

*CHRISTIAN
STUDIES*

*CHRISTIAN
STUDIES*

**CHRISTIAN
STUDIES**

*CHRISTIAN
STUDIES*

*CHRISTIAN
STUDIES*

CONTENTS

Foreword.....	3
The Lutheran Church of Australia and its Schools	4
Christian Studies in the Lutheran School.....	6
Principles for a Christian Studies program	7
SOME SPECIFIC ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES	
The literacy of Christian Studies.....	11
Values in Christian Studies.....	12
Indigenous Australians and Christian Studies	13
Professional reading	14

CHRISTIAN STUDIES is the foundation document for LIFE Christian Studies Curriculum.

It is attached to all five LIFE folders.

- Teachers Folder for Band A
- Teachers Folder for Band B
- Teachers Folder for Band C
- Teachers Folder for Band D
- School Planning Folder

LIFE TEACHERS FOLDERS **CONTENTS**

Christian Studies
Introduction to LIFE
Planning Guides for twelve LIFE Concepts
Glossary

List of Bible stories used in the curriculum (ABC)

Resources for music and devotions (ABC)

Summaries of model units
School planning models

SCHOOL PLANNING FOLDER **CONTENTS**

Christian Studies
Framework for Policy Development
Introduction to LIFE
Background notes for LIFE Concepts
(from teachers' planning guides)
Band-specific goals for LIFE Concepts
(from teachers' planning guides)
Summaries of model units
(from teachers' planning guides)
School planning models
LIFE mapping chart

LIFE is a joint project of the Board for Lutheran Schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia and Openbook Publishers.

The *Christian Studies* section has been prepared by the LIFE Curriculum Management Committee:
Paul Fielke, Mark Greenthaner, Andrew Jaensch, Adrienne Jericho, Sue Kloeden, Jane Light,
Margaret Linke, Anna Watson, Mignon Weckert, Mary Jo Zwar

Published July, 1999

© Board for Lutheran Schools, Lutheran Church of Australia, 197 Archer Street, North Adelaide, SA 5006

Printed by Openbook Publishers, 205 Halifax Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

FOREWORD

Lutheran schools are important to the mission and ministry of the church, the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA). They are now in the forefront of development so far as the LCA is concerned. The rapidity of the growth of our schools has been beyond all expectations.

But there is something more to the significance of Lutheran schools for the mission and ministry of the church than their rapid growth and their excellence. They lead the way in many respects. They provide models. Their implementation and absorption of the intentionality of mission has been an encouragement and a model for the rest of the church.

The genius of Lutheranism is that it does not hide the gospel. Jesus Christ is at the centre of all of life and of all of church life. He is at the centre of worship, mission, and of schools. For Lutherans this is not just mere lip service. The LCA takes seriously its commitment to the Scriptures as the word of God and to Jesus to whom those Scriptures testify.

This is one of the reasons behind the development of this curriculum. It enables a systematic and carefully planned presentation of the chief teachings of the Christian faith to be provided in our schools. Thus the schools can more satisfactorily carry out one of the reasons for their existence and uniqueness.

Since all involved in our schools — not only principals and staff, but parents, supporters and others — will want to take seriously the essential task of the schools, I commend this material to you. I urge you to welcome this material as something which will bring blessings to your school as a whole and to the individual students in the school. I pray that God will bless the use of this material so that life, life in all its fullness, life in Jesus Christ, is enriched and enhanced for all who have the privilege of receiving its message.

LANCE G STEICKE

President, Lutheran Church of Australia

May 1998

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA AND ITS SCHOOLS

adopted by the Board for Lutheran Schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia, 22 April 1997

1. The Lutheran School

- 1:1 The Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) has a variety of agencies through which it carries out its ministry and mission of proclaiming the word of God and administering the sacraments in accordance with the confessions of the church.
- 1:2 One such agency is the Lutheran school. The LCA, through its congregations and districts, owns and operates early childhood centres, primary schools, and secondary schools in order to make available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. Thus, through its schools the church deliberately and intentionally bears Christian witness to students, parents, teachers, friends, and all who make up the world of the school.
- 1:3 Specifically, through its schools the LCA offers a program of Christian education which
- serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government by providing a quality education for the whole person;
 - strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts;
 - equips students for a life of service to God in the church and community;
 - provides an alternative to a secularistic, humanistic philosophy and practice of education;
- includes, as a core part of the program, a Christian Studies curriculum which has been developed deliberately and consciously from the perspective of confessional Lutheranism;
- involves the school community in regular Christian worship.

