

## For the following Sacramental Programmes...

### **We Celebrate Jesus With Us—**

*Resource for children preparing for the  
Sacraments of Confirmation/Eucharist*

### **We Celebrate Forgiveness—**

*Resource for children preparing for the  
Sacrament of Reconciliation*

### **“The Call Has Come...” - A**

*Resource to support lay ministers in  
their care of the dying*

### **Rites of Passage—Rituals for**

*Transitions Through The Journey of Life*

Order forms for each of these  
resources may be downloaded from  
the website of the Catholic Diocese  
of Rockhampton at  
[www.rok.catholic.net.au](http://www.rok.catholic.net.au)  
or by contacting:



#### **RESOURCE MANAGER: MARCIA MANSFIELD**

170 William Street  
PO Box 641 ROCKHAMPTON Q 4700  
ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Phone: 07 4931 3630

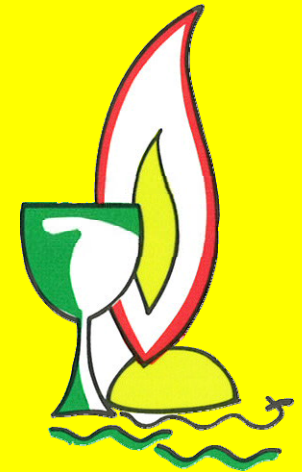
Fax: 07 4931 3717

E-mail: [dps@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:dps@rok.catholic.net.au)



## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

## SACRAMENTAL RESOURCES



RESOURCE MANAGER: MARCIA MANSFIELD  
170 William Street  
PO Box 641 ROCKHAMPTON Q 4700  
ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Phone: 07 4931 3630

Fax: 07 4931 3717

E-mail: [dps@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:dps@rok.catholic.net.au)



On 31 March 1993, Bishop Heenan addressed a letter to people of the Rockhampton Diocese and indicated that, in line with the spirit of our times, he was establishing a SACRAMENTAL TASK FORCE.

The purpose of this enquiry was to discover whether or not there needed to be a “change in the age for and order of receiving Sacraments”, and to investigate if there was “a need to hand back the preparation for the Sacraments to the parents and loyal communities, and take away the emphasis of school preparation.”

Some immediately asked, “Why change what already seems to work well?” Indeed, why have schools if they are not going to prepare students for the Sacraments, and encourage those children to receive such Sacraments regularly?

Although teachers worked very hard to prepare their students for the reception of particular Sacraments, the difficulty was that the climate beyond the school very often undid much of the good work.

The spiritual growth and the faith education of Catholic children is essentially the responsibility of parents. Schools “took over” yesteryear mainly because parents lacked the background to make them confident in helping their children.

But all that has changed. Modern parents are for the most part properly educated—and if they are not faith-educated as well, they themselves are mostly to blame. “God helps those who help themselves”, and if we want children to grow up strong in their faith, it is the parents—not the teachers—who must be both the primary educators and the role models.

Why do parents want their children to “receive the Sacraments”? Sometimes, it seems as if “Sacraments” are THINGS to be collected (like stamps or seashells) on one’s way through life. They are not mere “social cachets” - they are “actions” which are intended to transform us spiritually, make us strong in our faith and draw us closer to our Great Model, Jesus Christ—and thus deeper into the love of God.

Until recently, a Catholic understanding of the Sacraments was that there were SEVEN, and that they were “signs instituted by Christ to give grace” - despite the fact that there is little evidence in Sacred Scripture that Jesus actually instructed his followers to perform some of these rituals.

Like many other aspects of religious life, the Sacramental forms remained static for many centuries: so static, in fact, that people forgot what the reality behind the ritual was. And because the

external forms were static, people came to believe that the truth of faith which the Sacraments represented was also static (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* #62).

Since the Vatican Council, being a Catholic has meant more than keeping the rules and observing the formulas. The challenge to today’s Catholics is to translate “the Way, the Truth and the Life” into action. The whole Church—not just teachers or parents or religious, not just young people or anybody except ourselves, but the WHOLE CHURCH (every single member of the Mystical Body) - must accept this “call to action” seriously—otherwise there can be little hope for the Church in the next millennium.

This is what the Sacramental Task Force saw as its goal. The collection of information and views and opinions is only a means to the end, which is to TRANSFORM the Church of Rockhampton.

Stage one of the transformation, that CHANGE, about which the Gospels speak, is to be aware that each of us is a SACRAMENT—each of us, by Baptism, is a “visible sign of an invisible grace”.

Stage two is to realize that the Sacraments are real, live actions of God’s grace in the world today. History and tradition are important—but we must also read the “signs of the times”. The Sacraments—like the liturgical life of the people of God (Church) - must meet today’s needs in today’s [Australian] society. What the Apostles did, or the Medieval Church did is “interesting” but not sacrosanct.

If further changes to the Sacraments are needed—and there have already been many—then it is essential that we explore in greater depth WHAT the Sacraments ARE, what is their PURPOSE, and are the NEEDS of the people of God being met by the current Sacramental formulas.

The work of the Rockhampton Sacramental Task Force is neither easy nor short-termed. To bring such an understanding to a successful conclusion will require a great deal of prayer and patience, a vast amount of listening, and considerable time in reflection. It is only against such a background that one can hope that the Holy Spirit might “enlighten the hearts of the faithful”.

**NOTE: By October 2005, this group felt it had fulfilled the functions that it was set up for and disbanded—Coordinator of Diocesan Pastoral Services still purchases, distributes and invoices resources and does all related administration.**

### Price List

**(Add postage and handling to listed prices)**

**We Celebrate Jesus With Us— \$5.50**

**Resource for children preparing for the Sacraments of Confirmation/Eucharist**

**We Celebrate Forgiveness \$4.50**

**Resource for children preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation**

**“The Call Has Come...” \$2.50**

**A Resource to support lay ministers in their care of the dying**

**Rites of Passage \$3.50**

**Rituals for Transitions Through The Journey of Life**

**NOTE: Each Parish/Community office has an STF Resource Kit to help parents and Parish Sacramental Teams to run these programmes.**