

Part IV

Implications for religious education in independent schools (with special reference to Catholic schools)

Part IV examines the theory and practice of religious education in religious schools in the light of issues discussed earlier. The notion of education in meaning, identity and spirituality (Part II) has implications for religious education in any school type; similarly, studying religion makes a distinctive contribution to the spiritual and moral dimension of the school curriculum (Part III).

Religious education in Catholic schools will be taken as a principal example in religiously sponsored schools, enabling us to attend to issues with a high degree of contextual specificity. We considered that the advantages in this strategy considerably outweighed those in restricting attention to generalisations across all types of religious school. Nevertheless, many of the issues are relevant to other religious schools in Australia, especially Christian church-related schools – with appropriate transposition according to context; estimating how their situations compare and contrast with that of Catholic schools can yield useful analyses. In addition, there will be some implications for Jewish and Muslim schools, depending on their particular cultural, theological and educational orientations. To account for the distinctiveness of religious education in the different types of religious schools in the country is beyond our scope here.

It will become evident that a number of the issues discussed here are closely related to those already examined in Part III on the spiritual and moral dimension to public education. The five-part arrangement of Chapters in this book has the potential to promote more mutual understanding and dialogue among educators in the public and independent sectors by having materials on the spiritual and moral aspects of education relevant to each in the same volume.

Chapter 16

Historical perspective on religious education in Catholic schools: Towards a relevant religious education for the future

This chapter interprets the recent history of religious education in Australian Catholic schools, highlighting issues in contemporary theory and practice.¹ It will provide the basis for identifying links with the questions raised in Parts I, II and III, as well as for comparisons with the practice in other types of religious schools.

16.1 Social and intellectual conditions that enable a critical historical interpretation

The historian Jaroslav Pelikan considered that a wise understanding of history is the best starting point when planning for the future, especially in an era characterised by rapid social change and uncertainty.² Present issues are best interpreted in the light of formative historical influences.

But constructing an insightful interpretation of the past is neither easy nor simple. Our capacity to interpret historical developments in religious education – as for any aspect of culture – depends on the relative maturity of the social and intellectual climate in which we work. To illustrate, we will consider a recent documentary about the role of Paul Robeson in the African American civil rights and labour movements.

The estimates of Paul Robeson as an African American leader during his own times (in the 1950s and 1960s) were not flattering. Because of his simplistic and sympathetic views of the quality of life in the Soviet Union under Stalin, leaders like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X distanced themselves from him; for a time he was not permitted to travel outside the United States because of his so called ‘un-American’ activities. He was not as widely appreciated then as he is now. It has taken many years before an evaluation of his leadership role emerged which acknowledged the social complexities that explained the successes and failures of his endeavours. Now we have a better understanding of the life work of this man who sang for the workers on the Sydney Opera house construction site in the 1960s and for Soviet workers in Moscow – the man who can be judged as an influential precursor of the Black civil rights movement in the United States.

The point of this analogy is that a critical interpretation of rapid new developments within Australian Catholic Religious Education in the 1960s and 1970s required a maturity of vision that was not available at the time. More experience and historical perspective were needed before an interpretation emerged that better explained what happened – that is, an appraisal that acknowledged all the influences at work and that resisted the temptation to oversimplify; one that did not collapse the tensions, accepting the failures along with the successes, and acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses. We are now better able to put the development of Catholic religious education into perspective, interpreting the history in terms of a network of causal

factors that makes sense of what happened and enables us to make wiser decisions about the future. Not all in the Catholic sector will agree with the interpretation that follows; there remain different estimates of what is the most appropriate content and method for religious education. But at least the discussion may raise issues on which a particular stance needs to be taken. It will presume that a common commitment to the advancement of religious education is greater than the differences, and that an opportunity to evaluate theory and practice is always important for advancing the profession.

16.2 An historical perspective on Catholic school religious education in Australia

A first step is to compile a list of the factors that had a shaping influence on religious education. They affected the thinking of authorities which gave rise to the *intentional curriculum*; they also influenced what happened in the classroom – the *actual curriculum* – where the perceptions and responses of the students made an important contribution. Such an extensive listing (see box) is only a starting point for a critical perspective. What is needed is an interpretation of the interplay between these factors, making use of selected themes, as will be taken up in the sections following the box.

Factors that have had a shaping influence on Catholic religious education in Australia since the 1950s

Theology

Impact of the emerging theology of the Second Vatican Council.

