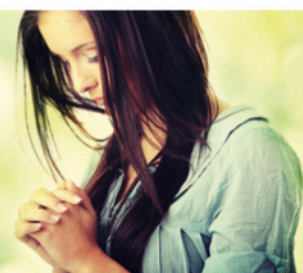




Tips from teachers



The Christian Meditation in Schools project is aiming to identify the impact, over time, of Christian Meditation on the religious and spiritual development of children and young people in the context of Catholic education.

The research includes an online survey and focus groups with students, as well as interviews with teachers. The first survey with Year 4 students was conducted in 2014, and another follow-up survey will be conducted in 2016, when the students are in Year 6.

Seventeen teachers were interviewed about their experience of practising Christian Meditation with their Year 4 students throughout 2014. This summary provides an insight into what the teachers had to say.

Who was interviewed?

Thirteen teachers (four males and nine females) were from six schools in the Lismore Diocese. Four teachers (one male and three females) were from three schools in the Sydney Archdiocese.

What were the interviews about?

The interviews covered three key areas:

- Teachers' perceptions of the impact of Christian Meditation on the children
- Teachers' perceptions of the impact of Christian Meditation on themselves
- Issues involved in implementing Christian Meditation in schools and classrooms.

What did the teachers share with us about implementing Christian Meditation in their classrooms? See overleaf

Where to from here?

The focus groups with students and interviews with their Year 5 teachers will be conducted in late 2015. Early in 2016 the Year 6 teachers from participating schools will have the option of attending a workshop as they prepare to implement Christian Meditation with the cohort of students moving into Year 6.


If you have any questions about the Christian Meditation in Schools project please contact:

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Teachers said:

Classes may need to start with very short periods of time, **such as 10 seconds or 30 seconds**, to meditate and then build up the length of time slowly. Most classes meditated between 3 to 5 minutes after several months of practicing.




Distractions, such as noises and people coming into the room, are challenging.

Putting a sign on the door that lets others know your class is meditating is helpful.

Most classes used the word "Maranatha" but many also used "Come, Lord Jesus", if the students preferred this. Most thought it was important to be flexible and **allow children to choose a word that carries importance** and has reverence for them.


Explaining the purpose of the meditation helped the students to be motivated to meditate. **The explanation may have to be given many times.**

It's necessary to open your eyes and check on students who may be unsettled during meditation.



It's important to be patient – it's hard for many children to be still and silent. Students were initially challenged by closing their eyes and **trusting that other children were not watching them.**

Most classes meditated **every day at the same time** each day, usually first thing in the morning or just after lunch. This worked well to settle the class.



Many teachers used the **mobile phone app or chimes** to assist in signalling the time to start and stop meditating.

Instrumental music was helpful to settle the children into the start of their meditation.

When they didn't have enough room on the floor for their class to sit in a circle some teachers allowed their students to **sit at their desks to meditate**, with the chairs pulled back slightly.



Use of symbols, such as the chimes or pictures, assists with helping the students to focus and settle into meditation.

The students sense if a teacher does not value the practice of meditation. It is important to engage authentically if implementing Christian Meditation and model a sense of reverence for the practice, including with posture.

It is important to model the process of meditating for your class and not be distracted, moving around the room or at your desk.

