

# AUSVANGELIST

NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE

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## From the Director



It's nearly Christmas time again. Thankfully the Church gives us the season of Advent by which we can prepare. Advent always contains four Sundays, beginning on the

Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, (November 30) and continuing until December 24.

It blends together a penitential spirit, very similar to Lent, (thus the purple vestments) and a liturgical theme of preparation for the Second and Final Coming of the Lord, called the Parousia, and a joyful theme of getting ready for the Bethlehem event\* Advent is considered the beginning of the Church's year.

Yet the retailers start preparing for Christmas many months before the Church, and often bypass the real 'reason for the season'.

I have been struggling to find an Advent Calendar for our home, one that is focussed on Jesus rather than being sponsored by chocolate makers or cartoon characters. This is to help our daughter understand the waiting of Advent and to reinforce the story of Jesus' nativity. I eventually found one, a 4-page book which folds out into a map of the journey of Jesus, Mary and Joseph at Christmas.

The Crib among other Christian imagery is so important in helping people of all ages, most especially children, to see and understand the humble beginnings of the Son of God made man.

This is a story which never fails to win hearts. It is a love story of God the Father who sends his son to become man and ultimately to die and rise again to save us from sin.

The sharing of this message is core to our work at the Catholic Enquiry Centre.

We have redesigned the CEC website this year to make this a more effective form of outreach. Thanks to Matthew Price of Transformation by Design who has done a wonderful job of creating a fresh new

website which utilises the latest technical tools as well as integrates our Blogsite and Facebook and Twitter.

This has also enabled us to add the capacity for online sales. This now means that dioceses, parishes and individuals can visit our website and see our resources, place an order and even pay by credit card (although paying on invoice will continue.) This has been a long awaited development so that we can better serve those within the Church. Thanks to Irene Sutherland at the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference for making this happen.

Online donations are still being trialled for those who prefer this method of managing their business.

So far this year we have sent *Call and Response* to 914 enquirers. We had a big response to our newspaper advertising in the month of October with 128 enquiries. Facebook and Google advertising has also been strong. It is not about the numbers per se, but souls who are finding a place for support and access to information about the Catholic faith.

I wish each of you, friends, donors and supporters, an Advent full of hope and anticipation and a joy filled Christmas.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

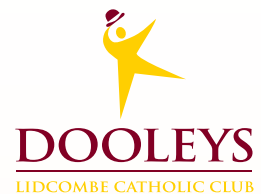
**Marita Winters**  
Director  
Catholic Enquiry Centre



**Catholic Enquiry Centre**

Reaching out in faith  
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

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### FOR OUR SUPPORTERS AND DONORS

We thank all our donors and supporters for your ongoing support, in both spiritual and practical ways. Those who have indicated that they want to know more about Jesus Christ and his Church receive the information on the Catholic faith, *Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith*, provided by your generosity.

### CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE

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[www.catholicenquiry.com](http://www.catholicenquiry.com)

\*<http://www.ewtn.com/devotionals/Advent/advent.htm>

# Projects Desk



On a number of occasions in From the Projects Desk I have written about the different types of questions that the Catholic Enquiry Centre responds to. While it certainly is not unusual for us to receive requests

from senior school students from both Catholic and non Catholic schools asking religious or ethical questions, a new source of questions is TAFE students completing Certificate courses in Aged Care.

In what I think is a very promising development it seems that one of the units that

Aged Care TAFE students complete relates to religious beliefs and customs. The students tell me that the questions are to assist them in serving their residents-patients more completely.

Perhaps it is the age of those completing these courses or maybe it is the type of people they are. Unlike the tech-savvy school students who tend to send emails the TAFE questioners tend to use the phone with a preference for talking to a person. As one who responds to these enquiries I enjoy talking to these usually mature women. In responding to their specific questions I get a chance to know these students a little and it is always an enriching exchange. The idea of trainee carers being encouraged to seriously consider the faith of the residents and patients they take care of is certainly to be applauded. The

Catholic Enquiry Centre is proud and happy to provide information to these dedicated students. Our hope is that as we increase awareness of our faith, in some small measure we also contribute to the formation of sensitive and caring aged care workers.

As always thank you very much for your continuing support in prayer and in donations.

