

St Thomas More Catholic School Sunshine Beach



Religious Education Program 2016

St Thomas More School Story



St Thomas More is a Catholic, co-educational, four-stream school offering placements from Prep to Year 6. Our parish school began in 1990, under the leadership and spiritual direction of the Marist Brothers. St Thomas More School came about following a strong desire from parishioners to have a Catholic school within the Noosa District Parish. After starting with 92 students in 1990, the school grew rapidly, with sustained growth in the school population in the early years, building it to a three-stream campus. High demand for enrolments and the newly built St Teresa's College in Noosaville meant the decision was made in 2008 to move toward a four stream learning environment. St Thomas More currently has an enrolment of 738 students, with a final year of growth in 2017 bringing our total student population to close to 760. We have 72 staff members, with many having a long connection with the school and parish community.

The Parish remains in strong partnership with the school, with both resident priests being supporters of the prayer and liturgical life of our community. The St Thomas More Centre acts as a school chapel and hall during the week, and then as an additional Parish Church on Sundays. Twelve years ago St Teresa's Catholic College began at Noosaville, with many of our students moving there for secondary education. The common Marist Charism provides links between our two schools. Joint school professional learning opportunities focusing on the Marist Charism are an important way of connecting our staff groups each year. Although the Marist Brothers no longer have a day-to-day presence within the school, the Marist Charism remains central to the life of our community. The presence of the Marist Charism provides a rich platform on which to express our Catholic faith and identity. This is reflected in the five characteristics of a Marist school being - Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work therefore developing a love of Jesus through our strong connection to Mary.

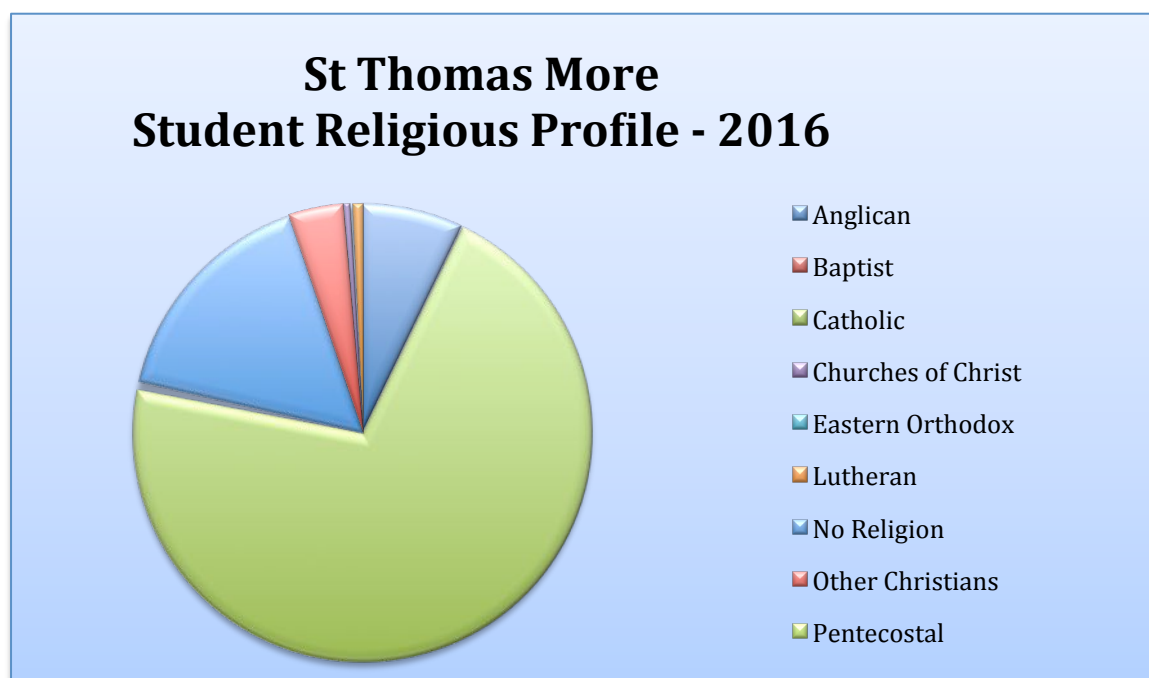
With our current enrolment, St Thomas More offers a broad and rigorous educational program that promotes equity and excellence for all its students. We promote a schooling experience that encourages all members of our community to live out the Gospel values of Jesus guided by the Charism of St Marcellin Champagnat and inspired by the values of St Thomas More.

Faith and Family Demographics

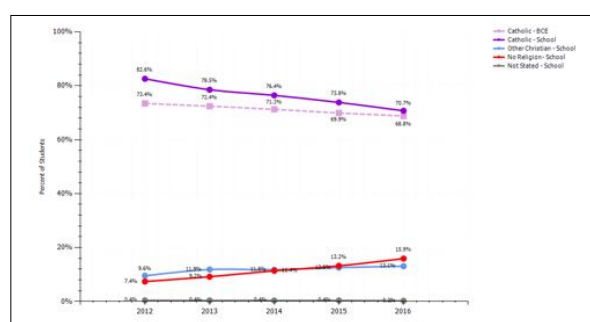
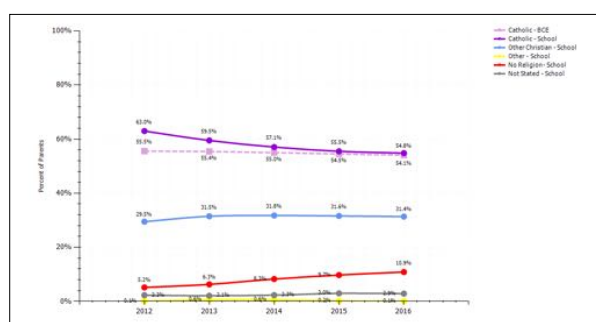
The St Thomas More community has a range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds represented. As a coastal community, movement of families throughout the year occurs due to work opportunities, and this is characterised by an annual retention rate of 94%. Our school currently draws from a wide geographical catchment area, with students coming from Noosaville, Tewantin, Peregian, Coolumb and from as far away as the hinterland towns of Cooroy and Pomona.



Of a population of 738 students, 71% are *Catholic*, with 13% identifying as other *Christian* denominations and the remaining 16% of the student population being made up either *Other, No Religion* or *Not Stated*.



St Thomas More has seen a slight decrease in its Catholic enrolment over the last five years, while there is evidence of an increase in those identifying as having no stated religion. The religious profile of parents shows signs of a decline in Catholic parents, with evidence of an increase in other religious denominations and also a trend toward an increase in no named religion. The St Thomas More community has families who are involved in the local parish through one of the four Churches at Tewantin, Sunshine Beach, Cooroy and Pomona, however many do not take an active part in the worshipping community or have strong connections to Catholic traditions. There is, however, strong support of our Catholic Christian Ethos and value of the Religious Life of our school is valued within our community.



The Parish Sacramental Program plays a significant role in family decision-making regarding initiation into the Catholic Church, with many parents and children choosing to become Catholic during their time at our school.

Some unique features of our school include:

- High demand for enrolment at St Thomas More, helping maintain our four-stream school population. There is reasonable movement of families throughout the year, however student population numbers are stable. There is strong stability on staff, with some movement evident in recent years.
- Strong connections with the Noosa District Catholic Parish. We have developed a close working relationship with our Parish Priest – Fr Mark Franklin and also work with the Associate Pastor, Fr Isidore Enyinnaya and the Parish Sacramental Co-ordinator.
- Our school site is a beautifully designed and developed school environment, with the St Thomas More Mass Centre and Chapel on site. The school is well-resourced in the area of Curriculum.
- We are current participants in The Delivering Excellence in Teaching – Literacy Collaborative and have also been part of the Visible Learning projects in recent years. This experience enabled learning and teaching in Religious Education to be viewed with the same rigour as other curriculum areas, with Religious Education leading processes in Assessment and inclusive practices as part of our curriculum focus.
- There have been significant changes in school leadership over recent years.

As a school community, we acknowledge the importance of providing opportunities and experiences that will allow families to connect with the Catholic Christian story and have placed great emphasis on;

- Telling our school story, connecting to the stories of faith of our school patrons
- Ensuring parents are encouraged and welcomed to be part of class and school celebrations
- Highlighting the importance of many religious artworks, symbols and icons throughout the school by highlighting the story of each through celebrations and communication to parents
- Introducing a unit on our school Charism for all students at the start of each year
- Involving students in the planning and leading of significant celebrations
- Working in partnership with the Parish community

Teaching and learning in Religious Education has always been valued highly at St Thomas More, with our staff heavily committed to professional learning and providing quality teaching and learning experiences in religious education. Implementing the new Religious Education Curriculum, based on a Reconceptualist approach, has provided some challenges for teachers. Coinciding with period characterised by many overall curriculum changes in our school, it has been important to ensure;

- Learning and teaching is responsive to the needs and religious backgrounds of students and the contemporary contexts for learning in the Religion classroom
- Adequate time is allocated to planning in Religious Education
- A consistent approach to planning/documentation is used throughout the school
- The educational focus of the teaching of religion is aligned with other curriculum areas
- Class timetables are reflective of mandated time for the teaching of Religion
- Assessment in Religious Education has the same rigour as other learning areas
- The diverse learning needs that students bring to the religion classroom are catered for in inclusive way

St Thomas More School Motto, Vision and Mission

Motto - In truth and love

Vision - Educating the whole person

Mission - *At Saint Thomas More Parish School we offer quality, inclusive education in the Catholic tradition. This provides equity of opportunity for all to participate in the experience of life long learning.*

The strong family spirit in the school community promotes a sense of integrity, justice and personal fulfilment that encourages children to critically question themselves and society as they prepare for a future characterized by personal growth and renewal.