2. The Lutheran School and Education

- 2:1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing quality education which meets the requirements of the state, responds to the needs of its students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the school community.
- 2:2 The principal functions as educational leader in the school and is responsible to the governing council for the total program of the school.
- 2:3 The Lutheran school operates from an underlying holistic world view which recognises the role of both God's relation and human reason, and into which all learning and teaching is integrated.

3. The Lutheran School and Worship

- 3:1 The LCA confesses that worship of God is central to the life of the people of God in mission to the world of the school. Within the school such worship may be:
- public worship of the faithful, involving the ministry of word and sacraments. This worship is open to all and will be organised to meet the needs of the school and of the wider community;
 - school or class devotional exercises which are part of the regular program of the whole school and which in different ways involve all students and staff.
- 3:2 The LCA urges and encourages schools and local congregations to work together in worship and mission in the world of the school.
- The school pastor serves as worship leader. He oversees and encourages staff, students, and others as they serve as leaders in class and school devotions. He feeds and equips the people of God for service and leads them in mission.

- Christian principals, teachers, and other staff are key persons in ministry and mission to the world of the school. They participate in worship and lead it when appropriate. They model the Christian lifestyle and uphold Christian values.
- The school worshipping community works in mission together with surrounding congregations, either as a distinct worshipping group or as an extension of a local congregation.

4. The Lutheran School and Responsibilities of the LCA

The LCA commits itself to the promotion and support of its schools by

- assisting and encouraging congregations, associations, and districts to provide for the Christian education of members, in keeping with the command of Christ;
- providing means and opportunity for the professional theological pre-service and in-service education of teachers;
- encouraging congregations and parishes to follow-up and minister to the contacts made in the wider community by the school and to involve the members of the school community in the ministry and mission of the congregation;
- working with the schools to assist them to realise their full potential as mission and nurturing agencies of the church.

5. The Lutheran School and Responsibilities of Governing Councils and Principals

The LCA expects the governing councils and principals of its schools to

- staff its schools with skilled and registered educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian lifestyle. In the first instance, it seeks to use the services of active members of the church. Beyond that, the church seeks to staff its schools with people who are active Christians from other denominations willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the school;

- support and encourage in-service training — including theological training — for the professional development of teachers;
- promote the purpose of the school in the local congregation, zone, or district;
- help the local congregation, zone, or district to use the school as a means of establishing and maintaining contact with the wider community;
- actively pursue every opportunity for maximising the school's effectiveness as a mission agency of the church.

6. The Lutheran School and Parents

The LCA acknowledges that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. As a church, through its schools, it therefore seeks to support parents in the fulfilment of this responsibility to their children. Furthermore, the church, through its schools, offers to all parents the option of a Christian education for their children.

7. The Lutheran School and Government

- 7:1 The LCA acknowledges that the State has accepted the responsibility for providing schooling for all its citizens. This education is compulsory, free, and secular in its orientation.
- 7:2 The LCA further acknowledges that the government permits non-government authorities, such as the churches, to operate schools, provided that they meet certain government-determined criteria, such as curriculum, and health and safety requirements.
- 7:3 The LCA will continue to own and operate its schools in accordance with government requirements, provided that meeting these requirements does not bring the church into conflict with the word of God or the confessions of the church.
- 7:4 The LCA will continue to accept financial assistance from the government under conditions determined by the government from time to time, provided that the confessional position of the church is in no way or at any time compromised.

CHRISTIAN STUDIES IN THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL

adopted by the Board for Lutheran Schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia, 14 August 1998

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN STUDIES?

