiting to discover the beauty, goodness and truth of the Christian faith"

**(Pope Francis: document released on May 11, 2021
"Antiquum Ministerium" (Ancient Ministry))**

Pope Francis notes how teachers of the faith were present from the earliest days of the Christian community and were recognized as having a special gift of the Holy Spirit for carrying out their role within the community.

Other excerpts:

"At times, the charisms that the Spirit constantly pours out on the baptized took on a visible and tangible form of immediate service to the Christian community, one recognized as an indispensable 'diakonia' for the community."

Catholics cannot overlook *"the countless lay men and women who directly took part in the spread of the Gospel through catechetical instruction. Men and women of deep faith, authentic witnesses of holiness, who in some cases were also founders of churches and eventually died as martyrs."*

Still today *"many competent and dedicated catechists are community leaders in various parts of the world and carry out a mission invaluable for the transmission and growth of the faith."*

"The long line of blessed, saints and martyrs who were catechists has significantly advanced the church's mission and deserves to be recognized, for it represents a rich resource not only for catechesis but also for the entire history of Christian spirituality"

"Men and women are called to express their baptismal vocation in the best possible way, not as substitutes for priests or consecrated persons,

but as authentic laymen and laywomen who, in the distinctive nature of their ministry, are able to experience the full of extent of their baptismal vocation of witness and effective service in the community and the world."

Laypeople who feel called to the ministry of catechists should be actively involved in the life of their Catholic communities and faithful to the Gospel and the teaching of the church, he said. But they also must receive "suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth of the faith."

"Catechists are called first to be expert in the pastoral service of transmitting the faith as it develops through its different stages from the initial proclamation of the Gospel, preparation for receiving the sacraments and support in living a Christian life,"

Especially in communities without a resident priest, catechists are the leaders of the local Catholic community, evangelizing, convoking and guiding their fellow Catholics in prayer and works of charity.

We praise and thank God for all of us who, as Church gathered together, give so generously for the spread of God's love.

We pray and thank God for all who have journeyed with us in the faith and we pray for our

Just a reminder...

For any assistance in mentoring, training and resourcing for children or family ministry in your parish or parish-school partnership, please contact us:

Family Faith Formation Team

Sr Jenny Seal jenny.seal@cesa.catholic.edu.au

Amanda Razon amanda.razon@cesa.catholic.edu.au

LET US WONDER



To encourage and support the celebration of the **Year of St Joseph**, resources continue to be developed and can be found at:

<https://catholic.org.au/yearofstjoseph>

LET US WONDER and reflect either personally or as a catechist group

- ◇ how the monthly reflections on Joseph enriches my life and deepens my call to discipleship and to ministry.

For the **Diocesan Assembly** and the **Plenary Council** to be more than an 'event' in our life and the life of the Church,

LET US WONDER, reflect and share together:

- ◇ what is your vision, dreams and hopes for the parish and the parish-school partnership from the perspective of ministry to children and families especially in the area of catechesis, growth in faith and spirituality?

I wonder...

- ◇ how can you and your parish together with your parish-school partnership develop this area and animate others to be involved in this vital ministry?

I wonder...

- ◇ how you can keep developing your passion and skills in this area?



Keep an eye out in your parish for the question being asked of each of us in preparation for the **Diocesan Assembly in September:**

What do you think are the most important things to be discussed at the Diocesan Assembly?

You are encouraged to reflect and respond **in the light of ministry to children and families** as a family, individual or group.

There will be an opportunity to share your response online or as a mail-in by 16 August 2021
www.adelaidediocesanassembly.org

The latest catechesis on **Prayer from Pope Francis** can be found at this link [The Church, Teacher of Prayer](https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=12503) or at <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=12503>



SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION



Together At One Altar is an Australian resource for school age children to develop their formation in the Eucharist and to assist their full, active and conscious participation in its celebration. It can be found at this link: <https://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au/>

This resource can be used in the parish catechetical context in a variety of ways:

- ◇ As background catechesis for catechists
- ◇ For use in parent gatherings
- ◇ In selecting the age-appropriate information, activities and videos for catechesis.