In our faith community the individual's potential for learning is nurtured, the Christian story is embraced, faith is celebrated in prayerful and reflective ways, and the children discover a belief in their own capacity to contribute to the Church and society.

OUR BELIEFS

Family and Community Spirit

Catholic Christian Tradition

Quality Education

Life Long Learning

Inclusive Practices

Action for Justice



Statement of Special Religious Character

*In the footsteps of St Marcellin Champagnat and Mary, our Good Mother,
and inspired by the writings of St Thomas More
we aim to be a community who;*

Respond to the teachings of Jesus through the Gospels

*Recognise God's presence amongst us, through our distinctive Marist characteristics –Presence,
Simplicity, Love of Work, Family Spirit
and In the Way of Mary*

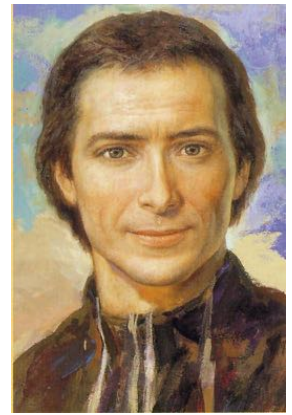
*Show Family and Community Spirit, Action for Justice
and love for each other through deeds and actions,
developing a strong community of faith, spirit and prayer*

*We strive to create quality, inclusive, life long learning opportunities for all
To embrace this very distinctive style 'we must love them and love them all equally'. (St Marcellin)*

Our Marist Characteristics

Presence

When we are present to each other we show that we care for one another and about each others lives and experiences on a personal level. As we get to know each other we can seek to **establish relationships that are founded on love and care**. By being **attentive** and **welcoming** to each other we can promote **openness** and **trust** in our conversations and decisions.



Simplicity

Simplicity reminds us that our connections with others within our school community should be genuine and straightforward, allowing each of us to feel comfortable to say what we believe and to show that we believe what we say. Simplicity is linked closely to the 'Three Violets' of the Marist tradition - showing **honesty** before ourselves and our God, **humility** - patiently allowing the action of God to work through us and **modesty** - seeking to do good quietly.

Love of Work

Love of Work is inspired by St Marcellin Champagnat; a man of faith and vision. Helping students discover the **dignity of work** allows them understand that work is a powerful means to **self-fulfilment**, and can add greatly to our sense of **well-being**. By developing a love of work, everyone has an important role to play as a member of the wider community, to **co-operate** and recognise that the work that they do helps to **serve** and **nurture** others in the school.

Family Spirit

As members of our school community we are called to develop values such as **warmth of welcome, acceptance, belonging, honesty, mutual respect and tolerance**. As we share successes and failures within our school family it is important that we continue to **believe in the innate goodness of each person** and always be ready to **trust, forgive** each other and prioritise **reconciliation**.

In the Way of Mary

As Marists, Mary is the perfect model for us as educators. Mary's life was a journey of **faith**. She knew the joys and trials of life and yet she was always **open to accept what God was asking her to do**. In her family, Mary and Joseph showed Jesus the **family love** and **unity** he needed to grow as a person. Mary showed a great **awareness of the needs of others** and a desire to always be a symbol of **wisdom, grace** and **strength** to others.



Our Vision for Religious Education

St Thomas More Catholic School shares and promotes the Vision for Religious Education articulated by Brisbane Catholic Education to:

'aspire to educate and form students who are challenged to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and who are literate in the Catholic and broader Christian tradition so that they might participate critically and authentically in faith contexts and wider society.'
(*Religious Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane Curriculum, P-12*)

At St Thomas More we are a Catholic faith community that is challenged to authentically live and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the guidance of Mary, inspired by the Charism of St Marcellin Champagnat and guided by the wisdom of St Thomas More.

As a Catholic Christian community, we strive to educate our students to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ as creative, confident, successful and informed learners who feel empowered to share and enrich our world.

The teachings and values of Jesus are at the heart of everything we do at St Thomas More. Inspired by the words of St Marcellin Champagnat to 'love them all and love them all equally' our vision is to develop students who, as life long learners, engage with a curriculum enriched by Gospel values that empowers them to make a positive contribution to the community by living out the values of Jesus.

We recognise that our Marist characteristics of Presence, Simplicity, Love of Work and Family Spirit, all done in the Way of Mary guide all that we do, and underpin the vision and mission for our school community.



The Contemporary Contexts of Religious Education:

The St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Religious Education Program identifies and articulates that the four contemporary contexts of Religious Education are identified as having a significant impact on Religious Education in our contemporary Catholic school. These include the Societal Context, Ecclesial Context, Educational Context and Digital Context. At our school we have developed school-wide expectations, in which these contexts are embedded and underpinned by Gospel values and promoted and voiced throughout the daily life of the school.

Societal Context



Our school Religious Education Program seeks to reflect a Catholic Christian worldview that enables us to integrate faith, life and culture in a contemporary and multi-faith context. St Thomas More is a place where students and their families encounter the mission and outreach of the Church, especially through pastoral care and the experience of Catholic Christian community grounded in the life and words of St Thomas More and through the Marist characteristics of Presence, Simplicity, Love of Work, Family Spirit and In the Way of Mary.

It is recognised at St Thomas More that while many parents want their children to be immersed in the Catholic values and traditions, some do not fully understand the foundational nature and central importance of the religious and spiritual dimension of Catholic Education.

At St Thomas More we respond to the societal context of Religious Education by-

- Acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture at the beginning of liturgies and school assemblies.
- Engagement with Marist Mission, Catholic Mission, Caritas, St Vincent de Paul resources to inform students about global needs.
- Using census information about the religious and cultural backgrounds of families to inform and develop units of work and naming this in our planning.
- Raising funds and awareness through Project compassion, Marist Solidarity, St Vincent de Paul and Catholic Mission.
- Use of universal symbols when gathering for prayer.

Ecclesial Context

Although St Thomas More has a significant number of students who are baptised Catholics, there is an increasing number of students who are not Eucharistically affiliated with the Catholic church community. In order to respond to this challenge, our aim is to support students and their families to develop stronger connections with the Catholic Christian tradition and to engage families in developing a deeper understanding of the traditions, culture and language of Church life.

At St Thomas More we seek to support families in connecting with the Catholic Christian tradition and its spiritual richness by;

- Weekly prayer focus at assembly
- Classroom sacred spaces to support class prayer rituals
- Year level liturgies and Masses
- Student involvement in Parish Masses – altar serving , offertory, readers, choir
- Open classrooms to enable sharing of student learning – Grandparents' day, Opening Liturgy, Graduation, weekly assemblies
- Varied prayer opportunities are shared and available to staff through weekly staff prayer, Marist retreats and Marist prayer
- Weekly staff meetings always commence with a prayer reflection
- Marist Mums prayer each month
- Connection to Parish activities with Year 6 attendance at Parish anointing Masses, combined Parish and School Masses for feast days and school celebrations
- Making information about the school Religious Education program available to parents through;
 - ~ RE section in the newsletter
 - ~ Class term newsletters and term overviews
 - ~ Throughout the enrolment and orientation process for Prep – at interview, during school tours and parent information sessions



Digital Context

At St Thomas More we seek to provide opportunities for students to engage with digital tools in a creative and purposeful way, with a particular focus on enabling students to develop knowledge and skills to help them become a responsible digital citizen. We recognize that students enter our learning environment with much experience and confidence in using digital technologies and this impacts on learning and teaching experiences used in our classrooms. At St Thomas More, we have identified that we need to be committed to developing innovative and creative ways to meet these learning needs.

Our school community supports students and their families in connecting the school to the wider community in a global context.

This is evidenced by:

- Use of online Bible resources – Bible Gateway, iPad apps, access to YouTube clips to support the teaching of scripture in classrooms
- Use of songs and hymns in more creative ways through site licences for musicians – (Andrew Chinn, John Burland)
- Assessment tasks that allow students to present their learning using digital tools and programs
- Religious Education Learning Bytes
- School Portal – Life Blogs for reflection and sharing
- STM Resources page on Pinterest
- Reflection on data available through the BI tool
- KWEB online resources – Ways to Pray Calendar



Beliefs About Learners and Their Learning

At St Thomas More, we believe that every learner is created in the image and likeness of God and, inspired by the Spirit, responds with passion and creativity to life. We follow the vision for Brisbane Catholic Education, which is to Teach, Challenge, Transform. We strive to educate the whole person and through our teaching, promote faith in Jesus Christ, the Gospel and the faith of the Catholic Christian community.

We recognise that people search for and find meaning in lived experience and that learning and living are connected in the curriculum, we are inspired by the Holy Spirit to challenge those we educate to live in communion with God, others and the whole of creation in prayerful, sacramental, just, peaceful, inclusive and reconciling communities.