- Christian Studies, in a Lutheran school, is the study of the Christian faith and its relevance for life today.
- Christian Studies is based on the word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments, has the gospel of Jesus Christ as its focus, and is taught in conformity with Lutheran confessions.
- Christian Studies belongs to the formal curriculum of the school. As part of the academic program, it must be educationally sound: stimulating and challenging, relevant to Australian students and inclusive of students with a wide range of backgrounds, needs and skills. It must be accessible for all students, regardless of their experience of the word of God and their stage of faith development.
- Christian Studies does not assume Christian faith. It provides an opportunity for teachers and students to express their faith, but does not overtly or covertly put pressure on students to do so.
- As the formal and intentional study of the Christian faith, Christian Studies plays a major role in Christian education, which is understood as *everything* that happens in a Lutheran school.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES?

- The ultimate aim of all Christian education is that students come to know and have faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This saving faith is entirely a gift of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of Christian Studies in Christian education is to provide one avenue through which the Holy Spirit can work. We teach in response to God's word:

'How can people have faith in the Lord and ask him to save them if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear, unless someone tells them?' Romans 10:14 (CEV)

We cannot predict or measure the response of individuals to the word of God. Some students may come to faith, some may grow in faith, others may reject the gift of faith.

- All subjects in the academic curriculum inform students and develop their understanding of life and the world in which they live.

Christian Studies within the academic curriculum gives students the opportunity to hear, explore, and reflect on the word of God in an atmosphere of openness, and thus to appreciate the Christian understanding of life and the world in which they live.

- By providing students with a knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, Christian Studies helps them to recognise the ways in which that faith informs what happens in Lutheran schools.

PRINCIPLES

FOR A CHRISTIAN STUDIES PROGRAM

Based on the understanding of Christian Studies outlined on the previous pages, a program of Christian Studies in Lutheran schools must be:

- gospel-centred
- informed by the Lutheran confessions
- educationally sound
- relevant to students
- culturally Australian
- flexible in structure
- responsive to the diverse needs of students
- supported with the best possible materials and facilities
- taught by teachers who are well prepared for the task.

GOSPEL-CENTRED

In order to provide a setting for

- an invitation to Christian faith,
 - the informing of Christian faith, and
 - the nurturing of Christian faith,
- and also a setting for learning about the Christian faith, the Christian Studies program must be centred in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This centring on the gospel must be apparent both in the content and the delivery. The program must allow all students to

- hear
- explore and
- reflect on

the gospel message.

Christian Studies should be delivered in a context that allows students to:

- witness faith in action
- form relationships with people who communicate their faith
- enjoy trusting relationships
- experience a sense of belonging within a caring Christian community
- question and be given appropriate, sensitive responses
- experience love, forgiveness and faithfulness.

INFORMED BY THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

The Lutheran confessions — as contained in the *Book of Concord* of 1580 — which are themselves 'gospel centred', provide a framework for understanding and communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ found in the Scriptures.

Written materials must present the gospel in the light of the Lutheran confessions. Teachers must have access to Lutheran confessional documents and to pastors and other support people who have thorough grounding in the Lutheran confessions.

EDUCATIONALLY SOUND

An educationally sound Christian Studies program incorporates best teaching practice, is inclusive of all students, and utilises assessment to ensure its effectiveness.

BEST PRACTICE

There is no single best method of teaching Christian Studies, but an educationally sound program of Christian Studies employs the same 'best teaching practices' which apply to other subject areas.

In Christian Studies, as in other curriculum areas, students construct meaning through the ideas, relationships and events they experience.

Students learn best when they

- are respected as unique individuals
- are comfortable and secure
- see the relevance and purpose of what they are learning
- are actively involved in acquiring knowledge, developing skills and reflecting on their learning
- are stimulated intellectually
- experience success in learning and receive regular feedback about what they are doing
- build on previous knowledge and understandings
- are challenged to use their learning in a meaningful way
- have opportunities to use a range of learning styles
- are able to work both individually and collaboratively
- have opportunities to share their developing understandings
- investigate concepts appropriate to their ability and developmental stage.

As is the case for other key learning areas, Christian Studies teachers need to be provided with clear curriculum guidelines, consistent with the conditions of learning listed above, from which to develop their program.

INCLUSION

An educationally sound Christian Studies program will be inclusive of all students regardless of

- ethnicity
- economic status
- gender
- physical, intellectual, social ability
- race
- religion.

The ultimate aim of the Christian Studies is that students will come to know God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and have faith in God as their Father, Saviour and Helper. However, faith is not assumed or demanded and there should be no overt or covert coercion to confess faith.