Together at One Altar offers some formation appropriate to each of the levels up to Year 12 under the four areas:

- ◇ What is the background to the Mass?
Explore stories about Jesus and find out about the history of the Mass
- ◇ How do we prepare to celebrate Mass?
Discover the people, clothing and vessels used at Mass
- ◇ What takes place during the Mass?
Learn about what the priest and people do and say during Mass
- ◇ How should I live out the meaning of Mass?
Reflect on and respond to the call to live like Jesus.

In preparing a sacramental process, we remember that all catechesis pursues several interconnected parts that are inspired by the way Jesus formed his disciples:

- ◇ to know the mysteries of the Kingdom
- ◇ to pray
- ◇ to illuminate gospel values for living
- ◇ to be initiated into communion with him and among themselves and
- ◇ to be initiated into mission (adapted from *Directory for Catechesis, June 2020* no.79).

While the work of the catechist is essential, the process of sacramental catechesis can involve the entire faith community.

PARISH STORY

Blackwood Parish

Charlie Rodda, Pastoral Coordinator of Blackwood Parish has created two groups for children aged 6-11 and 12-14 years to gather on a regular basis and learn more about being a disciple of Jesus. Charlie's passion has translated into thriving groups of young people who regularly attend this youth group.

I had the idea for Young Disciples while we were half way through our Sacramental Program, and I was doing a catch up session with a few children. Their curiosity and desire to ask questions about the faith made me realise how many children may not be able to ask these sorts of questions and learn about the faith at home or school. Once children leave the Sacramental Programs, there isn't really much ministry for them until they're old enough for a youth group. The idea for Young Disciples was then born, and so after discussing the idea with a few people and putting some plans together, we began shortly after and have had really positive responses. In the initial stages, parents were excited and keen to get on board, and since then, Young Disciples has become the evening for many parents to catch up and build their own community while their children do the same. We have grown from a group of about 3 core families, to now having 6-7 on the regular. The children all know each other very well now and we often get feedback to say how much the children look forward to coming.

The idea for Embers came about because we had a few children who were young teenagers, and we didn't have any ministry for them at that stage - the early teens to early adult age group is something we've frequently struggled to tackle in our parish. The intentions for the group were to build friendships and faith, but also to engage the children in 'real-life' ministry, by accessing charities where we can get involved and help in ways beyond fundraising. There has been a big focus on the Works of Mercy to guide our group's mission.

-Charlie Rodda



Photo: Southern Cross, March 2021

Adelaide Cathedral Parish

The Adelaide Cathedral Parish have combined both music ministry and children's ministry to bear fruit within the community. The parish have established a children's choir to accompany the celebration of the Mass with their heavenly singing voices.

We extend our admiration for parishes, in all their work and dedication to the ministry of children and families. We pray that your ministry continues to grow and thrive!

Do you have any children/ family initiatives that you would like to share? Please let us know!

I wonder what will work in your parish?

MAKING CONNECTIONS: WITHIN THE FAMILY

...because every family matters



YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Pope Francis has announced a special *Year of the Family* from March 19, 2021 to June 26, 2022.

The year commemorates the fifth anniversary of the apostolic exhortation

Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)

“The spirituality of family love is made up of thousands of small but real gestures.”

Amoris Laetitia, 315



Family Activities: *Links to enhance living faith in our daily lives*

Parishes are encouraged to provide a link from time to time for parents and family activities:

- ◇ As a family, you are encouraged to use *Family Liturgies* each week based on the Sunday Gospel from the following link: <https://adelaide.catholic.org.au/our-works-and-community/family-and-parish-based-catechesis/prayer-services>
- ◇ Parents are invited to look at this short 3 minute video about witnessing to their children at this link: <https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2021/04/pop-up-catechesis-how-parents-witness-faith-to-their-children/>
- ◇ There are 4 downloadable activity pages for children on Saint Joseph <https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2021/02/saint-joseph-activities-pack/>



‘I believe that God is revealed to us through the ordinary events of family life. You don’t have to become someone you’re not in order to experience this revelation. You just have to pay attention to the subtle ways God operates in the life of your family’.