Learning and teaching at St Thomas More prepares students for global responsibilities to contribute positively to justice, peace and ecological sustainability. We educate students so that they can transform the world in communion, by nurturing the gifts and potential of each person, enacting shared leadership, and exercising a preferential option for the poor and the marginalised.

We believe that all students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging Religious Education Programs, drawn from the BCE Religion Curriculum P-12, that addresses their individual learning needs. As a Marist School the Charism of St Marcellin Champagnat plays an important role in telling the Catholic Christian story. Through the Marist Charism we are challenged to look to Mary as a model of faith and this is reflected in our school practices, celebrations and symbols.

Our school Religious Education Program caters for the diverse needs of our students. Student voice is an important part of our processes for teaching Religious Education and a strong priority has been placed on developing learning opportunities that are inclusive, innovative and challenging to learners.



Learners and Learning in the Religious Education Classroom

At St Thomas More we believe that each learner brings their own richly diverse life journey and story to the life of our community. Although a high percentage of our community are members of the Catholic faith, we are very aware of the religious diversity that exists amongst our students with regard to religious practice and engagement with the Catholic tradition. This presents the challenge to foster a critical appreciation of one's own religious tradition, whilst building an empathetic understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of others.

As educators in a Catholic School, it is imperative that the needs of our learners are understood through a contemporary lens and valued so that pedagogies that support quality teaching and learning in Religious Education will enhance the learning experiences of students within our classrooms.

The BCE Learning and Teaching Framework (2012) informs our beliefs about learners and learning at St Thomas More. Our school beliefs about learners and their learning impact on the teaching of Religious Education and are important considerations in the planning and teaching of Religious Education in the classroom setting.



We acknowledge that all students at St Thomas More are entitled to Religious Education opportunities that are rigorous, relevant and engaging to them as a learner. In order to cater for the diverse needs of all learners it is essential that due consideration is given to the Curriculum content, The Cross-Curricula Priorities and General Capabilities evident in the Religious Education Curriculum. When designing learning and teaching opportunities in the classroom consideration also needs to be given to the diverse student needs, levels of development, previous life experiences and characteristics of learners at each age.

Collaborative Planning

Collaborative planning of Religious Education is of high importance at St Thomas More, and time is allocated to ensure that all staff has the opportunity to be part of Religious Education planning experiences. At the beginning of each year time is taken to plan and revise the year level overview for the teaching of Religious Education for the year.

Year level teams meet with the Assistant Principal – Religious Education and other relevant key staff (Support Teacher Inclusive Education, Teacher Librarian, Curriculum Support Teacher) each term to develop units of work for Religious Education. One member of each team takes leadership of this role to work with the APRE to document and resource the ideas shared at the year level planning meeting.

This planning process assists teachers in developing a greater understanding of the Religious Education Curriculum for their year level and assists teachers in implementing a curriculum that ensures mandatory requirements are met and that there is continuity and comprehensive coverage throughout the school.



Evidence of Collaborative planning is shown by;

- Our school Scope and Sequence document is a 'living working document' that is updated each year. Units are not term specific, which has allowed for units to have flexibility and to align with our curriculum expectations.
- The teaching of Scripture is something the staff has shown interest and involvement in. Whole staff professional development in the area of Scripture enables all teachers to be aware.
- An important part of our Religious Education planning journey has been the development of a clearer understanding of assessment in religious education.
- Within our staff group there are many individuals who have particular interests and skills relating to the teaching of Religious Education. Sharing of their insights and ideas, followed by opportunities for planning and feedback has enabled new initiatives to develop, resources to be used differently and rich professional sharing to take place not only within year levels but also across different year levels.
- The use of the language of 'High Yield Strategies' as part of the DELT initiative has provided a platform for rich collaborative discussions, focused planning and creative opportunities for the learning and teaching of Religious Education.

Communication to the Wider Community

Communication to the wider community about the teaching of Religious Education is an important priority at St Thomas More. This information is shared in a number of forms. Our school website enables parents and the wider community to have access to clear information about the teaching of Religious Education in our school context. Every effort is made to ensure that parents are well informed about the teaching of Religious Education at our school and that there are opportunities to engage in the Religious Education of their child.

Evidence of this communication

- Religious education is an important focus as part of our school newsletter. The religious education curriculum is mentioned regularly, most significantly through the use of examples of student work or engagement with a particular topic in religious education. Throughout the year, there are opportunities for parents to be informed of the organisation of the curriculum and what is being covered at different year levels throughout the school.
- Year level parent information nights and term curriculum letters highlight what is being covered as part of the teaching of Religious Education in classrooms.
- Information regarding the Religious Education program is communicated to the parish priest to keep him informed of the teaching and learning of Religious education within the school.
- Our weekly school newsletter also communicates information about the religious life of the school, with particular attention to invitations to attend year level and whole school liturgical celebrations and assemblies.
- Information about our school Charism is clearly evident through our communication of our school activities. Parents are aware of our Marist Characteristics and how they impact on 'what we do' at St Thomas More. These are clearly evident through icons and words around the school. Explanation of these characteristics forms a regular part of our school communication to the wider community in the newsletter, through our enrolment package materials and on the school website. An example of this would be the information about the weekly 'Family Spirit' value and how this impacts on the prayer life of classrooms and our school weekly assembly.



Curriculum Structure and Organisation for Religious Education

A Catholic View of Learning and Teaching

At St Thomas More our Religious Education Program is intentionally developed on the foundation of a Catholic theology and philosophy of teaching and learning. The Catholic view about learning and teaching is reflected in the two dimensions of religious education; the classroom learning and teaching of religious education and the religious life of the school.

At St Thomas More, the four key themes of Anthropology, Epistemology, Cosmology and the Catholic Christian Tradition are foundational to our Religious Education Program.



Catholic View of Christian Anthropology

We recognise each person is created in the image of God and emphasise the role of Jesus as teacher. It is Jesus' Spirit that infuses our whole curriculum with a hope-filled vision of life. Our Religious Education Program is characterised by inclusion, holistic and relational learning, and action in community.

Catholic Perspective on Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the 'act and nature of knowing.' Our perspective on epistemology orients a curriculum towards rationality, holistic knowing, knowing and living wisdom.



"A Catholic perspective on epistemology affirms that knowing is a holistic enterprise that embraces the intellect, emotions, imagination, experience and community and is not just an exercise of the mind or intellect" (Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2008, p.9).

The Catholic tradition views the acquisition of knowledge as a lifelong and life-wide enterprise. Reflective self-directed learning and teaching provides Sabbath spaces for teachers and students to interiorise knowledge. At St

Thomas More this perspective is evidenced by the strong connections made with the rich stories of people within our school family. Grandparents' Day, inclusion of families in school celebrations, and the connections made as students attend the Parish Anointing Mass with parishioners enable the Catholic Perspective on Epistemology to be real and present within our community.

Catholic Understanding of Cosmology

Cosmology relates to how we understand our place in the universe and the choices we make to live within the integrity of creation. Through the elements of stewardship and sacramentality, we at St Thomas More are called to respond to questions like: *'What is our place in the universe?' 'How do we live within the integrity of creation?'*

Humans are co-creators with God and, as stewards, are charged with cultivating and caring for creation. As sacramental people we experience God's presence in their everyday world. In a faith vision of life, God is encountered in community, in the Church and its sacramental life, through nature, human activity and the world at large.



Catholic Christian Story and Tradition

As teachers within the Catholic Christian tradition we strive to live the BCE vision to Teach, Challenge and Transform. This vision is realised through everyday witness and through the learning and teaching that challenges and transforms the culture and the world in which we live.

At St Thomas More we value and recognise the personal narrative of each individual's experience, through an approach that engages the head, heart and hands. Each person's *My Story* forms the fabric from which faith development and education in the Catholic Christian tradition develops. Each person's experience, knowledge and practice is acknowledged and celebrated.

We recognise the communal experience and narrative of *Our Story*. At St Thomas More, *Our Story*, speaks of our communal desire to educate the whole child and, in the words of St Marcellin, 'to love them all and love them all equally'.

God is *The Story*, on which our school values, mission and goals connect our community to our faith story. *The Story* is real and present; lived out by the words and action of those in our community.

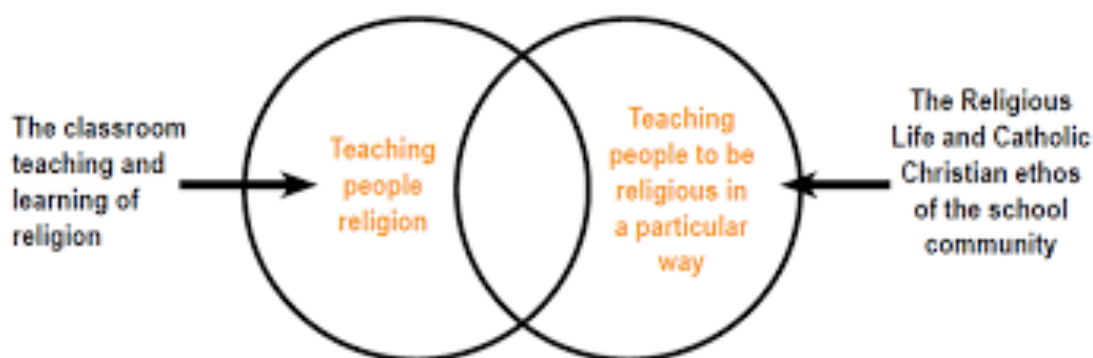
Through this dynamic interaction between *My Story*, *Our Story* and *The Story*, individuals and communities at St Thomas More encounter and develop a capacity to engage with a new way of being and seeing, a new language and a living theology. This understanding of spiritual formation is at the heart of the work we do at St Thomas More



Model for Religious Education

At St Thomas More Primary School we give witness to the two dimensions of Religious Education - *teaching people religion* and *teaching people to be religious in a particular way*.