ASSESSMENT

An educationally sound curriculum utilises assessment for a variety of purposes, using a range of strategies.

Assessment of students' knowledge, skills and understandings should

- enable teachers to judge the extent to which individual students have achieved the learning unit objectives;
- provide teachers with the information needed to aid evaluation of their teaching and assist decision-making about future learning experiences;
- encourage student self-reflection;
- motivate students to take responsibility for their learning;
- enable reporting about student progress to students and their parents (care-givers);
- convey to students and parents (care-givers) the importance of Christian Studies within the total curriculum.

Effective assessment strategies

- are appropriate for the age, culture and level of ability of the student
- target the objectives of the program
- utilise a variety of methods
- include the students as knowledgeable participants in the process
- are valid, reliable, fair and equitable
- are supported by a whole-school approach
- are devised at the planning stage.

RELEVANT TO STUDENTS

Students are stimulated and challenged to learn about things that are relevant to them. We believe that the gospel speaks to the human situation, whatever it is. Therefore Christian Studies must be more than just life-related; it must be presented in the context of students' lives.

School forms a large part of the students' lives, therefore what is taught in Christian Studies should help students understand other aspects of school life.

CULTURALLY AUSTRALIAN

To be relevant to Australian students, Christian Studies must be presented using language, examples and content which reflect both general Australian culture, and the specific local cultural setting of the school.

FLEXIBLE and RESPONSIVE TO THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF STUDENTS

The student body of Lutheran schools reflects the cultural diversity of the Australian population. In addition to this, students in any school come with a wide range of previous experiences and learning needs.

While attempting to meet these diverse needs, Lutheran schools also have a dual role as places for nurturing Christian students in their faith and serving non-Christian students.

A Christian Studies program which responds to the increasingly diverse needs of students must have the characteristics already discussed. It must be

- gospel-centred
- educationally sound
- and relevant to students.

At the same time it must allow students to explore, in a non-threatening environment, the various values and lifestyle options available to them.

SUPPORTED WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE MATERIALS AND FACILITIES

CURRICULUM

A Christian Studies program which meets all the previous criteria must be based on a curriculum written with the same criteria and guidelines.

A national Christian Studies curriculum which meets the needs of a variety of school situations and a variety of students and teachers must be flexible in structure.

While a curriculum is, by definition, a structure for learning, the curriculum structure should allow teachers to adapt materials to suit their specific situations and that of their students.

The curriculum should support

- the teacher who works best from detailed plans
- the teacher who is comfortable using general teaching suggestions, and
- the teacher who prefers to plan an individual program within a basic general structure.

OTHER MATERIALS

A Christian Studies program that meets the previous criteria will not be bound by a single student textbook. It will encourage students and teachers to use a diverse range of printed and electronic resources, as well as drawing on personal experience of people in the community and providing hands-on experiences for students. The effective resourcing of the Christian Studies program relies upon

- a key teacher accepting the responsibility for coordinating the selection and purchase of Christian Studies resources that directly support the objectives of the program;
- the administration of adequate budgetary commitments for the provision of teacher and student materials and facilities.

TAUGHT BY TEACHERS WHO ARE WELL-PREPARED

QUALIFICATIONS

Teachers of Christian Studies will be selected in accordance with the Board for Lutheran Schools guidelines.

It is imperative that teachers of Christian Studies

- are committed to Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church
- have a sound knowledge of the basics of the Christian faith
- are committed to their own ongoing professional and spiritual development
- are willing to disclose and bear witness to their own faith as they interact with students.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

In order to provide academic and personal support to the great diversity of students found in their classes, teachers of Christian Studies themselves need support.

This support relates both to day-to-day spiritual guidance and nurture and also to support in times of difficulty and crisis.

The means by which this may occur needs to be planned and implemented by school leaders.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regular professional development that caters for the diverse needs of teachers in the area of Christian Studies is crucial.

The purpose of this professional development is to:

- assist teachers to develop their theological understandings in accordance with the Lutheran confessions;
- equip teachers to develop quality Christian Studies programs appropriate to the needs of their school and students;
- heighten teacher awareness of issues, research and methodologies relevant to the teaching of Christian Studies;
- assist teachers to recognise the role of Christian Studies within the context of the ministry and mission of Lutheran schools;
- lead teachers to identify their needs and subsequently develop supporting networks and resources from which to gain ongoing assistance.

