

# Good Shepherd Catholic School

## Religious Program

“As the primary educators of their children, parents have special responsibilities regarding Catholic schools. Chief among them is to help ensure that the school’s life and practices are consistent with a distinctively Catholic environment.”

*(Mandate Letter, Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, para. 57)*

Religious Education at Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School comprises two distinct but complementary dimensions – teaching people religion and teaching people to be religious. Teaching people religion is an educational activity focused on the teaching and learning of religion and utilising a range of learning processes and resources. Teaching people to be religious is identified with the religious life of the school and is a faith development activity focused on nurturing the religious, spiritual and faith growth of students. Religious education is taught in a context with the same systematic demands and rigour as any other learning area.

**The Religious Education program consists of five learning area outcomes.**

Each Religious Education Unit follows a cyclical process that involves three essential steps:

### **A. Wondering at the Creator**

We wonder at experiences of being human and what religious meaning is given to these experiences. We try to understand what attribute of God is revealed through these experiences.

### **B. The Promise of Christian Salvation**

Looking at what Jesus models to us through the Christian Promise and how Jesus empowers us to live like him.

### **C. Christian Response**

Looking at Christ’s power through His Church and how we can continue to wonder at Christian possibilities and become the person God wants us to be.

Pre-Primary and Year One will cover 12 units over the year.

Year Two to Six cover eight units of work. These units follow the following themes:

- Baptism
- Penance
- Eucharist
- Confirmation
- Church
- Bible
- Prayer
- Jesus

Children participate in Sacramental programs in Year Three (Penance), Year Four (Eucharist) and Year Six (Confirmation). Parents are an integral part of this preparation and are encouraged to assist the class teacher in any way they can. Parent information sessions are held as part of the preparation for each sacrament and parents are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is vital in all our lives and focuses on how we restore peace when we make mistakes or do wrong and how God's desire to forgive and heal is offered to us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### **Eucharist**

The Sacrament of the Eucharist is a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving". The Eucharist is a celebration of the Christian community in which all are included. The celebration is there to nourish and nurture us, so that strengthened by God's Word, we are enabled to act and live with courage and commitment as disciples of Jesus in our world.

### **Confirmation**

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the third Sacrament of Initiation. Confirmation is intimately linked to Baptism. In Confirmation, your child is now confirming their Christian faith as their own, and in doing so are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, anointed with the Oil of Chrism and sent as witnesses of God in the world.

## **The Role of the Parents**

Parents are the first faith educators of their children and most particularly model this through the witness of their lives. Parent involvement in sacramental preparation is crucial in shaping the values and attitudes of each child. Knowledge is not the key factor for parents but faith and a willingness to spend time sharing with their child is an important element.

## **Parental Commitment**

The family is the place where a child's real education in faith occurs. What happens within the family shapes the child's appreciation of God, the Church and the child's encounter with God through the Sacraments. We ask then that parents also make a commitment to this Sacramental Program by attending a Commitment Mass and the relevant workshop sessions. This encouragement and support will enable your child to benefit from the best preparation possible.