Our school Religious Education program recognises and supports the distinct and complementary nature of both dimensions of Religious Education, as conceptualised in the following Model for Religious Education. (*Religious Education Curriculum, 2013, P. 11*)



Model adapted from Gabriel Moran, 1991

At St Thomas More, *teaching people religion* and *teaching people to be religious in a particular way* draws upon the Catholic Christian tradition in ways that are mindful of our local context, our school mission and vision and the Marist Charism.

Students develop a sense of the Sacred and the opportunity to learn how to be *religious in a particular way* by engagement with our Catholic Christian Story, through the lens of our Marist Charism and in how we ritualise and celebrate everyday events in rich and meaningful ways.



As a community, that lives its mission, we are challenged by the words of St Thomas More to live 'in truth and love'. This mission calls us to be a religious voice in the world and to live our lives based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



'Love of Work', one of our Marist Characteristics, challenges all learners to engage in opportunities for learning which enable them to reach their full potential. In a community where we strive to deliver quality education to all our students, the importance of *teaching people religion* by developing religious knowledge and skills ensures that the Religious Education classroom engages and challenges students to articulate and express their faith in an authentic way.

A Reconceptualist Approach to the Religion Curriculum at St Thomas More Primary School

In a Reconceptualist approach, the classroom Religion Program becomes a primary arena for dealing with the critical religious issues and concerns of life. There are three key considerations for teachers using this approach: the *Avoidance of Presumptive Language*, *Teaching 'about' the Tradition* and *Powerful Pedagogies*.

Avoidance of Presumptive Language

In the teaching of Religious Education at St Thomas More, all efforts are made to avoid the use of **presumptive language**. In a Reconceptualist approach, teachers do not start with assumptions about students' faith development based upon their particular religious affiliation. The language that is used is invitational and educational to engage students in the Religion classroom, allowing students who can readily identify themselves as Catholics to be affirmed by this approach. By using non-presumptive language, teachers provide students with the freedom to respond in ways that do not assume a programmed response (Brennan and Ryan, 1996).

Teaching 'about' the Tradition

When we **teach about the tradition** "it is important to focus on exploring the meaning of one's own religious life in relation to both those who share that life and those who do not" (Scott, 1984, p.334). In order to achieve this, teachers need to focus on developing a critical appreciation of one's own religious tradition along with an empathetic understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of others. In teaching about the Catholic Christian tradition, teachers need to provide a classroom environment that moves beyond simply being a place for transferring facts and knowledge.



At St Thomas More, teachers give witness to the values they place on their own personal religious beliefs, through the authenticity of the teaching processes they employ and also by who they are as people of faith. Within the Reconceptualist Approach, teachers are challenged to build critical distance between themselves and the content they are teaching, to make available space for authentic dialogue, and to allow students the freedom to investigate, to inquire and to use their religious imagination.

Powerful Pedagogies

At St Thomas More **powerful pedagogies** are used to engage students with the richest resources of the Christian tradition. In the teaching of Religious Education the BCE Model of Pedagogy (2012), five practices of Focus, Establish, Activate, Respond and Evaluate are consistently embedded to ensure there is a common language for planning and reflecting on learning and teaching in the Religion classroom. Teachers establish clear learning intentions and success criteria; activating multiple ways of knowing, interacting and opportunities to construct knowledge, teachers respond with feedback to move learning forward; and evaluate learning with students as activators of their own learning and act as resources for others.

Entitlement to Learning - Powerful Pedagogies

The Religious Education Program at St Thomas More identifies and articulates how entitlement to learning within the Religious Education curriculum is reflective of a Reconceptualist Approach and is enabled through flexible structures, effective timetabling and time allocation.

At St Thomas More Primary School, the Religious Education Program operates from an educational framework rather than a catechetical or shared Christian Praxis framework. The teachers of religious education avoid the use of presumptive language and making assumptions about student's faith development, based on upon their particular religious affiliation.

Our Religious Education Program allows students to explore their own religious tradition, whilst exploring and building empathy and understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of others. Students are given opportunities to inquire about and investigate their own faith and develop a deeper understanding of the faith of others.

At St Thomas More our Religious Education Program uses the BCE Model of Pedagogy for the teaching of Religion. Our common language for planning and reflection on teaching and learning within the religious education classroom are based on these pedagogical practices;

Focus – developing and nurturing a focus on learners and their learning

Establish – clear learning intentions and success criteria

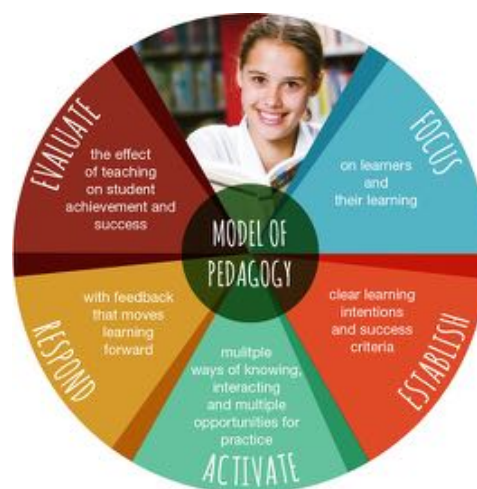
Activate – multiple ways of knowing, interacting and providing opportunities to construct knowledge

Respond – with feedback to enable learning to move forward

Evaluate – learning to enable students to be activators of their own learning, and resources for others.

Powerful Whole School Pedagogies

The Religious Education Program at St Thomas More School is consistent with our whole school approaches to teaching and learning across the curriculum as articulated as part of our school vision of learning. Our Religious Education Program identifies and articulates powerful whole school pedagogies and is embedded in the BCE Model of Pedagogy to ensure continuity of learning for all students within and beyond the Religion classroom. Such connections enable the learning and teaching process in religious Education to be developed, communicated, supported and reviewed as part of established curriculum processes. The Religious Education Program is closely aligned with the three high yield strategies contained within the Delivering Excellent Learning and Teaching Strategy, enabling this to be included within learning walks and talks and the review and response cycle. A concentrated focus on the Three Worlds of the Text has enabled the teaching of Scripture to be a focus in the learning and teaching of Religious Education Curriculum.





Scope and Sequence Documents

The Religious Education Scope and Sequence document is a living 'working' document that continues to evolve and develop through the process of teaching and learning and whole school discussion and feedback. This document informs how the Achievement Standards and the Core Content Descriptors for each year level are linked to the everyday classroom teaching and learning of Religious Education.

The Scope and Sequence document clearly outlines the yearly progression through the Religious Education for each year level. It includes fertile questions that are linked to core content, mandated and supplementary texts, explicit prayer, the Religious Life of the School and our school's Marist Charism focus.

The format designed for our Religious Education Scope and Sequence has been acknowledged by staff to be clear and easy to read and understand. This framework, which was developed for the Religious Education Curriculum at St Thomas More, is being used by other curriculum subject areas as a model for Scope and Sequence development and planning.

