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Dear Parish Priests and Parish Catechists

One of the most important responsibilities of the Bishop of a Diocese is that of supervising the handing on of the faith. At the heart of this responsibility is religious education.

Among those closest to my heart in the fulfilment of this responsibility are parish catechists. When thinking of them, I make my own the words of St Paul (Philippians 1:3-4):

*I thank my God whenever I think of you, and
every time I pray for you all, I always pray
with joy for your partnership in the gospel ...*

The Archdiocesan Religious Education Programme, 'The Truth Will Set You Free', is a concrete expression of my desire to provide the strongest support possible to teachers of religious education. An important part of this is the Archdiocesan Catechist Programme. It comprises the primary units for parish programmes conducted by catechists.

These units are based upon the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It has been developed according to the principles of the *General Catechetical Directory*.

The units for parish catechists have been in preparation for many years. I thank most sincerely all who were involved in their development, especially the Archdiocesan Catechist Service.

I now promulgate the Perth Archdiocesan Catechist Programme as the official programme for the religious education of children in the Archdiocese who do not attend Catholic schools.

In Christ Our Lord

Most Rev BJ Hickey
Archbishop of Perth

18 February 1997