Influence from particular movements in theology: Christological, ministry, social justice, liberationist, feminist.

Scripture scholarship influenced understandings of biblical authorship with considerable impact on the interpretation of the gospels.

Increasing theological sophistication of the adult Catholic community.

Movements in Religious Education with different orientation

Changing emphases in movements such as the kerygmatic movement, also the experiential, social justice.³

community-oriented student retreats which began in the late 1960s, changing from the silent retreats which had predominated.

Impact of Thomas Groome's Shared Christian Praxis approach, which was adopted by a number of Catholic dioceses.⁴

Pursuit of religious literacy as a goal; the notion of 'critical' religious literacy.⁵

Change in curriculum format to stress outcomes.⁶

Education

The new prominence of 'experiential' education (for example Jerome Bruner); the emphasis on 'process' rather than content.

The rise of 'critical' education: emphasis on analysis, evaluation and interpretation rather than on learning facts.

1990s emphasis on outcomes and employment-oriented competencies.

Increasing interest in the personal and social dimensions of education.

The new emphasis in the 2000s on education for spiritual and moral development, and for the acquisition of values.

Social science

Humanistic psychology from the 1960s onwards. Great interest in how human relationships foster personal development.

The rise of 'psychological spirituality' where insights from psychology have been blended with theology and traditional spirituality to give a language for spirituality that sought to articulate the religious tradition with more relevance and meaning for contemporary life (see 8.2).

Social and cultural developments affecting the context of religious education; an interpretation of the social situation is taken into account within theory and practice of religious education

Secularisation of culture – less prominence for organised religion; decline in parish church

participation; increasing numbers of pupils coming from homes with minimal connection with the local church.

Social and cultural change as issues to be addressed:

Changes in family life and social roles

Social liberalism: more tolerance of diversity, but social conflict remains evident

Changes in the workplace and employment

Increasing levels of poverty and hardship

Economic rationalism and the impact of globalisation, casual employment, downsizing

More technological and computer-oriented society

Anxiety about increasing levels of drug use and violence in the community

Anxiety about racism and immigration, and about terrorism

Environmental concerns and anxiety about deterioration in the quality of life

The influence of film and television on life expectations and values.

A more educated and critical adult and youth community – less ready to respect and believe authorities; more questioning; more critical of church teachings and less accepting of traditional views.

Promotion of multiculturalism in a multi-faith society.

Crisis of meaning arising from inability of people to find relevant and sustaining meaning and purpose in life (increase in suicide rates, depression, drug use, violence, boredom).

Teaching religious orders

Provided the structural and personnel resources for Catholic schooling and religious education since the 1870s.

The great interest of religious order personnel in Vatican II theology and in the psychological spirituality that emerged from the 1960s onwards; effects on theory and practice of religious education.

The boom period for religious order vocations (1950s and early 1960s) followed by sharp decline.

Minimal number of personnel from religious orders remain teaching in Catholic schools in 1990s.

Lay personnel in Catholic schools

Gradually became the large majority of religion teachers in the 1980s and 1990s.

The emergence of lay spirituality gradually taking the place of religious order-oriented spirituality as the norm for teachers in Catholic schools.

Diocesan structures

The rise of Catholic Education Offices after funding was secured for Catholic school systems; consultants in religious education.

Diocesan religious education documents and Vatican documents

Vatican documents on catechesis, evangelisation; and on Catholic schools.

Diocesan guidelines

Student texts

The new national Catholic school catechisms of the 1960s for primary and junior/middle secondary. The booklet series *Come Alive* for Year 12 in 1970, and conflict over its appropriateness.

Aims, content and teaching strategies influenced by student texts; the use of American, British and Australian student texts and series of booklets in the 1970s and 1980s.

The New Zealand religious education series *Understanding Faith* late 1980s and 1990s (cf. production and marketing of the Australian edition).

The publication of the *To know, worship and love* series of texts for Kindergarten to Year 10 for use in Catholic schools; adopted by a number of Catholic dioceses from 2001 onwards.

New state-based Religion Studies courses

Emergence of state Religion Studies courses, mainly in the 1990s.

Religion studies courses widely adopted and taught in Catholic schools at Years 11 and 12 levels.

Religion Studies courses becoming the *de facto* formal religion curriculum for Years 11 and 12.

Writers/theorists in religious education

Relative influence of American, British and Australian writers.

