

REC Report: Year 8 Religious Education Test 2013

In 2103 the Year 8 Religious Education Test was conducted in 64 schools- **39 schools** in the Sydney Archdiocese, 11 schools in the Lismore Diocese, 8 schools in the Bathurst Diocese, 5 schools in the Wagga Wagga Diocese and 1 school in the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese. There were 9, 443 students who participated in this test which was held on Wednesday 9th October.

From the 39 schools in the Sydney Archdiocese there were 15 schools in the Southern Region, 13 schools in the Eastern Region and 11 schools in the Inner Western Region with a total of **5,865 students** participating. Four congregational schools were also involved in this test.

The **50 test questions** were developed from the **Stage 4 Curriculum** with 10 multiple choice questions developed from each of the 5 Religious Education Curriculum strands: Scripture and Jesus; Church and Community; God, Religion and Life; Prayer, Liturgy, Sacraments; and Morality and Justice. Two units of work from Year 8 were not used for the development of any test questions. These units were: B8-2 People and Ministries in the Church and E8-3 Living the Christian Life. The results from the test were distributed to schools from the 13th November and reports were available online from the 18th November.

Of the **5865** students who participated in the test, 51.36% were male and 48.24% were female. 74.08% of these students indicated that their religion is Catholic; 9.97% Orthodox; 5.88% other Christian and 9.34% from other religion. The Archdiocesan average mark for the test was **28.66**.

The **highest score of 50/50** was achieved for the first time since its introduction in a Year 8 RE test by one student: **Matthew Brunet** from Patrician Brothers College Fairfield. 18 students from 10 schools achieved a mark of 47/50 or above.

The statistics from **Educational Assessment Australia** demonstrate that 10 questions were easily answered by the students: **Questions 1, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 24, 38 and 40**. Students also achieved well, that is 70-100% of students achieved the correct answer, in questions **20, 26, 28 and 45**.

A point to note here is that **Questions 8, 15, 26, 30, 36 and 37** were questions used from the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2012.

Four questions in this test were seen to be difficult, that is 0-30% of students achieved a correct response for questions **27, 31, 33 and 46**.

questions 27-28

For **Question 27**, **28% of students** chose the correct answer 'D', 50% answered 'A', 11% answered 'B' and 11% answered 'C'. Option 'A' of Mary showing loyalty was the most popular choice by the students.

Interestingly for question 28, **75% of students** chose the correct response of 'D'.

Use the following Scripture passage to answer questions 27 and 28.

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her; "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

LUKE 10: 38-42

27

In this story Mary demonstrates

- A loyalty.
- B ignorance.
- C hospitality.
- D discipleship.

28

In this story Jesus tells Martha that she needs to

- A be more assertive when asking Mary to help her.
- B stop being jealous of her sister.
- C keep busy with her many tasks.
- D take time to listen to God.

For Question 31, 21% of students chose the correct answer 'D', 35% answered 'C', 30% answered 'A' and 14% answered 'B'.

31

The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel is a collection of Jesus' key teachings on Christian living which includes the

- A story of the Good Samaritan.
- B Great Commandment.
- C Ten Commandments.
- D Beatitudes.

For Question 33, 26% of students chose the correct answer 'B', 58% answered 'A', 11% answered 'D' and 5% answered 'C'.

33

Which of the following would be an example of stewardship in a school community?

- A planning a liturgy to celebrate and give thanks for God's gift of creation
- B installing energy saving light fittings and switches in every classroom
- C encouraging students to charge their laptops at home before coming to school
- D arranging a volunteer roster of students to deliver messages around the school

For Question 46, 26% of students chose the correct answer 'D', 46% answered 'C', 19% answered 'B' and 9% answered 'A'.

46

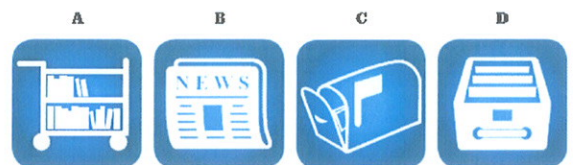
Virtuous living is sustained by God's grace and is seen in the theological virtues of

- A judgement, peace and purity.
- B courage, love and harmony.
- C love, wisdom and justice.
- D faith, hope and charity.

Thus 4 questions were identified as being difficult, 14 questions were identified as being easy to answer and of the remaining 32 questions in this Pilot test, students achieved correct answers ranging between 30-70%.

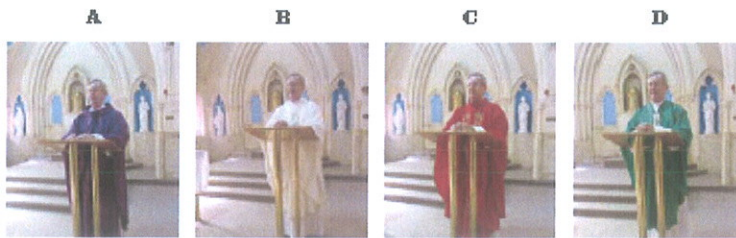
The following statements can be made about the Religious Education knowledge and understanding for the 5865 Year 8 students in these 39 schools: (KEY: **= easy or easier question)

- ****Question 1: 93% of Year 8 students** know that the Creation stories are found in the book of Genesis.
- ****Question 2:** 40% of Year 8 students know that the term 'laity' refers to all the baptised members of the Church who are not ordained. 28% of students selected option 'B', clergy and 16% selected option 'D', diaconate, whilst 15% selected option 'C', bishops.
- **Question 3:** 54% of Year 8 students selected 'Image A' as the one that best reflected the Catholic Church's understanding of the structure of the Bible. 24% of students selected option 'D', 19% selected option 'A' and 3% option 'C'.



