



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Religious Education and Sacraments

### **Rationale**

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary school is a faith community, inspired by the love of God, within the Parishes of St Francis Xavier, Montmorency and Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham. At St Francis Xavier School our Religious Education curriculum underpins all that we do, supporting students to grow and strengthen their relationship with God, responding as active members within their community of faith.

Our Religious Education program values strong connections between Parish, school and parent community so that our sense of partnership in the formation of Religious commitment is fostered by all those involved. We realize that this is both a privilege and an honour.

Our Religious Education program offers meaningful opportunities for students to engage in dialogue, explore, reflect and practise our Catholic tradition. We welcome and encourage a pedagogy of encounter with other faith traditions as we develop our personal and communal Catholic identity.

The Religious Education program from Prep through to Year 6, is developed from Catholic Education Archdiocese of Melbourne's Horizons of Hope documents; Religious Education Curriculum Framework.

Learning is supported by the 'To Know, Worship and Love' resource developed by the Archdiocese of Melbourne and draws upon the richness of the Caritas Catholic Social Teaching principles. We encourage students to learn about the Church's mission as global citizens and endorse partnership with a friendship school in the Philippines.

### **Sacramental Program**

The Sacramental Program at St Francis Xavier School is encompassed by a 'Parish Based-School Supported-Parent Initiated Sacramental Program with our Parish schools: Our Lady Help of Christians and Holy Trinity. All students and families, regardless of their faith denomination are invited to be part of our Sacramental Program by the way of Sacrament or Blessing. Our celebrations of Reconciliation (Year 4), First Eucharist (Year 5) and Confirmation (Year 6) are all celebrated at either St Francis Xavier or Our Lady Help of Christians Church. Our Parish Priests, Pastor in Solidum: Terry Kean and Moderator: Michael Sierakowski lead these Sacraments in an inclusive manner. Bishop Terry Curtin joins our Parish for the Sacrament of Confirmation and is equally inclusive. The Sacrament of Confirmation is normally celebrated at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In preparation for the Sacraments, students participate in structured classes during class learning time, which is supported by both parents and Parish. Adult faith education and family preparation nights for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation take place each year and are led by Parish and School Staff.

### **Purpose:**

At St Francis Xavier we:

- work in collaboration to plan engaging units of work for students to be given opportunities to discover more about themselves, their faith and the world around them, supported by the Education in Faith and Learning and Teaching staff leaders.
- Provide opportunities for students and staff to engage in dialogue to recontextualise their understanding of scripture and faith development.
- Develop an awareness of, response to and celebration of the students' relationship with God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the world in which they live.
- Highlight the Doctrine of the Catholic Church and issues of social justice as important features.

- View Religious Education as an area in the curriculum which brings together many other disciplines and aspects of life, integrating these in a context of spirituality.
- Foster a sense of belonging in the Church by providing an opportunity for all children to participate in prayer, liturgies and sacramental programs.
- Pursue the objective that all teachers of Religious Education are accredited to teach in a Catholic Primary School/Accredited to teach Religion in a Catholic Primary School.
- Respect and acknowledge all influences within our faith lives, with an emphasis on parents being the first educators in our students' lives.

### **Implementation:**

At St Francis Xavier we promote Catholic identity, faith and social justice. Our Religious Education program includes:

- Using To Know, Worship and Love texts as a key resource in planning and teaching lessons as mandated by CEVN for Religious Education.
- Implementing Religious Education Curriculum Framework utilising tools such as the Pedagogy of Encounter.
- Utilizing the Caritas and Understanding Faith website resources to support our Religious Education curriculum.
- Planning and teaching Religious Education lessons each week from Prep to Year 6. (2.5 hours)
- Assessment and reporting is based on the achievement standards as described in the Religious Education Curriculum Framework for the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
- Implementation of daily morning prayer and/or Christian Meditation
- Class prayer tables that focus on the liturgical season and symbols of our faith.
- Planning and implementation of a comprehensive 'Parish Based-School Supported-Parent Initiated Sacramental Program with our Parish schools.
- Providing opportunities for staff and students to encounter prayer through planning and participating in formal and informal prayer as expression of faith.
- Regular scheduled Class or Year Level Masses and Liturgies (Covid dependent)
- Reflections and prayers at whole school assemblies.
- Acknowledgement of Country at faith formation evenings with parents.
- Celebrating a Prep Welcome Mass in conjunction with our Parish schools
- Providing Sacramental Parent Faith evenings in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation
- Celebrating the Sacraments with our Parish schools
- Participation in Social Justice initiatives to reach out to both our local and global communities; Hayden's Helping Hands, St Vincent Winter Food and Christmas Appeal, Project Compassion and we participate with Parish to support the Philippines to visit friendship schools and provide aid to poorer communities.
- Providing Liturgical celebrations and instruction for Easter (Lent) and Christmas (Advent)
- Promoting Catholic Teachings and the Church's perspective in Religious Education lessons.
- Professional learning opportunities are facilitated to support teachers to better understand the issues of life, faith and our Catholic tradition.
- Ongoing purchase of Religious Education resources to support classroom learning.
- Provide professional learning opportunities to develop teacher's knowledge of Scripture and the Gospels.
- Catholic identity of the school is promoted in the wider community.
- The teaching and promotion of Catholic Social Teachings and Principles.
- Year 6 Religious Education Student Leaders

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's Review cycle.