Adequate budgetary commitment to ongoing professional development for teachers of Christian Studies is crucial.

THE LITERACY OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Literacy is a fundamental building block of learning. Learners read and view, write, speak and listen as they build on and develop their values and understandings of concepts, attitudes, skills and knowledge.

While many literacy practices are common to every area of study, there are literacy demands which are particular to each area of study. The teacher must be aware of these, and explicitly teach them to students.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is the central text in Christian Studies.

When selecting Bible translations for students to use, schools should consider the appropriateness of the translation for the age of the students.

Students should develop the understanding that the English Bible is a translation from original Hebrew and Greek texts and exists in various translations. They should also explore the similarities and differences between various English biblical translations.

When using the Bible, students need to become familiar with its structure, that is: Old and New Testaments, book, chapter and verse designations, together with notes and cross-references.

Students need to become familiar with various text types found in the Bible (eg prayers, psalms, parables, sermons, prophetic writing).

The language students encounter in the Bible assumes an understanding of a culture far removed from their experience. The teacher must provide opportunities for students to develop their contextual understanding of Bible times.

The Bible is the sacred text for Christians. Christian Studies in Lutheran schools is taught from the perspective that the Bible is the inspired and inerrant word of God. However, students can still be taught the critical literacy skills of identifying, articulating and critiquing what they learn as it relates to their own lives and experiences. In this context, teachers and students should understand that proper interpretation of particular Bible passages can be done only within the context of other related passages or the whole message of the Bible.

LANGUAGE

Christian Studies has its own specialised language. Words like *grace*, *faith*, *salvation*, *redemption*, *baptism*, *communion*, *psalm*, and *shalom* are examples of the technical terms associated with Christian Studies.

Students need to be aware that some words have a particular meaning in Christian Studies which may be different from the meaning the same words have when used in another context (eg *font*, *grace*, *father*, *church*, *crucify*). Some homophones evident in Christian Studies are *prophet/profit*, *pastor/pasta*, *peace/piece*, *hymn/him*, *Pilate/pilot*.

Metaphors also play an important part in the discourse of Christian Studies. Examples include *lamb*, *door*, *vine and branches*, and *shepherd*. These metaphors must be explored with students, keeping developmental characteristics in mind.

Synonyms also need to be brought to the attention of students, for example, *Yahweh*, *He*, *Jehovah*, and *I am* are all names for God.

OTHER TEXTS

Students of Christian Studies will use a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts in a variety of mediums. Some of these texts will be encountered in other key learning areas, for example, dictionaries and encyclopedias. Others, such as concordances and the catechism, will most probably be confined to Christian Studies.

Students also need to become familiar with the particular organisational structures of Bible reference books, such as concordances, Bible handbooks, Bible dictionaries, and atlases, and to understand how they can be used in Christian Studies.

CONSTRUCTING TEXTS

Students will be asked to construct a range of texts, and they will need to be provided with appropriate scaffolding by the teacher to ensure success.

Margaret Linke
National Professional Development
Coordinator for LIFE

VALUES IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES

adopted by the Board for Lutheran Schools as a working document, March, 1998

1. WHAT IS MEANT BY VALUES?

In the context of Christian Studies in the Lutheran school, values are understood as ultimate truths which inform, in explicit and implicit ways, attitudes and actions. Christians believe that values, these ultimate truths, are God-given

- in the natural orders of creation and in natural law 'written on human hearts' (Romans 2:15), and
- in the revealed word of God, written in the Bible, signed in the sacraments, and revealed most fully in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

In baptism, through the saving work and word of Jesus Christ, human lives are grafted into the life of God with all its divine virtues and powers, and in an ongoing way, the Holy Spirit continues to reveal and express the values of God as revealed in Jesus in human life by faith.

2. VALUES IN THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Lutheran schools seek to create a learning context in which values are recognised as having their source in God. Values have implications in all areas of life.

Therefore, in the Lutheran school

- the word of God informs all learning and life;
- the overall aim is for students to know, express, and live in God's values through faith in Jesus Christ;
- policies and practices reflect God's values;
- staff are committed to a life that reflects God's values;
- parents are aware of the God-given values of the school;
- a prophetic stance is taken towards the pluralist values of the world.