 St Thomas More - Sanskine Beach Religious Education - Scope and Sequence - Year 1 					
YEAR LEVEL DESCRIPTION	<p>In Year 1, students explore the Christian teaching that all people are created in God's own image, with dignity and natural rights. They learn about living in accordance with God's plan for all creation: living safely and happily in community and in living relationship with God, with a responsibility to care for all creation and using God's gift of freedom to make choices responsibly. They engage with a variety of Old Testament texts to learn about God's presence and action. They learn about the different roles in the local parish community. Students learn about the nature of Jesus' mission and ministry. They explore aspects of Jesus' daily life at the time of Jesus. They learn to view and read accounts from different Gospels of key events, places and characters in the life of Jesus and explore similarities and differences in these accounts. They explore the many ways in which Mary, Mother of Jesus, is honoured by Christians past and present and develop their understanding of the Holy Mary. A Catholic prayer honouring Mary. Students understand that prayer was an important part of Jesus' life and is important in the lives of believers. They continue to learn about ways in which believers pray, either alone or with others.</p>				
FOCUS	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Testament Texts Stories of Israelite Origins Jesus' Character Jesus' Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God's plan for creation Living for the God's creation Prayer for the dignity and rights of all Jesus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prayer as a significant part of the life and ministry of Jesus The Holy Mary: prayer-honour Mary, the mother of Jesus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Testament texts God's presence in the lives of individuals and communities Jesus' daily life at the time of Jesus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and actions used in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist Shared mission of the life of Jesus Nature of Jesus' mission and ministry
CONNECTIONS TO AND ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS	Students recognise some ways in which believers past and present honour Mary, Mother of Jesus.	Students make connections to personal experience when exploring ways of living in accordance with God's plan for creation. They recognise the safety and security in community and in living relationship with God, with a responsibility to respect the dignity and natural rights of all people, to care for all creation and to responsibly use God's gift of freedom to choose.	Students recognise some ways in which believers past and present honour Mary, Mother of Jesus, including praying the Holy Mary. They recognise the significance of prayer in Jesus' life and in the life of believers and participate with respect in a variety of personal and communal prayer experiences, including recite the prayer, Jesus and the Holy Mary.	Students learn about how some Old Testament texts that describe God's presence in the lives of individuals and communities. They describe some aspects of Jesus' daily life at the time of Jesus.	Students identify the nature of Jesus' mission and ministry, as well as some similarities and differences between Gospel accounts of significant events, places and characters in the life of Jesus. They identify words, actions and symbols used in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist to communicate Jesus' presence and action.
FERTILE QUESTION	How does St Elizabeth help us learn about God's love?	Who is God?	How do people pray at Eucharist?	Who is Jesus?	How is the story of Jesus remembered in the Church today?
CORE CONTENT	Baptism BPT1 - Jesus' Mission and Ministry	Baptism BPT1 - Jesus' Plan Christian Life CL1 - God's plan for the Creation CL2 - Images of God Church CH1	Christian Life CL1 - Personal and Communal Prayer CL2 - Mary, Mother of Jesus CL3 - Meditative Prayer Sacred Time ST1 - Gospel Accounts	Baptism BPT1 - Jewish Community Sacred Time ST1 - Old Testament Texts ST2 - God's Presence	Baptism BPT1 - Jesus' Mission and Ministry Church CH1 - Sacraments of Baptism Sacred Time ST1 - Gospel Accounts
MANDATED SCRIPTURE		Sacred Creation Story Genesis 1: 1-5, 9-10, 12-13 Jesus - a story of salvation Genesis 3: 1-4, 1-1	Annunciation to Mary Luke 1: 26-38 Mary visits Elizabeth Luke 1: 39-45	Lord is the Temple Luke 1: 41-57 Prayer Matthew 26: 1-11 Jesus Matthew 1: 1-11	The Last Supper Luke 22: 14-20 The Baptism of Jesus Luke 3: 1-11 Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James and John Matthew 4: 18-22 Calling the Twelve Mark 3: 13-19
SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS	Living in Harmony Matthew 23: 1-12 Luke 9: 21	Prayer Luke 11: 1-13 Psalm 137: 1-6 Psalm 137: 14-19 Luke 11: 19-26	Jesus and John Luke 2: 21-28 Luke 2: 36-38	Prayer, Jesus in the Temple Luke 2: 41-51 Feeding at Caper Luke 9: 1-17 Feasting in the Temple Luke 20: 1-17 Festival of the Bread of Life John 6: 1-14 Bible Luke 1: 1-11 Jesus Luke 2: 1-11, 1-11, 1-11	The Last Supper Luke 22: 14-20 The Baptism of Jesus Luke 3: 1-11 Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James and John Matthew 4: 18-22 Calling the Twelve Mark 3: 13-19
PRAYER	Classroom Prayer: Words and symbols School Prayer	Jesus Meditative prayer practices including sharing with words School Prayer Classroom prayer: Words	Jesus Meditative prayer practices including sharing with words School Prayer Classroom prayer: Words	Jesus Meditative prayer practices including praying with words School Prayer Classroom prayer: Words	Jesus Meditative prayer practices including praying with words School Prayer Classroom prayer: Words
CELEBRATIONS	Opening School liturgy	All Wednesday liturgy Year 1 Family liturgy Holy Week Prayer liturgy Holy Week Interactive Prayer Service	Feast of Holy Family Christmas Eve liturgy Feast of St Thomas More - Mass	Feast of St Mary of the Cross Christmas Eve	All Saints Day Mass Feast of St Francis Xavier Ash Wednesday Year 1 Liturgy
RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	Religious Identity and Culture Exploring the tradition, beliefs, values and stories of the Catholic Church - CCE 1.1 Prayer and Worship Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1	Religious Identity and Culture Understanding the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Prayer and Worship Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1	Prayer and Worship Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Religious Identity and Culture Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1	Prayer and Worship Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Religious Identity and Culture Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1	Prayer and Worship Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Religious Identity and Culture Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1 Exploring the meaning and value of prayer and worship - PWP 1.1

Line of Sight Documents

The Line of Sight documents provide a clear focus for year level planning. These documents also provide evidence of the multiple opportunities students are given to demonstrate elements of the achievement standard at each level. Both the Line of Sight and Scope and Sequence documents inform year level and class planning, and allow for alignment with the pedagogical practices being used as part of learning and teaching at our school.

RELIGION CURRICULUM - YEAR 1 OVERVIEW			
YEAR 1 - Year Level Description	YEAR 1 - Scope and Sequence		YEAR 1 - Achievement Standard
<p>The Religion Curriculum Framework for students from schools, Catholic, Anglican and Christian life. These papers are interconnected and should be taught in an integrated way, and in ways that are appropriate to specific local contexts.</p> <p>In Year 1, students explore the Christian teaching that all people are created in God's own image, with dignity and equal rights. They learn about being in communion with God's gift for all creation, being caring and happy in community and in being relationship with God, with a responsibility to care for all creation, and using God's gift of freedom to make choices responsibly. They engage with a variety of Old Testament texts, to learn about God's presence in the lives of individuals and communities, and make connections to their own experiences. They explore the words, actions and symbols used in the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist to communicate God's presence and action. They learn about the different roles in the sacramental community.</p> <p>Students learn about the nature of Jesus' mission and ministry. They explore aspects of Jesus' daily life at the time of Jesus. They learn to care and read accounts from different Gospels of Jesus' words, actions and character in the life of Jesus and explore similarities and differences in these accounts. They explore the many ways in which Mary, Mother of Jesus, is honoured by Christians past and present and develop their understanding of the role of Mary in Catholic prayer, including Mary.</p> <p>Students understand that prayer was an important part of Jesus' life and is important in the lives of believers. They continue to learn about ways in which believers pray, either alone or with others.</p>	<p>Beliefs</p> <p>Scripture Read, hear the Bible, Bible</p> <p>Anglican knowledge and deep understanding Jesus called people, including "the rejected", to share in the mission and ministry. Identify the Jesus of Jesus' mission and ministry, including: teaching, healing, forgiving. Jesus has a special mission, including: "the rejected", Jesus' love called for people to be rejected and rejected. [C1.1]</p>	<p>Beliefs</p> <p>Anglican knowledge and deep understanding God created human beings in God's own image. God created human beings in order to form a loving relationship with them. God's plan is that people help each other to live with joy and beauty in community. [C1.1]</p> <p>World to live in</p> <p>Anglican knowledge and deep understanding God created human beings in God's own image. God created human beings in order to form a loving relationship with them. God's plan is that people help each other to live with joy and beauty in community. [C1.1]</p>	<p>By the end of Year 1, students make connections to personal experience when exploring what is being in communion with God's gift for all creation. They learn about being in communion with God's gift for all creation, being caring and happy in community and in being relationship with God, with a responsibility to care for all creation, and using God's gift of freedom to make choices responsibly. They engage with a variety of Old Testament texts, to learn about God's presence in the lives of individuals and communities, and make connections to their own experiences. They explore the words, actions and symbols used in the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist to communicate God's presence and action. They learn about the different roles in the sacramental community.</p>
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High Quality Teaching and Learning

Accreditation Requirements

There are a number of administrative priorities that all schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane need to address in the delivery of a high quality Religious Education curriculum across Prep – Year 12. At St Thomas More, all teachers have Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school, and all teachers of Religion have Accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic School.

Maintenance of Accreditation

As part of their professional learning, all staff are required to maintain their accreditation status by engaging in the required number of hours of professional learning every five years in order to maintain Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School and to teach Religion in this context. Regular opportunities are provided to ensure that all teachers have the resources to maintain these hours for teacher accreditation.

Time Allocation for the Teaching of Religion

Teachers at St Thomas More school follow the mandated requirement of Brisbane Catholic Education, which is that a minimum of 2.5 hours per week of religion teaching to be provided in primary schools within the Archdiocese of Brisbane. This equates to 92 - 100 hours per year, based on 37 - 40 available teaching weeks per year. This time does not include liturgy, prayer, hymn practice and other religious practices. Each teacher is responsible for developing a timetable that is reflective of the high priority religion classes have within the life of our school.

Teachers as Professional Learners

All teaching staff at St Thomas More engage in ongoing professional learning which focuses on enhancing individual and collaborative practices as well as the capacity to improve student learning. At St Thomas More teachers have regular access to relevant and engaging professional development to increase their capacity to teach the Religious Education Curriculum. Many of these opportunities for professional development arise from areas of interest and areas of need identified by the teachers themselves.

Marist based staff professional learning opportunities allow teachers to strengthen their own faith and prayer life, and are a unique feature of our school community. A yearly professional development calendar is designed to ensure that teachers are given appropriate support in the area of Religious Education.

Each staff member engages in the ongoing process of consistency of teacher judgement, a key strategy for implementing the *Religion Curriculum P-12* and monitoring its effect on students' learning.

Through engagement with this process, within and across school community, teachers build a capacity to understand the curriculum intent, identify evidence of student learning, determine and develop appropriate pedagogical practices and moderate teacher judgements about student learning.

