

CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES FOR THE NEW NSW SYLLABUSES

To be Known, Understood and Articulated by every teacher, parent and student

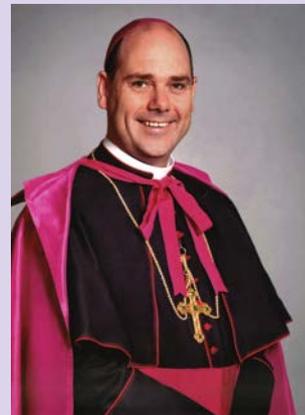


Catholic Schools Office *Diocese Of Armidale*

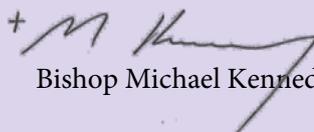


Message from the Bishop of Armidale

In 2011, the Catholic Schools Office Armidale commissioned an extensive study of the understanding of and commitment to Catholic principles and values through the *Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project* (ECSIP). The data from the ECSIP clearly indicated that there is a very real and immediate need to move away from an implicit secular values education approach towards a more clearly articulated set of core Catholic principles and values that are known, understood and articulated by staff so that they can explicitly teach these principles and values and use them to discern appropriate resources to support high quality educational outcomes. The introduction of the NSW Syllabii for the Australian Curriculum provides a unique opportunity for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale to re-evangelise the curriculum so that Catholic principles and values are clearly and explicitly articulated in every subject area for all students.



In identifying the Catholic principles and values outlined in this document it is my hope that Catholic educators across the Diocese will be able to deliver a truly Catholic education curricula that invites students, parents and staff into deeper understanding of the correct view of the human person and the incomparable dignity that God has conferred upon us in creating us in his own image and likeness. These Catholic principles and values will be a foundation for renewed Catholic curricula in Armidale Diocesan Catholic Schools.


Bishop Michael Kennedy

Message from the Diocesan Director

This foundational document provides Armidale Diocesan Catholic Schools with a broad set of Catholic principles and values that will enable all schools to provide a richer Catholic education into the future. These principles and values clearly support our mission statement, “To Proclaim Witness and Serve” and underpin our Diocesan Strategic Intents.

As staff develop units of work for the new NSW syllabuses, this document will become a core planning document for both whole school curriculum planning and individual teacher planning. This document also provides Catholic Schools with an opportunity to look closely at our core Catholic principles and values in new ways and to develop new and innovative approaches to educating not only students but staff and parents into what it means to be a Catholic in the Twenty First Century.



I commend this document to all school staffs, Boards and Parents and Friends Associations across the Diocese


John Mula
Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools

Christian Anthropology

The values that form a part of the rich teachings of the Catholic Church are based in the Church's understanding of Christian Anthropology. We have been made by God for God¹ in his image. In the story of creation God creates both male and female and God enters into a loving dialogue with them. (Gen1:26-29) It is at the core of the human person to want to know and love God. "To be human means to be called to interpersonal, communion"² with the Trinitarian God in obedience to the commandment of love.

In identifying a set of core values to be explicitly incorporated into the curriculum it is essential that every opportunity be afforded to ensure that what is being taught in all subjects in all Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale aims to explicitly assist students, parents and staff to seek God, to know God and to love God³ for the desire to know and love God is written on the heart of every human person.⁴

What are the Core Catholic Principles and Values?

The Catholic Church's core value is spreading the message of salvation through Jesus Christ to all people in all contexts. In the Armidale system of Catholic schools this is expressed in the mission: to proclaim, witness and serve Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The core Catholic values which are to be explicitly taught in every subject can be broadly categorised under four principles, firstly the Principle of the Primacy of God, secondly, the Principle of the Sanctity of Life, thirdly the Principle of Fidelity in Relationship and the Principle of the Common Good. From these four overarching principles key values can then be identified. These have been expressed in such a way so that they can easily be expanded upon. They deliberately avoid reducing the core values to single words which can become meaningless.

The core values can also be viewed as those that concern God, those that concern self and those that concern the building of a just world, but at the heart of each value is the call to build the Kingdom of God here and now so that each person can come to know and love God.