3. VALUES IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES

While Christian Studies does not undertake catechesis, teachers in Lutheran schools have many opportunities to witness to God's values, as with students they explore the word of God and discover its implications for them as they live by faith in the everyday life of the world.

Therefore, in Christian Studies

- there will be opportunities for students to discover God's values and explore the relationship between these values and daily life in all its complexity and variety;
- teachers are encouraged to provide an open and inviting learning environment, a safe place for students to explore and share personal values and experiences;
- students and teachers are challenged to determine their values in the light of God's values.

In this context the diversity of student background is respected, learner responses are not engineered, nor is Christian faith assumed.

4. IMPLICATIONS

STAFF Schools will give careful attention to the support and nurture of staff so that they grow in Christian faith for their spiritual journey and life. They need to be helped to articulate, act upon, and defend God's values.

ENVIRONMENT Schools will bear witness in many ways, spoken and implied, to God's values, particularly as these are expressed through the gospel message of God's unconditional love and salvation for the world through Jesus Christ.

OPPORTUNITIES Since deliberate catechesis is not appropriate in the diverse student body of the Lutheran school, voluntary gatherings need to be provided for staff and students so that Christian values may be explored and expressed in everyday situations and in the context of prayer, pastoral care, and Christian encouragement. In this way the school can offer intentional, evangelical and catechetical experiences for members of its community. This can occur on campus, in camps or in retreats. In addition the worship life of the school needs to be sustained at a high level of creativity and commitment, and in an evangelical spirit.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AND CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Those who teach Christian Studies should take particular care to be inclusive of Indigenous Australians. They should recognise the unique position that Indigenous people have in Australia as the original inhabitants of this land and should not simply group them together with the various 'ethnic' groups that make up the rest of the Australian population.

Teachers should refer to Indigenous people in ways that show respect towards them and acceptance of them. This is particularly important in view of the fact that Indigenous people have often been looked down on by non-Indigenous Australians and have not always been shown proper respect and recognition as human beings.

Teachers should be aware that the terminology used to refer to Indigenous Australians originated with non-Indigenous people and are not terms originally used by particular groups of Indigenous people to refer to themselves. Teachers should use whatever terminology is most acceptable to Indigenous people in their community. This terminology can change from time to time, often quite quickly, as certain terms come to have negative connotations and new terms come into use.

Teachers should be aware of the danger of always speaking of Indigenous people as the out-group and non-Indigenous people as the in-group. Especially when Indigenous people are the focus of attention, other people should be referred to as 'non-Indigenous people'. Terms such as 'white people' and 'Europeans' are not appropriate, because many non-Indigenous Australians are not white or are not of European background.

Teachers should be careful to avoid terminology that implies a negative or patronising attitude towards Indigenous people and their culture, eg savage, primitive, native, cannibal, tribe, walkabout. They should avoid the frequent use of impersonal terms such as 'they', 'them' and 'these people'. They should watch out for images that could be offensive (eg the equating of black with evil) or the use of expressions that discount the experience of Indigenous people and their history (eg 'Australia was first settled in 1788').

Teachers who have the necessary knowledge and ability are encouraged to include an Aboriginal perspective in any part of the

curriculum where it seems appropriate. The reason for this is that Aboriginal people and their culture and spirituality are an important and unique part of Australia and Australian life. This is important for students of Indigenous background, who need to be able to take pride in their cultural heritage and to explore its relationship with Christianity, and for non-Indigenous students, who can benefit from gaining a greater understanding of and respect for something that is part of their life as Australians.

Christian Studies is not a course in comparative religions but a means for teaching the Christian faith. Where teachers incorporate in their lessons material relating to Indigenous culture and spirituality, they will do this in order to make students familiar with these aspects of wider Australian life and culture and to cultivate respect for them and appreciation of them.

'Indigenous spirituality' can be understood in two ways: first, a spirituality related to and growing out of traditional religious beliefs, attitudes, values and ceremonies of Indigenous people; and second, the particular ways in which Indigenous people may understand and give expression to their Christian faith. While these two forms of spirituality can be distinguished, they may often overlap and interrelate in the lives of Indigenous people.