(Raising Faith-Filled Kids: Ordinary Opportunities to Nurture Spirituality in the Home)

MAKING CONNECTIONS: WITHIN THE FAMILY ...because every family matters

LET US PONDER



To ponder is to take time to think about or think over something and to allow the response to rise in our hearts.

In our busy lives, we don't often take time to ponder. We can ponder while in the garden, while doing some household activity, on a walk, quietly on our own or reflect upon something together as a family.

Here are **some questions to ponder**. You may find others relevant to your lives.

- ◇ What is your favourite image of Jesus? Why?
- ◇ What does the image of Jesus tell you about the kind of person Jesus is for you?
- ◇ What are the things that you are grateful for today...this week...this year?
- ◇ What or who draws me to pray?
- ◇ What do the seasons tell me about life?
- ◇ How can I become a more caring person?
- ◇ What are some positive ways to deal with feelings that hurt?
- ◇ How can I care for creation in my own yard?

Think about some other questions to ponder.

**Give yourself some pondering time
each day or each week.**

Jesus says to us:

For where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also
(Matthew 6:21)



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UPDATES AND NEWS

Catechist Formation, Training and Workshops

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION: WHERE TO NEXT?

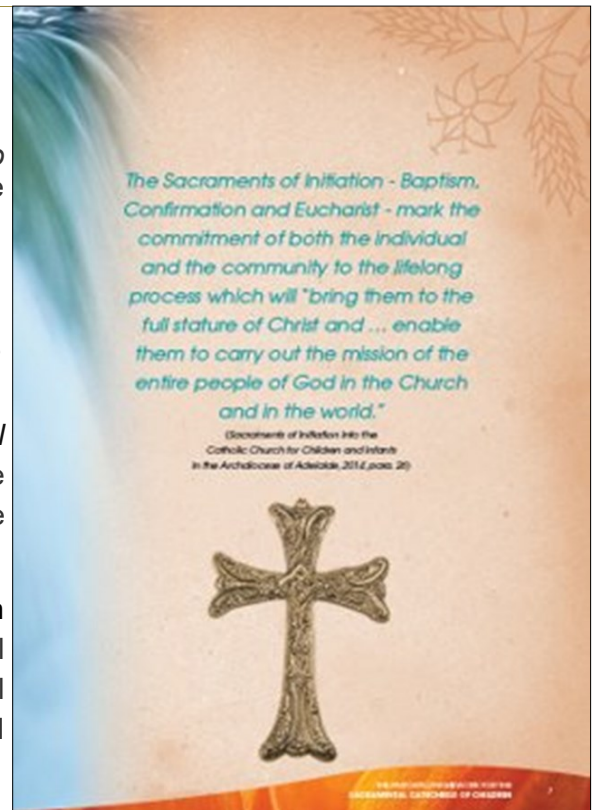
This workshop assists parishes to reflect upon *Where to Next?* in their situation and context as we respond to the question:

What does authentic and healthy Sacramental Catechesis of children and their families look like?

(Partnerships in Sacramental Catechesis: The Pastoral Framework for the Sacramental Catechesis of Children 2014:4)

This workshop reviews essential aspects of the *Pastoral Framework* to respond to this question and draws upon the data of the Sacrament Review Report of 2019 and the School Survey in 2020.

This is an important workshop for representatives from each team to attend as well as those new to the role. It is a vital opportunity for the parish-school partnership in sacramental catechesis to discern elements required for evaluation and continuous improvement for sacramental catechesis.