These principles and values are to be explicitly taught in each unit of work across the Diocese. Every principle and value will not be covered in every subject area, for clearly some subject areas will lend themselves more naturally to certain principles and values rather than others. Nevertheless, over a stage of learning all the principles and values will be addressed at a level that takes the context of each school community into consideration and allows each student to grow in their understanding of these principles and values so that they can develop a meaningful framework on which to build their future lives.

¹ CCC 27

² John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 7:AAS 80 (1988), 1666

³ CCC 1

⁴ CCC 27

The Principle of the Primacy of God

- **Love of God and Love of Neighbour**

All people are called to love of God and love of neighbour. For Christians this is expressed in the words of Jesus “you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind, (and secondly), you must love your neighbour as yourself.” (Matt22:37-38).

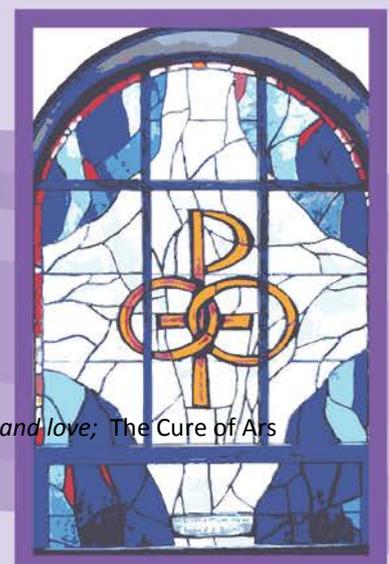
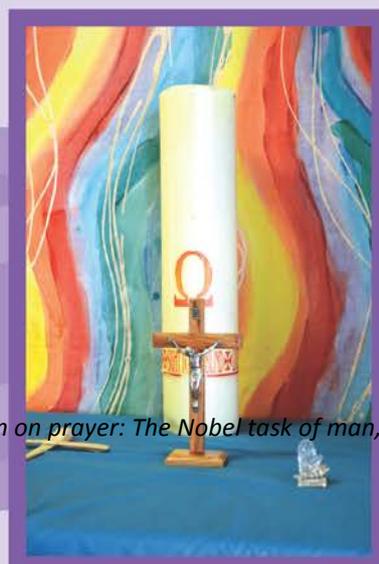
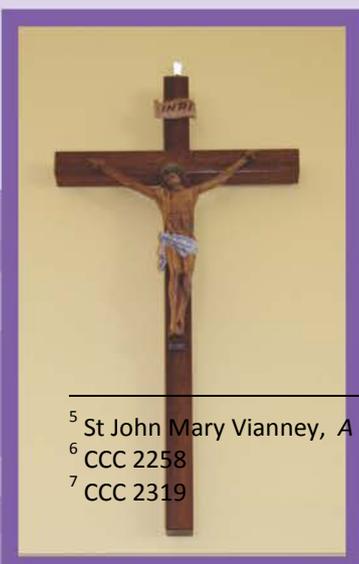
Our love of God is expressed through prayer and worship, “Man has a noble task: that of prayer and love...Prayer is nothing else than union with God.”⁵ These directives from Jesus form the basis for identifying a set of core Catholic values recognising that at all times our overriding value is love of God.

The Principle of the Sanctity of Life

“Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end; no one can under any circumstances claim for himself the right to directly destroy an innocent human being.”⁶

- **Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

“Every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of God.” ⁷The belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of the Church’s social teaching. Catholics believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.



⁵ St John Mary Vianney, *A Catechism on prayer: The Nobel task of man, to pray and love*; *The Cure of Ars*

⁶ CCC 2258

⁷ CCC 2319

- **Rights and Responsibilities**

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Every person has a fundamental right to life⁸ and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

- **Stewardship of God’s Creation**

The Catholic tradition teaches that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. All people have been entrusted by God with this stewardship which must be exercised in such a way that it is respectful of God’s plan for creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation.

In order to be effective stewards of God’s creation it is important that we develop a sound understanding of human ecology so that a deeper understanding of environmental ecology will develop. “A correct understanding of the relationship between man and the environment will not end by absolutizing nature or by considering it more important than the human person.”⁹ “It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational systems and laws do not help them to respect themselves.”¹⁰

The Principle of Fidelity in Relationships

- **Call to Family, Community, and Participation**

“Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not sit in judgement, to serve and not to be served.”¹¹

- **Sacredness of Self**

“Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one’s neighbour. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all.”¹² Through an understanding of chastity the Catholic Church provides a means by which true friendships can be cultivated.