Examples of Professional Learning Include

- Marist association programs provided for staff each year
- Footsteps 1 and 2 programs
- Combined professional learning days with other Sunshine Coast schools with a focus on the teaching of Religious Education
- Scripture twilight sessions both at our school and other schools
- Assessment in Religious Education 3 part workshop
- School led workshops on topics of interest for the teaching of Religious Education – meditative prayer practices, infancy narratives, Easter scripture
- Lenten group studying Scripture
- BCE led professional learning
- Parish led workshops

Validation of School Religious Education Programs

Each Catholic and ecumenical school is required to have a documented Religious Education Program designed in accordance with the *Religious Education Curriculum* and approved through an Archdiocesan validation process. Regular monitoring and review of the program and its delivery is aligned with approved cyclical review processes.

Design Principles for the Teaching of Religious Education

The Religious Education Program at St Thomas More has been developed around the four principles of;

Embracing a Catholic Christian worldview through content that unambiguously reflects a Catholic Christian worldview and integrates faith, life and culture in a contemporary world. This enables students to develop clear perspective in their understanding of the Catholic Christian traditions and how these align with their faith story and experience within our school setting.

Modelling a seamless curriculum by applying the same rigour as found in other learning areas. Religious Education is leading the way in the area of Assessment with the development of clear understandings of the importance of providing assessment tasks that are mindful of the learning needs of all students. At St Thomas More, Religious Education is identified as a learning area that requires careful planning, adequate resourcing, and the use of high yield strategies when teaching Religious Education content.

Setting a clear pedagogical direction by using a planning framework that is consistent with the BCE Model of Pedagogy, aligns closely with the Australian Curriculum and uses an inquiry model. Our planning framework is closely aligned with planning format across other curriculum areas in the school, with this framework used across curriculum areas. The use of an inquiry model is used as part of this planning enables learning to be responsive to student need, creative and engaging.

Strengthening alignment between the two dimensions of Religious Education enables learning to be authentic, focussed and responsive to student need. The reciprocal nature of the two dimensions working together ensures that students within our community have opportunities to not only learn Religion content, but also have the opportunity to learn to be Religious in a particular way.

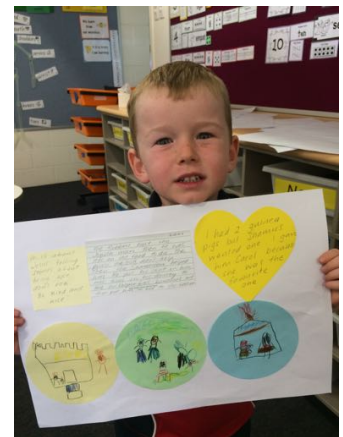
Learning and Teaching in the Religion Classroom

All students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs in Religious Education that address their individual learning needs. Within the organisation of the Religious Education Curriculum there is the flexibility to cater for the diverse learning needs of all students within the school environment. Learning and teaching in Religious Education at St Thomas More is designed using the following considerations.

Prep – Year 2

Students in the early years of schooling have a natural curiosity about their world and have a strong desire to make sense of it. New learning in Religious Education can be constructed and reviewed by providing opportunities for interactions with others, experimentation, explicit teaching and practice and play within the learning environment.

- Use of simple language with accurate religious terminology
- Use of the senses to explore and demonstrate learning
- Learning experiences and opportunities that are open, flexible and engaging
- Opportunities for exploration, creativity and wondering
- Use of play to explore and develop religious knowledge and understanding
- Exploring Scripture in creative ways – for example, Godly Play
- Integration of the arts and music in Religious Education
- Begin with 'what they already know'
- Use of non-presumptive language
- Development of a sense of reverence, quiet, stillness and prayer



The Religious Education Curriculum enables students in Prep – Year 2 to learn about Jesus' life as a Jew, his family and friends, his teachings and actions. During the early years of school, students learn about God's loving relationship with people and of all creation. They also learn about the ways in which communities of believers nurture their loving relationship with God, others and all of creation.



Year 3 -6

Students in Years 3-6 begin the process of understanding and appreciating different points of view and look for and value learning they see as relevant, consistent with their goals and purposeful. Students also draw on their growing experience of family, school and the wider community in their pursuit of learning more about their world.

- Use of social media and digital tools for self-expression
- Opportunities for reflection and prayer
- Living out faith experiences through social justice and action
- Deepening their knowledge of scripture using the Three Worlds of the Text
- Use of meta-cognitive processes to allow students to explain their thinking
- Connecting to real-world experiences



The Religious Education Curriculum enables students within Years 3-6 to engage in experiences of learning about different communities and the significance of the way that faith has been lived out and celebrated in these communities over time. Students have opportunities to become engaged with sacred texts and begin to understand how the writers shaped these texts for a particular purpose. They also learn about God as Trinity and the significance of Jesus' law of love.



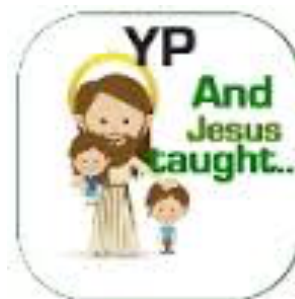
Quality Resources

The Religious Education Program at St Thomas More identifies and articulates quality resources that are accessed to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences for all students.

St Thomas More places a high value on quality resources to be used to enhance the learning experience of all students. The Religious Education budget is allocated to purchase a variety of rich resources that support quality learning and teaching. A priority has been placed on supporting teachers to gather quality teaching resources to assist them in the teaching of mandated Scripture for their class.

A strong priority for the Religious Education budget has been in the area of professional development in Scripture, to help teachers assist students in their understanding of the Three Worlds of the Text in Scripture activities. With a 1:1 and 1:2 ipad program operating within different levels of the school, a strong emphasis has been placed on engaging and enhancing student learning in the digital world through the use of a variety of online resources such as;

- School RE Portal
- Bible Gateway
- BE Learning Bytes images
- BCE Ways to Pray Calendar
- ipad Apps



Teaching Scripture

In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to the person in a human way. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words (Catechism of the Catholic Church n.109)

The study of Scripture in a classroom context takes the reader into the world of Jewish and Christian believers. In order to discover the author's intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating.

At St Thomas More we acknowledge that Catholics do not read and understand scripture from a fundamentalist perspective. This is not the approach taken in the Catholic Church or in the religion classroom. Rather, the Catholic Church's understanding of Scripture accepts the Bible as the inspired Word of God and as the work of human authors who were conditioned by their time, place, culture and worldview.

The Religion Curriculum supports this view of teaching Scripture through the inclusion of core and supplementary texts for each year level. Texts are explored and interpreted through the framework of the Three Worlds of the Text.

Core texts are the prescribed Scriptural texts that are taught in depth at each year level. By exploring the Three Worlds of the Text, students will engage in;

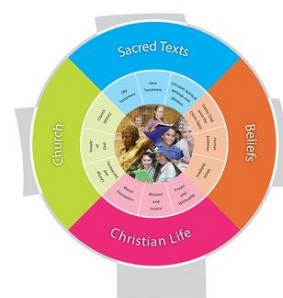
A study of the world of the text (*What is actually in the text? What type of writing is this text? Is there a particular structure of the text? Who are the characters in the text and what happens? ...*)

A study of the world behind the text (*What can we learn about the context of this text - the historical world of the human author(s); the cultural world of the time; the geographic considerations of the text; the community for whom the text was written...*)

An exploration of the world in front of the text (*What meaning does the text have for our lives today? What might God want to say to us through this text today? What might God want to say to me through this text today? What does the Church say to us about the meaning of this text?*)

Supplementary texts are Scripture texts that have been identified as relevant for particular concepts and appropriate for students at different year levels. Supplementary texts do not need to be taught in the same depth as the core texts.

Teachers at STM have engaged with professional learning opportunities to deepen their knowledge of Scripture and how this can be taught within the Religious Education classroom. The provision of rich learning opportunities for teachers has enabled the teaching of Scripture to be approached with a greater depth of understanding and consideration of the Three Worlds of The text that impact on the core and supplementary texts within the Religious Education Curriculum.



Monitoring and Evaluation in Religious Education

At St Thomas More, the process of planning and evaluating the effectiveness of assessment processes are part of the process of teacher planning. This review process takes into consideration the importance of assessment tasks showing evidence of the four principles of assessment. It is also important that there is evidence of close alignment between the achievement standard, success criteria and set assessment tasks. Throughout the process of assessment the challenge exists to provide tasks that enable students to demonstrate their depth of knowledge, understandings and development of skills.