Professional development programs for religion teachers

Diocesan programs for teachers.

Professional development of educators for Catholic schools in Catholic Teachers Colleges and subsequently in Catholic universities, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Relative popularity of overseas religious education scholars who conducted professional development programs.

Increasing numbers of educators engaged in postgraduate research in religious education.

The perceptions of students and their responses

Criticisms of the lack of relevance of religious education by students in the 1960s and 1970s.

Student satisfaction with retreats.

Increasing acceptance of academically accredited courses.

Teachers' perceptions of the changing needs and interests of students.

The spirituality of contemporary young people and how this was perceived by teachers.

[Box not styled]

There are a number of historical accounts of the evolution of Catholic religious education that trace the emergence of different approaches.⁷ They show that there has been a perennial quest to be 'relevant' and 'effective', involving trial and error and professional conflict. Also evident are the different estimates of what classroom religious education should be about. Given that this evolution has already been well documented, our interpretation will concentrate on what the developments mean for the future; it revolves around the interplay between six themes:

16.2.1 The experiential quest for personalism and relevance

16.2.2 The centrality of the concept 'faith development'

16.2.3 The development of diocesan guidelines for Catholic religious education

16.2.4 Student resource materials

16.2.5 New state Religion Studies courses and the quest for academic credibility

16.2.6 The spirituality of contemporary youth

[Box not styled]

16.2.1 The experiential quest for personalism and relevance

Perhaps the most notable change in Catholic school religious education after the Second Vatican Council was the emphasis on the *experiential* and a quest for *personalism* and *relevance*. It sought to make the classroom interactions tuned in to pupils' life experience, needs and interests as well as being personal. The idea of 'faith sharing' was prominent.

The new emphasis emerged from the coalescence of a number of movements. Whereas previously theology had been mainly the preserve of the clergy, it was opened to members of the teaching religious orders of sisters and brothers, and then to the laity. The religious personnel, who made up the majority of the religion teachers in Catholic schools at the time, joined the surge of interest in the new humanistic psychology (for example the work of Rogers, Maslow, Allport, May). Special attention was given to human relationships as a key aspect of personal and spiritual development. What emerged was a form of 'psychological spirituality' which sought to interpret theology and scripture in terms of their relevance to contemporary life (8.2). This development reinforced and magnified the changes in Catholicism that are often ascribed to the Second Vatican Council. While this gave useful insights into personal development, where it was overused and not kept in balance with other interests, it tended to result in a religious education that looked excessively individualistic. There was a danger that it could promote and reinforce self-centredness, aggravating problems of narcissism that might already be there in some individuals.

Being able to relate sensitively in one-to-one relationships became a more prominent part of people's religious spirituality. The counselling relationship assumed

a wider significance beyond the therapeutic; it became like an ideal for religious ministry, and the often used words ‘being sensitive to people’ were iconic. This new interest in personalism not only affected the lives of educators, but changed their understanding of religious education. Efforts were intensified to make it an activity that overtly engaged pupils at a personal level; intimacy in discussions became a much desired goal. In senior secondary classes, ‘relationships’ and ‘personal development’ figured prominently as content, displacing more formally religious topics. This development made religion teaching easier for those who had little knowledge of theology or scripture – at a time when theological and scriptural understandings were changing quickly in any case. The spectacular success of the new style of community retreats which began in the 1970s reinforced this thinking, and teachers unsuccessfully tried to use retreat activities to transform their ordinary lessons into lively personal discussions.

The research on Catholic schools conducted by Flynn (1975), following up that of Leavey (1972), stressed the importance of community and school climate. It was interpreted as a research justification of the quest for personalism. Religious education was thought of more as a community-building, ‘personal sharing’ activity than as a ‘study’ of religion. Teachers tried to ‘de-school’ religious education, making it into a more informal discussion activity (see Chapter 19).

So, in the Catholic education sector, as the language of psychological spirituality came to dominate thinking about personal and spiritual development, the small-group discussion came to be regarded as the central process of religious education. Distinctions between religious education and personal development education were blurred. Informality in context and method, personal sharing, group dynamics, and process rather than content became prominent in teachers’ understanding of religious education, especially in the secondary school. Having students make personal revelations became the measure of effective religious education. Words like ‘students really giving of themselves’ were used by teachers to describe what they regarded as successful lessons. Even though much has changed in Catholic religious education since the heyday of the experiential approach, there remains lingering attachment to this personalist view of the process. A thorough, realistic interpretation of the place for personalism in Catholic religious education is still needed today.