- **Questions 4, 5, 6 and 7** asked students to identify the correct missing words from a close passage about St Paul. 42% of Year 8 students know that Saul persecuted the early Christians; 32% of students know that Saul was converted on the road to Damascus whilst 46% of students selected Jerusalem as their response; ****Question 6** was one that was considered an easy question where **85%** of students know that Saul's new name was Paul; and for Question 7 36% of students know that Paul spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Gentile communities, whilst 42% of students chose the Jewish communities.
- **Question 8:** 51% of Year 8 students know that the first 5 books of the Old Testament are known as the Pentateuch. *This question was also used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2012.*
- ****Question 9:** 86% of Year 8 students were able to link the scripture passage from Deuteronomy with the concept of being generous with their time and possessions.
- ****Question 10:** 82% of students identified how to correctly use a biblical reference.
- **Question 11:** 68% of students selected Image 'A' as the correct image representing new spiritual life and the washing away of sin. 28% of students chose option 'B'.
- **Question 12:** 50% of students know that farms and vineyards were places where Jesus' followers spent most of their working lives and so Jesus used examples from these for the settings of the parables. 35% of students selected option 'B' which was the temple of Jerusalem.
- **Question 13:** 61% of students identified that in an extract taken from Pope Francis's homily at his inauguration mass he was promoting the ethic of stewardship.
- **Question 14:** 44% of students identified the Psalms as an example of poetic praise. 28% selected 'proclamation' and 26% selected 'prophetic wisdom' as their responses.
- ****Question 15:** 86% of students know that they can best demonstrate Jesus' teachings by showing compassion in their attitudes and actions. *This question was also used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2012.*
- ****Question 16:** 88% of students identified that the right thing for Dan to do when he was given too much change was to go back to the canteen, explain the mistake and return the money. *This question was also used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2011.*
- **Question 17:** 65% of students know that the common mission of all catholic schools and parish communities is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. 24% chose option 'D' which was to provide education for a wide range of students.
- ****Question 18:** 93% of students recognised God as Creator in the Scripture passage from Hebrews 1:10.
- **Question 19:** 62 % of students know that the local communities in the time of Jesus were permitted to keep their own religion as long as their beliefs and practices did not lead to conflict with the Roman authorities.
- ****Question 20:** 73% of students know that the Jesus taught about the Golden Rule.
- **Question 21:** 52% of students know the Pharisees were devoutly Religious Jews who engaged in debate with Jesus on the Law.
- **Question 22:** 36% of students placed the events of the coming of the Holy Spirit, the conversion of Saul, the Council of Jerusalem and the Destruction of the Temple in the correct timeline order.
- **Question 23:** 69% of students know that when students are making a decision to dispose of rubbish responsibly that they are applying an understanding of right and wrong.
- ****Question 24:** 97% of students know the Lord's Prayer.
- **Question 25:** 50% of students know that a sacrament is a ritual because it has structure and repeated actions.
- ****Question 26:** 72% of students know that a Bishop is the religious leader of a diocese. *This question was also used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2011.*
- **Question 29:** 38% of students know that at the Council of Jerusalem the issue of whether Gentile Christians should observe the customs of Judaism was debated. 27% of students selected option 'C' that Christians should celebrate the Eucharist in their homes.
- **Question 30:** 50% of students know that icons are a feature in some Eastern Catholic Churches. 28% of students selected option 'B' - statues. *This question was also used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2011.*
- **Question 32:** 42% of students know that love of God dwelling in us and present in the sacraments is known as grace.
- **Question 34:** 52% of students know that to be exiled is to be punished for breaking God's law.
- **Question 35:** 42% of students know that the Maronite, Melkite and Coptic Churches are Eastern Catholic Churches.
- **Question 36:** 59% of students were able to identify the events of Holy Thursday. *This question was used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2012.*
- **Question 37:** 59% of students were know that when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples that Christians are reminded of the importance of service. *This question was used in the Year 8 Religious Education Test in 2012.*
- ****Question 38:** 82% of students know that the choices we make that weaken our relationship with God can be described as sinful.
- **Question 39:** 52% of students know that Hebrew was the language that would have been spoken in the Temple during the time of Jesus. 24% of students selected option 'D' – Aramaic.

- ****Question 40: 85% of students** correctly identified examples of social and religious rituals.
- **Question 41:** 40% of students correctly identified a prayer of intercession.
- **Question 42: 68% of students** know that the story of Gemma establishing the School of St Jude in Tanzania is a story about a young woman pursuing goodness by fighting poverty through education.
- **Question 43:** 47% of students identified option 'D' as the image showing a season representing a time of hope and growth. 24 % of students selected option 'B'.



- **Question 44: 63% of students** know the principle effect of sin is that it weakens our relationship with god and with each other.
- ****Question 45: 76% of students** know the correct order of the liturgical actions of the Mass.
- **Question 47: 55% of students** know that Catholic Churches have different languages and symbols that they use in their liturgy.
- **Question 48: 53% of students** identified that in the parable of the Lost Sheep Jesus teaches us about unconditional love.
- **Question 49: 54% of students** know that during the Mass we pray the Lord's Prayer after the priest says: "At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching we dare to say...".
- **Question 50:** 45% of students know that when Jesus told parables he encouraged people to reconsider their beliefs and practices.