Use of Learning Data

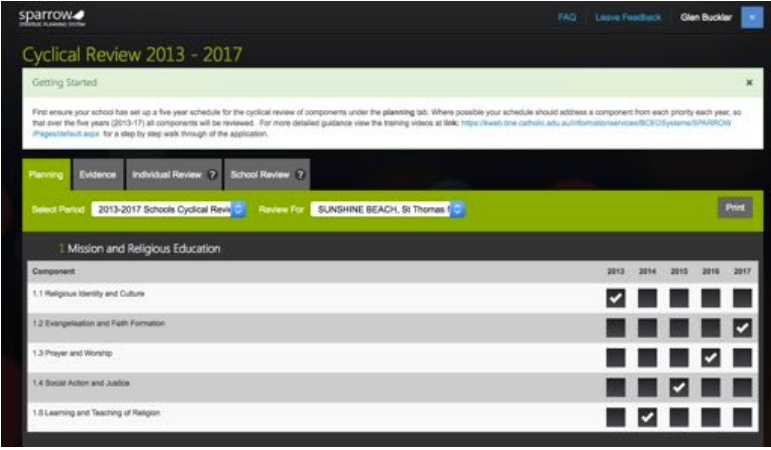
Student learning data is an important tool to help identify and articulate student progress at both a year level and class level. This data helps teachers at our school make informed decisions about curriculum planning for Religious Education. It also enables learning, teaching and assessment opportunities to be reflective of student progress and achievement and how this can be monitored in Religious Education.

Student learning data is used to inform year level teaching teams' decisions about curriculum planning, teaching opportunities and assessment processes. Our journey in using student data is in its infancy, however teachers have had opportunities to meet in their non-contact time to consider student data and to begin to develop consistent processes across the year level. The process of monitoring student progress and achievement in Religious Education has been part of this process, with professional dialogue among teachers included as part of the annual intra and inter-school moderation process as part of consistency of teacher judgement.

As part of our focus on assessment, professional learning supporting teachers at our school to plan and implement for assessment that enables all children to demonstrate their learning, with suggestions made about how different kinds of media could be used. Acknowledgement of inclusive practices and support to complete tasks enabled us to see some changes in student progress, as indicated in our data.

Other Forms of Data

Our annual school goals created as part of the cyclical review process provide another way that our school plan enables school data to be collated. This annual process enables relevant data to be collected and then used to inform and evaluate the way that the two dimensions of Religious Education are present at our school. At St Thomas More these goals provide a barometer to keep us on track and provide a way that future decision making and action can be informed.



Cyclical Review 2013 - 2017

Getting Started

First ensure your school has set up a five year schedule for the cyclical review of components under the planning tab. Where possible your schedule should address a component from each priority each year, so that over the five years (2013-17) all components will be reviewed. For more detailed guidance view the training videos at <https://web.one.catholic.edu.au/information/services/RCO/Systems/SPARROW/#pagecontent> for a step by step walk through of the application.

Planning Evidence Individual Review School Review

Select Period: 2013-2017 Schools Cyclical Review Review For: SUNSHINE BEACH, St Thomas

Mission and Religious Education

Component	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1.1 Religious Identity and Culture	✓				
1.2 Evangelisation and Faith Formation					✓
1.3 Prayer and Worship				✓	
1.4 Social Action and Justice			✓		
1.5 Learning and Teaching of Religion		✓			

Assessment Practices

At St Thomas More, assessment is seen as a critical aspect of the teaching and learning cycle. An emphasis has been placed on teacher professional development in the area of assessment to fully support the administration and collection of high quality assessment. Teachers plan collaboratively using the Brisbane Catholic Education's Religious Education Curriculum.

Principles of Assessment

- Formative assessment is used to gather evidence of students' prior knowledge and experiences. This information guides teachers in their planning and delivery of lessons.
- Summative assessment is used to ascertain to what extent students have achieved the learning intention.
- Summative assessment should allow for children to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge beyond the stated requirements.
- Assessment should be completed at regular intervals and should be flexible to allow all children to demonstrate their learning.
- Feedback needs to be provided to keep moving learning forward
- Assessment tasks need to align with the four principles of assessment – are they valid, aligned, equitable and evidence based?

Tools for Assessment

- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to cater to the unique learning needs of all children.
- Teachers gather a range of information about student learning through observation, feedback sessions, small group work and independent activities.
- Teachers plan for assessment in year level groups.
- Teachers attend a CTJ day once a year to participate in moderation of work samples.
- The tools include – drama, art, music, digital products, written and illustrated work, oral presentations.

Moderation

The moderation of assessment tasks occurs at a number of informal levels at St Thomas More.

- During the process of planning for units of work, the line of sight document is used to help build alignment between the Achievement Standard, Knowledge, Understanding and Skills and the assessment task that is best suited to meet this standard.
- Year level teachers meet at the end of a unit of work with sample assessment tasks from their class to attempt to establish equity in marking.
- A formal intra-school moderation process takes place in August where teachers bring and discuss samples of work 'at standard' and 'above standard'.
- Teachers engage in a Consistency of Teacher Judgement inter-school moderation process in October to share annotated samples of work with other teachers at their year level.

Feedback to Students

At St Thomas More student self-assessment is regarded as important to success at school. In our context, it involves teachers;

- Sharing with students the success criteria for each assessment activity
- Ensuring that students understand the success criteria
- Explicitly teaching students how to apply those criteria to their work
- Providing students with feedback to help them improve
- Helping students establish learning goals to achieve improvement

Consistency of Teacher Judgement

Each year St Thomas More participates in the ongoing process of Consistency of Teacher Judgement in the area of Religious Education.

At St Thomas More, Consistency of Teacher Judgement occurs through use of a number of processes. Consistency in teaching and learning occurs firstly through a process of collaborative planning. The use of a common planning template ensures that language is consistent and that learning intentions, success criteria, line of sight alignment with the Achievement Standard and the assessment task developed. The development of clear criteria enables learners to have a clear understanding of what is expected in their learning. Intra and inter school moderation processes ensure that opportunities exist to moderate student work and to help plan for future student learning.

Reporting

Religious Education is not taught in isolation: it is a curriculum area similar to all other curriculum areas taught in the school. It is taught, assessed, reported on and evaluated in the same way and with the same rigour as other subject areas. Student learning and progress is reported to parents twice per year in semester reports. Teachers write detailed comments about what students have been learning and have achieved as well as allocating a mark.

Work Samples

Student work samples are provided to parents as a part of the reporting process. Teachers collect and moderate a variety of samples to ensure consistency in grading and reporting. Samples are collected and shared with teachers from other schools at the annual Consistency of Teacher Judgement day.

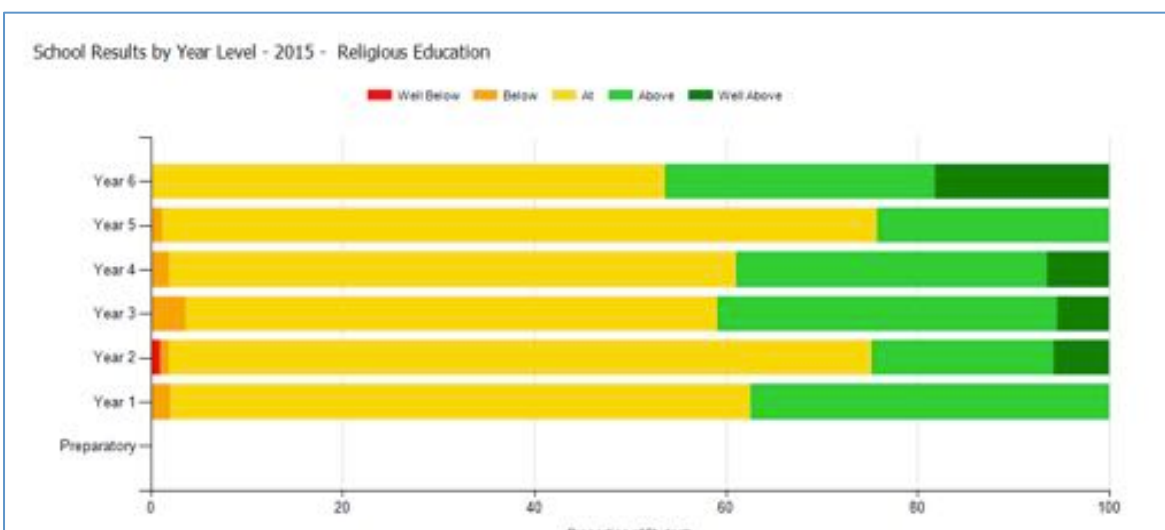
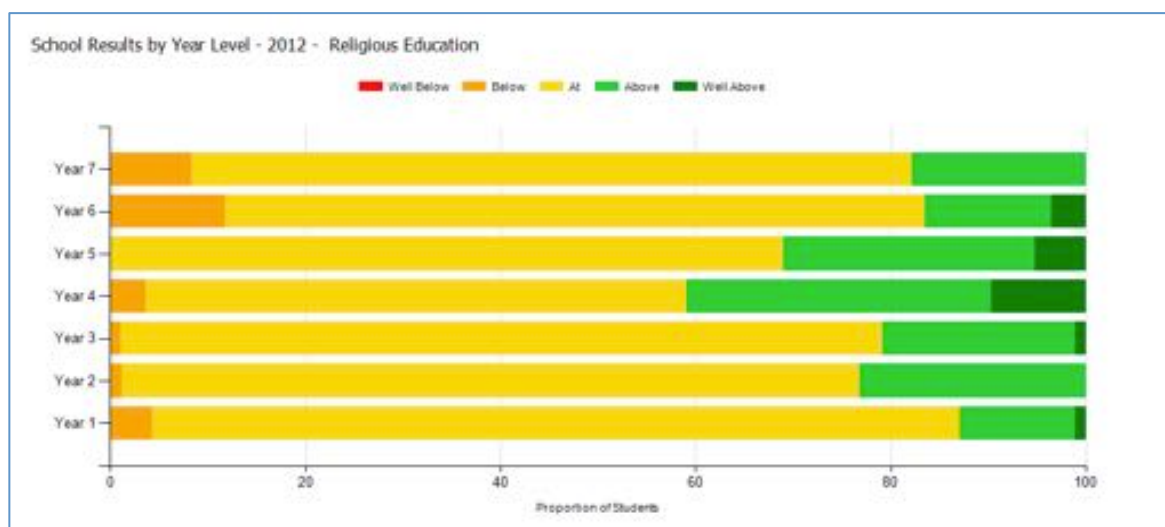
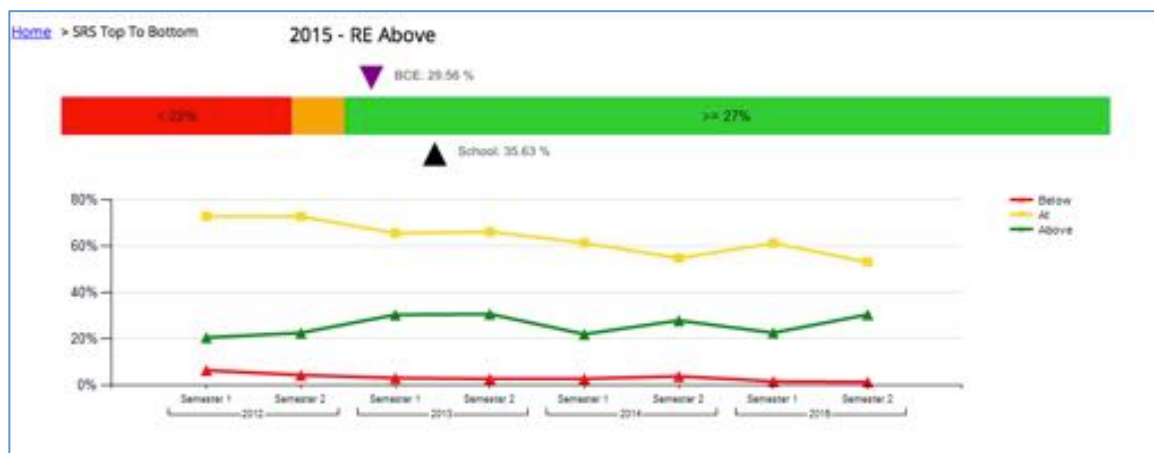
Schedule of Formal Reporting Procedures

