



December 2022 Network News

Dear Friends,

Now that we are in the midst of the Advent Season our expectation of the coming Messiah is growing. It's delightful to see children and families preparing with their Advent wreaths at home. Some families erect little Bethlehem stables with animals, but without the holy family, while children are encouraged to pad the stable with pieces of straw to signify their daily sacrifices made to serve their coming King. The Church is replete with many wonderful Advent customs.

In our parishes, we prepare our catechumens and candidates for the coming Messiah with a deep dive into the Messianic prophecies. This can be accompanied by immersing them into our spiritual heritage by way of the great liturgical hymns like, O Come, O Come, Emmanuel with all its biblical roots.

This edition of Network News includes an article by Dr. Carmel Suart about the importance of Dismissals during the Catechumenate. This article is essential reading for those involved in parish RCIA in order to understand the richness of the dismissal practice, both for the catechumens (unbaptised) and our parishioners.

Br. Bernard Fonkalsrud OFM Conv. launches a new section of our Network News which focuses on the catechist-saints. This section seeks to encourage RCIA teams in their ministry by introducing us to the great 'cloud of witnesses' who have trod the path of evangelisation and catechesis before us.

Kathy Horan provides a reflection for RCIA team members as we journey through Advent to Christmas. And I provide a brief article on Christmas carols that could be introduced to catechumens and candidates to immerse them into the Catholic culture.

Please note that our Executive members Simon Yeak (host) and Br. Bernard Fonkalsrud OFM Conv. (speaker) are offering a webinar on Monday 13th March, 2023, at 7.00-8.15pm AEDT via Zoom, entitled, Holy Week and Mystagogy. Click [here](#) for registrations.

Finally, on behalf of the CIAN Executive, I would like to wish you all a very blessed Advent and holy Christmas season.

Yours in Christ,
Dr. Christine Wood
E: christine.wood@aohas.org.au
M: 0408 321 002

[Find Out More](#)

Understanding the Liturgical Rites in the RCIA

Dr. Carmel Suart writes about the importance of the Dismissals during Sunday Mass in the Catechumenate. Dr. Suart explains the reasons for this practice and how it helps to support catechumens, while also informing parishioners of their baptismal dignity.

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St Charles Borromeo - Patron of Catechists

Br. Bernard Fonkalsrud OFM Conv. writes about the sixteenth century, St. Charles Borromeo, the patron saint of catechists, in order to encourage RCIA teams in our RCIA ministry.

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Reflection - Endings and Beginnings

Kathy Horan provides a reflection on the journey through Advent as we continue to accompany our catechumens and candidates towards meeting Christ.

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Spiritual 'Rich Fare' of Traditional Christmas Carols

Dr. Christine Wood provides a doctrinal reflection on some traditional Christmas carols as an aid in immersing catechumens and candidates in our Catholic culture.

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Upcoming CIAN Network members' webinar

The first CIAN RCIA webinar for 2023 will be on 13 March. Simon Yeak and Br Bernard Fonkalsrud OFM will lead you through a discussion on maximising the experience of your Elect during Holy Week, the Easter Initiation Rites and the Mystagogy period post Easter. We have scheduled it for Monday, 13 March to give you plenty of time to participate in the webinar and then implement your Holy Week and Easter plan for your Elect.

You can register for this webinar: "Holy Week and Mystagogy" through this link (webinar participation requires registration) and download the webinar flyer here to distribute in your parish. Your registration email will include links to add the webinar information and date to your preferred digital calendar.

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