In Christ Jesus,

**John Francis Collins**  
Catholic Enquiry Centre

# Resources

## FOR PARISHES

Making non-Catholics feel welcome at Christmas

Many who are not Catholic, as well as those who are not regular participants at Mass, will find themselves visiting parishes for Christmas Masses. What can your parish do to make them feel welcome this Christmas?

- Have enough seats for everyone. Put seats outside if necessary, and provide sound and visuals to connect those outside and in. This is much more welcoming (and safer!) than making everyone squeeze in to the back of the Church or along the walls. Consider the school hall or even a community facility where people are used to celebrating, for this is what Christmas is about.
- Set up a Christmas crib and encourage all people to find support and comfort in the child Jesus whose birth is the reason for Christmas. Have colouring in pages for children to keep them occupied and engaged.

- Invite people to introduce themselves to those around them at the beginning of Mass, and in particular to meet someone new.
- Promote at the collection time the services both in the parishes and across the wider Church that are supported by monies raised. No good hiding the 'light under the bushel'!

## FOR SCHOOLS

Ever tried Googling 'Catholic faith'? Hundreds of entries come up. Which one to choose? The Catholic Enquiry Centre ([www.catholicenquiry.com](http://www.catholicenquiry.com)) can help answer your personal questions about the Catholic faith, as well as direct your research for school assignments into matters about the faith. Bookmark and visit us often.

For young people wanting to strengthen their faith in God, consider ordering a copy of *Call and Response* via our website, [www.catholicenquiry.com](http://www.catholicenquiry.com) or call 1300 4 FAITH (1300 432 484).

## YOUR WILL

A significant number of Australians die without a Will. Our choices can make a difference in the world. We can choose to let our life's work continue for the good even after we have finished the journey. After meeting all ordinary obligations in your Will, you may consider a bequest supporting the Catholic evangelisation of our nation. The Catholic Enquiry Centre can supply a form of words for such an intention to your legal advisors.

# Inspiration



## St Francis of Assisi

Much has been written about St Francis and the image of a man in a habit talking to birds or using sticks as a violin.

Born in 1182, Francis the man

from Assisi, in the popular imagination has in many ways been transformed from a man into a symbolic figure that attracts a whole range of people, movements and causes. As

the patron saint of animals and the ecology, Francis is claimed by environmentalists and those concerned for animal welfare. As a former soldier who laid down his weapons of war and encouraged others to do the same he is claimed as a peace activist. As a man who embraced the poor and outcast he is portrayed as a supporter of a broad range of economic and political perspectives.

At heart however Francis was a follower of Jesus Christ and a man for whom the Catholic Church was of utmost importance. In love with Christ and deeply concerned for his Church Francis worked tirelessly throughout his short life to rebuild and reform the Church. Claiming that he was unworthy to be a priest Francis was ordained

a deacon and overcame significant obstacles to ensure the rule of life that he had written for his followers received papal approval.

In taking the name Francis our present Holy Father has brought the vision and mission of the poor man from Assisi into the very heart of the Church. As if to reinforce this point Pope Francis arranged to visit Assisi this year on the feast of St Francis, October 4th, even taking his special group of eight consultant Cardinals with him.

Even though Francis lived in the twelfth century his prayers, writings and way of living the gospel continues to inspire today.

# Orders

## BOOKS

Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith	16.50
"Food for Life" Catholic Mission Cook Book	25.00

## MULTIMEDIA

Christ Bearers - Understanding Baptism (DVD)	32.95
Hearing God's Call: An Audio Introduction to the Catholic Faith - 4 disk set with 30 sessions of 10 minute duration (CD)	44.00
Pope Benedict's Encyclical - God Is Love <i>Deus Caritas Est</i> (CD)	24.20
The Mass - Images of Catholic Life (CD)	32.95

## PAMPHLETS

About the Catholic Faith	0.25 ea
The Sacrament of Baptism	0.25 ea
The Sacrament of Marriage	0.25 ea

**To place your order, call 1300 4 FAITH (1300 432 484) or visit [www.catholicenquiry.com](http://www.catholicenquiry.com) to download an order form or order online.**

# Your Support

Online donations are now being piloted. If you would like use this method to support the Catholic Enquiry Centre's mission of evangelisation, please call 1300 4 FAITH (1300 432 484) or email [info@catholicenquiry.com](mailto:info@catholicenquiry.com).

## TO AID THE CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE IN ITS MISSION IN AUSTRALIA

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PO Box 415, Crows Nest  
NSW 1585 Australia



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