Non-Indigenous teachers should be cautious about making use of material relating to more traditional forms of Indigenous spirituality. If they do not have expertise in this area, they can misrepresent Indigenous spirituality or caricature or trivialise it. Where possible, teachers should use material in this area only after consulting with appropriate Indigenous people or after careful research based on reputable sources.

Also in relation to the particular ways in which Indigenous Christians may express their spirituality, teachers should be careful that what they present is accurate. Where possible they should consult with Indigenous people. There may also be Indigenous people who would be willing to come and talk to the students about their particular ways of understanding and expressing the Christian faith.

John Pfitzner President's Committee on
Aboriginal Issues, LCA (1993–1997)

PROFESSIONAL READING

BOOKS

- Cupit C *Come and Follow* 1991 Scripture Union
- Fryar J L *Changing Hearts Changing Lives: Practical Ideas to Make a Difference in Your Classroom* 1996 Concordia Publishing House
- Harris M *Fashion Me a People* 1989 Westminster/John Knox Press
- Lambert I & Mitchell S, ed *The Crumbling Certainty: Towards a Christian Critique of Postmodernity and Education* 1997 Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity
- Malone P & Ryan M *Sound the Trumpet: Planning and Teaching Religion in the Catholic Primary School* 1994 Social Science Press
- Moore B *Religion Education: Issues and Methods in Curriculum Design* 1991 University SA
- Moran G *Religious Education Development: Images for the Future* 1983 Winston Press
- Ryan M & Malone P *Exploring the Religion Classroom: A Guidebook for Catholic Schools* 1996 Social Science Press
- Ryan M *Foundations of Religious Education in Catholic Schools: An Australian Perspective* 1997 Social Science Press

ARTICLES

- Bartsch M 'Changed and Different: The Challenge to Lutheran Schools' 1993 *Lutheran Theological Journal* 27 (1), 23–31
- Bartsch M 'Cultural Dialogue: An Approach to Christian Studies in Lutheran Secondary Schools' 1996 *Lutheran Theological Journal* 30 (3) 131–141
- Beck M 'Teaching Foundation Studies in the HSC Studies of Religion Syllabus' *Word in Life* February 1996
- Butler R 'Postmodernism and Curriculum in Lutheran Schools' 1998 *Lutheran Theological Journal* July
- Crawford M & Rossiter G 'What is the Place for an "Academically Challenging" Religious Education in Catholic Schools' *Catholic School Studies* July 87 p20

- Crotty L, Fletcher E & McGrath J 'Reflections on an Emerging Religious Education Curriculum' *Word in Life* May 1995
- Eisenmenger R 'Christian Studies Classroom as an Agency for Mission' and 'The Curriculum of the Classroom Complementing the Curriculum of the School.' *Australian Lutheran Education Yearbook* 1997
- Groome T H 'Catechesis and Religious Education: Let's Stay Together' *The Living Light*, Fall 1992, pp 40–46
- Hackett C 'Religious Education Moves On: A Review of Australian Research in Religious Education' *Catholic Schools Studies* Vol 69, No 1, May 1996
- Hobson P 'What Does Religious Pluralism Mean for the Teaching of Religious Studies?' *Religious Education Journal of Australia* Vol 11/3 1995
- Lovat T 'Religious Studies: The Way Ahead For Religious Literacy and Adherence' *Religious Education Journal of Australia* Vol 8/2 1992
- MacDonald M 'Assessing Knowledge and Evaluating Faith: Dual Approaches to Determining Outcomes of Religious Education' *Word in Life* May 1995, pp 9–14
- McGrath J 'Studies of Religion in Practice: A Preference for Christianity' *Word in Life* February 1996
- Malone P 'Teaching Studies of Religion: Some Issues' *Word in Life* 1996 p13–21
- Mavor I 'Religious Education and the National Curriculum' *Religious Education Journal of Australia* Vol 10/2
- Moore B 'Resisting Racism through Religious Education' *Religious Education Journal of Australia* Vol 10/2
- Rossiter G 'The Place of Faith in Classroom Religious Education' *Catholic School Studies* October 86 p49
- Scott K 'Three Traditions of Religious Education' *Religious Education* Vol 70, No16