A deep understanding of the Church’s teaching regarding chastity and its impact on the full development of the human person provides a means by which proper sexual relationships can be formed that are respectful of the dignity of each person, the family and society.

⁸ Cf CCC 2270

⁹ Benedict XVI Address to new ambassadors to the Holy See, 9 June 2011

¹⁰ Benedict XVI In Veritate #15

¹¹ Gaudium et Spes # 3; cf CCC 1917

¹² CCC 2347

- **Sacredness of Marriage**

The family is experiencing a profound cultural crisis with the value of marriage under threat of becoming a “form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will.”¹³ The Catholic tradition teaches that marriage is not a private institution but that it is the foundation of the family where children learn the values and virtues that will assist them to be fully able to participate in society.¹⁴

- **Sacredness of the Family**

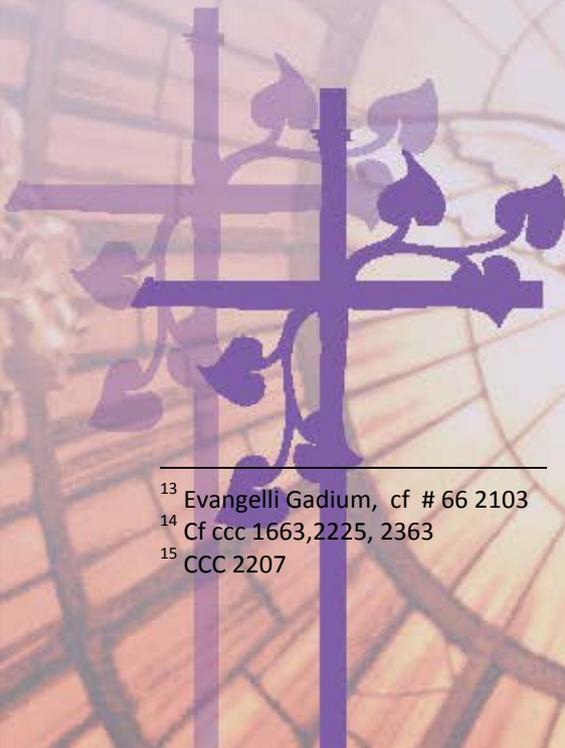
The Catholic tradition proclaims that the human person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society – in economics and politics, in law and policy – directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. For the proper formation of a just society each person must have a personal faithful relationship with Christ. This relationship will help form the foundation of all other human relationships particularly the relationships within the family.

The family is the original cell of social life¹⁵ that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. In particular the Catholic ideal of faithfulness in relationships must be preserved and actively promoted. Catholics believe all human persons have a right and a duty to participate in society, working together for the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

¹³ *Evangelii Gadium*, cf # 66 2103

¹⁴ Cf ccc 1663,2225, 2363

¹⁵ CCC 2207



The Principle of the Common Good

- **Solidarity and Fraternity**

Catholic social teaching proclaims that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, whoever they may be and wherever they may be. Through solidarity and fraternity Catholics consciously work for the fair distribution of goods and resources for human persons so that their human dignity can be upheld. An understanding of solidarity and fraternity is not limited to material goods but also extends to access to the spiritual goods of the faith. Explicitly practicing the virtue of solidarity and fraternity means learning that “loving our neighbour” has local, national and international dimensions in a world that is increasingly interdependent and interrelated. Students must be provided with skills to respond to human need in a Christ-centred way.

- **Preferential Option for the Poor**

Catholic teaching proclaims that a basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, the Catholic tradition teaches us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. “The Church’s love for the poor...is a part of her constant tradition. This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and his concerns for the poor.”¹⁶

- **The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**

The Catholic tradition teaches that the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Where to Now?

The Catholic principles outlined in this document will form the basis from which Catholic values will be explicitly taught in all units, in all subject areas in an integrated way, so that students, staff and parents will come to know, understand and articulate what our core Catholic principles and values are. Support material will be developed to provide ongoing support for a deepening understanding of the principles and values in this document. The support material will be in the form of professional development at a theological, pedagogical and practical level.¹⁷

¹⁶ Centesimus Annus #57

¹⁷ Document prepared for the CSO by Lee Herden, Assistant Director: Mission and Evangelisation



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