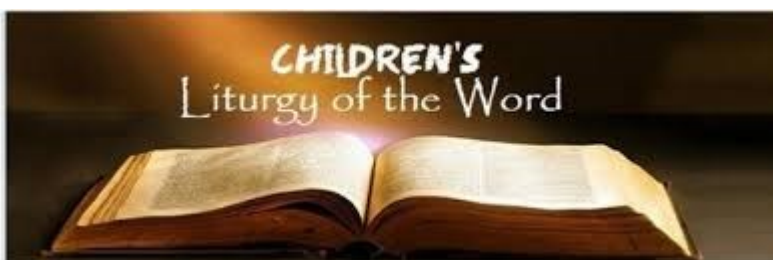
When: Tuesday 29 June , 9.30am– 2.30pm

Where: CEO Conference Centre 116 George St Thebarton

For details and registration, please go to: <https://registrationcentre.cesa.catholic.edu.au/event-4229874>

Registration queries: carmen.larwood@cesa.catholic.edu.au

Workshop queries: jenny.seal@cesa.catholic.edu.au or amanda.razon@cesa.catholic.edu.au



Liturgy of the Word with Children

This training is important for those leading as it delineates the correct process for this **Liturgy with Children** which is usually held at the same time of the *Liturgy of the Word* during a Sunday Mass.

This time is meant to be a prayerful, reflective time for the children on the gospel with appropriate prayers and responses. This process can also be utilised with children in other settings and is an opportunity for liturgical catechesis. A handout with puzzles or activities may be given for the children to do at home with their family at the end of this time.

There will be a 3-hour training available in the second half of this year for all involved in this ministry. This may also be an occasion for new recruits or for those interested in this ministry on a 'come and see' basis.

Please contact Sr Jenny or Amanda to arrange a mutually convenient date.

UPDATES AND NEWS

Catechist Enrichment Day

Our Catechist Enrichment Day was held back in early May, when we had the opportunity to connect with other catechists and share our experiences in faith formation with children and families. We had the privilege of having Fr. James McEvoy who spoke to us about the Mystery of Childhood, seeing God through children and through the eyes of children.

We received fantastic, positive feedback from those who attended the day, *"all the topics that were discussed and shared today is helpful"* and it was a great opportunity *"meeting everyone in the group and hearing about experiences and tips."*

Thank you for all your work and we look forward to connecting with you at future workshops and events!

Catechist Newsletters and Communications

We would be grateful if parishes or coordinators could ask all involved in children and family ministry if they would like to be on our mailing list if not already receiving our newsletters *Making Connections* and other regular online communications. Could you please forward these to Amanda amanda.razon@cesa.catholic.edu.au.

Thank you.

We also communicate with parishes via the Archdiocesan e-news and schools via the Religious Education Communique as needed.

We suggest that parishes and schools print a few copies of this newsletter each term and place them in the foyer of your church or school. This may encourage others to join this ministry or assist parents in nurturing their own journey and that of their family.

If you have any news and are holding an event for children and/or families that you would like to share with others for inclusion in our communications, please contact Amanda or Sr Jenny via email. Permission will need to be sought for any photos and be aware of child protection and safety processes.

Faith Facts



Formation of Catechists from the *General Directory of Catechesis* Vatican 2020

131. *Formation is an ongoing process that....helps the baptised person to take shape....The work of formation acts as a transformation of the person who internalises the evangelical message existentially and in such a way that it may be the light and guidance for his ecclesial life and mission. It is a process that takes place deep within the catechist, profoundly touches his freedom and cannot be reduced simply to instruction, to moral exhortation, or to the updating of pastoral techniques. Formation, which also avails itself to human expertise, is in the first place a sapiential work of openness to the Spirit of God who thanks to the willingness of the participants and the community's motherly concern, conforms the baptised to Jesus Christ moulding in their hearts his face as Son (cf Gal 4:19), sent by the Father to proclaim the message of salvation to the poor (cf Luke 4:18).*

CATECHIST REFLECTION

Setting the Scene

- ◇ Favourite image or symbol
- ◇ Light a candle
- ◇ Play some reflective music
- ◇ Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you and listen to God in your heart.

The *Directory for Catechesis*, issued on 25 June 2020, describes the identity and vocation of the catechist:

This ministry provides an introduction to the faith and, together with the liturgical ministry, begets children of God in the womb of the Church. The specific vocation of the catechist therefore has its root in the common vocation of the people of God. (110)

Pause, Reflect, Pray

- ◇ What does it mean for me to be a catechist?
- ◇ Would the words *witness*, *mystagogue* and *accompanier* fit in your experience...now...in the future?
- ◇ How do I see the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the children and families?
- ◇ Spend some time now listening to the Holy Spirit.

