

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