Term 1 – Parent interview

Term 2 – SRS Report Card

Term 4 –SRS Report Card

Staff professional learning in the area of assessment focused on helping teachers develop a deeper understanding of the four principles of assessment, and how these impact on planning and assessing in Religious Education. One of the challenges named at this time focused on providing opportunities for learners to demonstrate learning above the standard. This became a priority in planning learning and teaching experiences and over the last 2 years, data indicates a rise in students demonstrating above the standard, with a decrease in below standard also evident.



Religious Life of the School

The Religious Life of the school, which is reflective of the second dimension of the Religious Education – ‘teaching people to be religious in a particular way’ (Moran, 1991), provides a lens through which our school community at St Thomas More can develop and enrich its religious life.

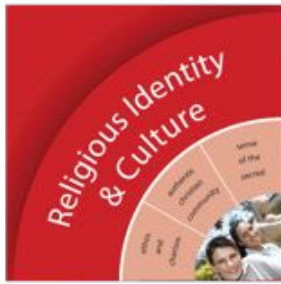


The four interrelated components: Religious Identity and Culture; Evangelisation and Faith Formation; Prayer and Worship and Social Action and Justice provide an important focus for the development of the religious life of our community. They are reflected in the following ways:

Social Action and Justice at St Thomas More

- Project Compassion – Caritas Carnival, weekly assembly prayer
- Focus on values for Assembly prayer
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas hamper appeal
- Anzac Day liturgy and participation in local community marches
- Prayer for justice and peace
- Marist Solidarity fundraising opportunities to support Marist mission
- Catholic Missions activities
- Promoting the resources and activities of Catholic Social Justice and Peace agencies for prayer and action through involvement in Caritas, Marist Solidarity, Catholic Missions, St Vincent de Paul
- Reflection for social justice included in whole school, staff and class prayer
- Marist Forum for staff
- Mini Vinnies projects at school
- Curriculum planning acknowledges social action and justice in curriculum units
- Outreach to local community from the school
- Marist Mums hampers and meal banks
- School leaders involved in Year 6 service day

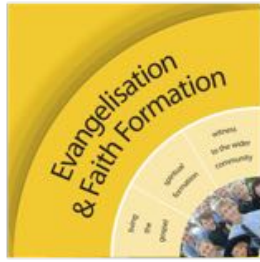




Religious Identity and Culture at St Thomas More

- Marist Charism central to our school story
- Marist Characteristics named, communicated and lived in community
- Focus on a particular Marist characteristic for the year
- Celebrating days of religious significance to focus on the school values, mission and ethos
- Celebration of Feast days – St Marcellin Champagnat, St Thomas More, Nano Nagle, St Mary of the Cross, Francis Xavier
- School house teams connected with school saints
- Learning the stories of the saints and the messages from these stories -
- School iconography – symbols, statues, murals
- Induction of new staff – Marist induction program through Marist Ministries
- Sharing the school story with new staff each year
- Communication through the school newsletter, school website and parent portal
- Staff development days at the beginning of the year – focus on school charism and story, staff mass
- Staff involvement in school and parish masses as musicians
- Playground companions\Mini Marists\Lunchtime game clubs
- Connection with St Teresa's College – student visits, Champagnat day
- Marist prayer group operates each month with staff and parish members attending
- Champagnat Award given each semester
- Weekly Marist and 'You can do it' award given on assembly
- Students acknowledged on assembly for birthdays
- School song, prayer and pledge are known and used by students at school assemblies and celebrations
- Staff Spirituality weekend for staff - this is an optional spirituality retreat that is well supported each year
- Grandparents' Day celebrations





Evangelisation and Faith Formation at St Thomas More

- Strong links with Noosa District Parish – Priests are present to students and families. Many opportunities exist to celebrate as a community.
- Parish Family Mass – held once per term
- Whole school masses and liturgies held throughout the year. Year levels have the opportunity to also celebrate through year level masses and liturgies.
- Sacramental program - although parish based, is led jointly by parish and school staff
- School song and prayer are used with students, staff and parents
- Our school newsletter highlights feast days, information about scripture, celebration, prayer and liturgy
- Staff RE News each week informs and supports staff
- Pastoral worker employed 3 days per week. Pastoral parents provide a link between parents and the school community
- Marist Mums prayer group
- Year 6 student leadership retreat
- Patron Saint chosen as a focus for each year
- Exploring the values and messages contained within the school Characteristics – Presence, Simplicity, Love of Work, Family Spirit, In the Way of Mary
- Students involved as altar servers for school and parish celebrations
- STM Rules
- Visiting presenters inform, inspire and educate students and teachers – e.g. Andrew Chinn, Michael Fitzpatrick, Maurice Ryan, Beth Nolen.
- Year 6 Students attending Parish Anointing Mass
- Parish Children's Activity days each term – link faith with music, art, drama and scripture.
- Meeting the pastoral needs of families through school initiatives – Marist Mums care packs, welcome packs to new students, Thinking of You bags
- Use of class strategies such as 'Prayer Journals' and 'Prayer Bear' to help make connections with the home prayer life of students.
- Teachers supporting in the leadership of the Parish Sacramental student preparation sessions





Prayer and Worship At St Thomas More

- School prayer is an important part of class and school prayer
- Prayer is an important part of weekly school assemblies
- The Religious Education Calendar for the year prioritises school feast days and liturgical celebrations.
- Staff gather weekly for staff prayer, led by staff members.
- Staff meetings, parent meetings and administration meetings begin with prayer
- School led parish masses allow students to lead prayer as part of school celebrations
- Class groups lead weekly assembly prayer
- Prayer focus areas are set up for Lent, Holy Week, Champagnat feast day
- Champagnat week prayer focus enables students to learn the story of St Marcellin Champagnat
- Marian prayer is an important focus of student, staff and parent prayer experiences
- The school chapel is used as a place for prayer and reflection
- Meditative prayer practices are used in the classroom setting and also as part of Lenten prayer focus spaces e.g. Labyrinth, Stations of the Cross focus spaces,
- Class prayer spaces are well resourced, varied and updated with symbols according to the liturgical year
- Staff prayer packs support staff in the development of the prayer life in their classroom
- Lenten prayer groups and the local Marist prayer group enable staff to be involved in varied prayer experiences
- Opportunities to pray the Rosary are made available to all community members during the month of the Rosary
- Prayer packs are sent home to families following the death of a family member
- Prayer is an important part of all school celebrations
- Teachers involved in Professional development to broaden and deepen their understanding of prayer
- Use of the Arts to enhance prayer – movement and drama as part of liturgical celebrations and the school choir leading school celebrations
- Induction of Year 6 leaders with student retreat
- Celebrating special days; Mother's Day liturgy and morning tea, Grandparents' Day and Father's Day breakfast
- Parents welcome to be part of the prayer life of classroom