The *Directory* lists three characteristics of a catechist.

A catechist is:

- ◇ **A witness of faith and keeper of the memory of God**
 - ◇ **A teacher and a mystagogue**
 - ◇ **An accompanier and educator (113)**

Pause, Reflect, Pray

- ◇ *As a witness of faith and keeper of the memory of God*, what ongoing formation am I being drawn towards?
- ◇ *As a teacher and mystagogue*, how do I assist to 'unveil the mysteries of salvation' (113b) in an experiential and meaningful way that will lead the children and families to link their faith with their lives more fully?
- ◇ *As an accompanier and educator*, how do I journey and accompany the children and their families as we see Jesus journey with the disciples in Emmaus?



God of love who journeys with us and holds us close to your Heart,

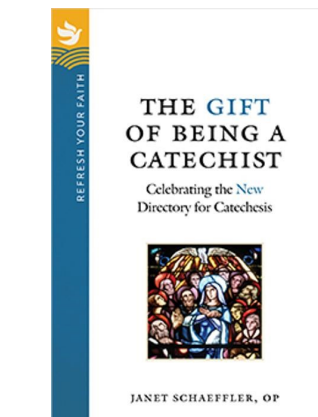
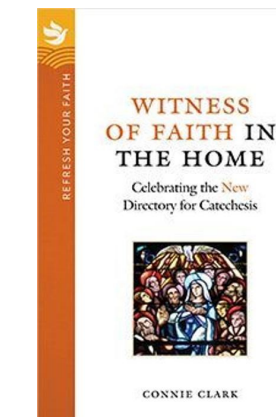
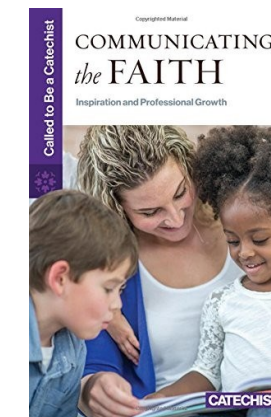
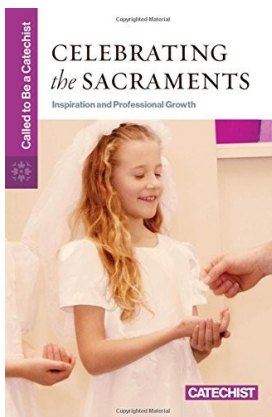
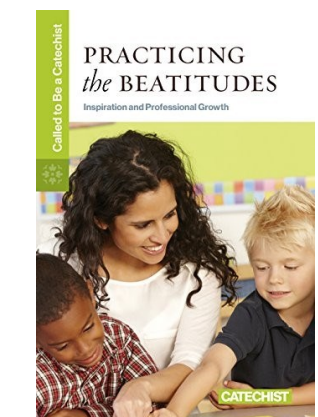
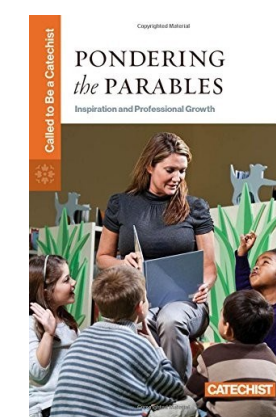
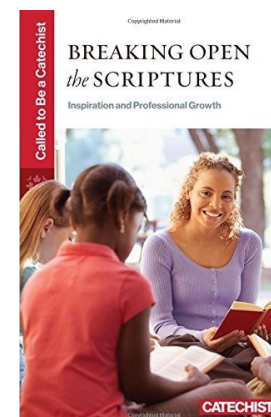
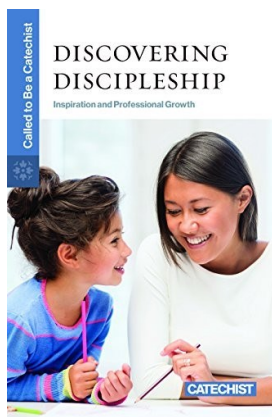
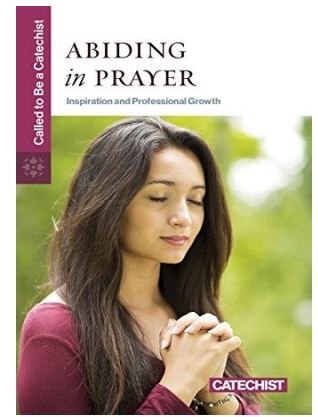
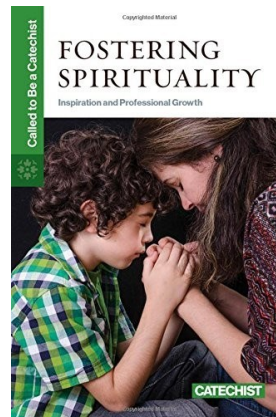
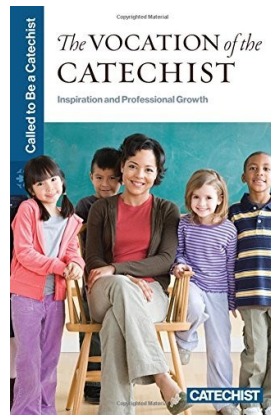
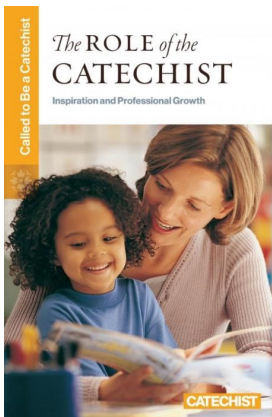
Help us to listen with an open heart so that we can journey with children and their families and be an instrument for a genuine spiritual encounter with you.

