



**ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF SCHOOL-AGED  
CATHOLICS POLICY**

**AUGUST 2005**

**POLICY**

*All young Catholics, throughout their school years, are provided with opportunities for religious education suited to their age, background and the changing world in which they live.*

**INTRODUCTION**

In the baptismal ritual the faith community of the Church commits itself to assisting parents in the religious education of their children. Such religious education can take place in schools, both Catholic and other than Catholic, in parish settings and in other contexts.

'May he soon touch your ears to receive his word, and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God.'

[Rite of Baptism]

**RATIONALE**

All young Catholics by virtue of their baptism enter into the communion of the Church and have an inherent right to be educated in the Catholic faith tradition. In Catholic thinking, any genuine education must address the religious dimension of life, nurture human spiritual yearning, assist young people to understand themselves in the light of the transcendent.

This policy statement is, in effect, a charter of young Catholics' rights to be effectively supported in their faith growth through appropriate religious education.

It is imperative that all within the community of the Church proclaim the Gospel to the young in ways that they can understand, in ways that are relevant to their ecumenical and multi-faith world. (*Pope John Paul II*; 2001; pg 104)

The Brisbane Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, *Let Your Light Shine* (2004) commits the Church to ensuring that young people are helped by a set of faith development opportunities to integrate faith with everyday experience. The Archdiocesan Vision focuses the themes of *Jesus Communion Mission*.

Through religious education centred on *Jesus*, the young person will develop as an individual, in a way appropriate to age, maturity and faith development. The young person:

- is aware of God's presence in creation
- knows and understands God as revealed in Jesus
- grows in relationship with God
- is confirmed in belief in a personal God
- values self and others as gifted by God
- develops a relevant, life-affirming personal spirituality
- develops an informed conscience
- sees a purpose in life and hope for the future.

Through religious education centred on *Communion*, the young person will develop as a member of the faith community, in a way appropriate to age, maturity and faith development. The young person:

- experiences and contributes to a welcoming and vibrant faith community
- actively participates in the worship, faith life and outreach of the faith community
- knows and values the Catholic Christian heritage and the faith heritage of others
- values and reflects on religious experience in an ecumenical and multi-faith world.

Through religious education centred on *Mission*, the young person will develop as a Christian in society, in a way appropriate to age, maturity and faith development. The young person:

- responds faithfully to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ in everyday living
- lives an ethical life guided by the values of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church
- critiques society and its structures in the light of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching
- acts for justice, peace and ecological sustainability in our world.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Religious Educators in the Archdiocese will:

- affirm and support parents / care givers in their primary role as the first educators of their children in the faith
- align religious education with Archdiocesan Vision, policies and guidelines
- develop, implement and review quality religious education in Catholic schools, state schools and parishes
- support and develop learning opportunities for religious educators
- include ecumenical and multi-faith perspectives in the religious education of young people
- comply with government and archdiocesan requirements

### *References*

Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. (2004). *Let Your Light Shine: Vision, priorities and planning for a vibrant local Church*. Brisbane.

Catholic Education Council. (2004). *Vision Statement for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane*. Brisbane.

Pope John Paul II. (2001). *Ecclesia in Oceania: The Church in Oceania*. St Paul's. N.S.W.

Rite of Baptism



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