**Help us to accompany others on the journey of faith; to know their joys and hopes, their sadness and distress so to show the way to you,
God of Love.**

We make our prayer in the name of the Father, in the love of the Son and under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

RESOURCES

Resources recommended for Catechist Gatherings within parishes or a group of parishes or for personal ongoing formation in catechesis with children and families.



Available from: Catholic Resource & Information Service (CRIS) (free borrowing)

**112 Kintore Street Thebarton SA 5031 T:83016869
E: cris@cesa.catholic.edu.au**

Opening times:

**Monday-Wednesday: 9am- 5pm
Thursday: 9am- 12:00 noon
Friday: closed**



OUR TEAM

The **Family Faith Formation Team** is a ministry of the Archdiocese and is located within the structure of Catholic Education, South Australia. The team consists of Sr Jenny Seal fdnsc and Amanda Razon who both work part time. The Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, alternate Wednesdays and Fridays. However, the team can be contacted via email anytime. We are available at times other than this on weeknights or weekends for workshops or training at a mutually convenient time.

The Team supports those engaged in the Religious Education and Catechesis of Catholic children and their families within the parishes and Catholic schools in the Adelaide Archdiocese, whilst promoting the partnerships between family, parish and Catholic school. We provide resources, consultation, workshops, mentoring and ongoing formation that support parish and school communities in the main areas of Family Catechesis, Sacramental Catechesis, Children's Liturgy of the Word and Parents' Faith Formation.



Photo by [Karolina Grabowska](#) from [Pexels](#)

Family Faith Formation Team

Catholic Education Office
116 George Street Thebarton

PO Box 179
Torrensville Plaza SA 5031

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

Amanda Razon
amanda.razon@cesa.catholic.edu.au
08 8301 6110



www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ParishandFamilyBasedCatechesis

Formation Opportunities

**SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION:
WHERE TO NEXT?**

Presenters: Family Faith Formation Team
When: Tuesday 29 June , 9.30am– 2.30pm
Where: CEO Conference Centre
116 George St Thebarton

<https://registrationcentre.cesa.catholic.edu.au/event-4229874>

Intergenerate Ecumencial Conference
When: 27-28 July in person or online
For more information visit

<https://www.intergenerate.com.au/events>