From the vantage point of hindsight it can be seen that the personal formula which appeared to have so much promise was inappropriate and unsuccessful. No doubt it made helpful contributions to young people’s personal and spiritual development, but as a comprehensive approach to the classroom study of religion it was too narrow in both content and method.

However, it was not the quest for relevance and personalism in itself that was the problem – this is still important. The problem was in the unrealistic expectations for personalism, and inappropriate methods for pursuing personal interactions in the classroom; an inappropriate informality was not the key to personalism in that context. The same problem affected the personalist movement initiated in British state school Religion Studies by Harold Loukes in the late 1960s (21.4.3).⁸ ‘Artificial’ informality did not engage the students; the activity was felt to be of little educational or personal consequence, even though many said that they enjoyed it. The intention of structuring informality into religious education led to practice that actually subverted both the desired personalism and the relevance; the students perceived religious education as unimportant (14.3.1).

Reflection on implications

The problem was essentially about the place of a personal dimension to classroom teaching and learning. We consider that the conceptualisation in Chapters 13 and 14, and in other publications,⁹ offers the best solution. No new pedagogy needs to be invented; rather, what is needed is a wise perspective on historical developments that can affirm best theory and practice.

Some Catholic educators look back on the experimentation in the 1970s and 1980s and judge the quest for personalism as a complete failure. Not so: the intentions were valid in the main, but the efforts were misdirected. Relevance and personalism remain the most important issues for Catholic religious education in the new millennium, more so now than was the case formerly (see Chapter 17). The particular content and pedagogy arrangement employed to achieve this goal was generally inappropriate and naive. It was successful in retreats, and especially in voluntary religious groups, and this remains the case, because there was congruence between the personalist formula and the voluntary retreat contexts. Such congruence was missing in formal classroom religious education.

What was required for a natural and authentic personalism was a different content and pedagogy that were more at home in the classroom and were consistent with expectations and practice in other subjects. What happened pedagogically in other subjects was not static; it changed and evolved. The point being made here is that religious education needed to have substantial congruence with the teaching and learning processes experienced by students in other subjects, otherwise its perceived value as a subject would be fatally marginalised.

More than most other subjects in the curriculum, religious education has been the arena where the quest for relevance and personalism has been explored and tested, with much experimentation, successes and failures over the years. An educational wisdom has emerged from this experience, with valuable implications for general education; for example, the substance of the proposals for the spiritual-moral dimension to public education in Chapters 11–14 was distilled from religious education.

Much has been done within Catholic religious education to make it personal and relevant for pupils. But, as considered below and in the next chapter, problems remain, and continuing efforts are required to maintain and enhance these qualities. Progress has been made as regards challenging teaching and learning processes, including the subtle place of personal freedom. What often remains the principal difficulty is the need for more *relevant content*.

16.2.2 The centrality of the concept ‘faith development’

Because of the prominence and influence of the concept ‘faith development’ in the history of Catholic religious education in Australia, it will be considered in more detail in Chapters 18 and 19. Only a summary statement of its significance will be made here.

Promoting the spiritual development of young people has always been a central aim of Catholic schools. Not surprisingly, the term ‘faith development’ has come to dominate the language of Catholic religious education since the late 1970s, but there remains some ambiguity about its meaning and implications for the classroom.

The significant issue here is the way that faith development came to be associated with the personal processes considered in section 16.2.1 above. It was like baptising the quest for personalism, identifying personal interchanges as instances of faith development. In turn, this sort of naive thinking about the nature and development of religious faith led to a false dichotomy: the apparently more personal activities like retreats, shared prayer, discussions and counselling were labelled as faith development; by contrast, the study of religion was regarded as something less than that (and hence less important), probably because its cognitive emphasis was thought to be less faith-intensive. This thinking became embedded in diocesan guidelines, in the writings of religious education theorists and in school programs, and no doubt it affected the thinking and practice of religion teachers.

Reflection on implications

What Catholic religious educators have often talked about as faith development would be more appropriately described as an emotional or personal component of religious education. Vagueness in popular usage of the term faith development implies a questionable view of the nature of religious faith; it presumes too narrow a dependence on psychological processes (and more specifically, on emotional activity) as the core pathway for the development of pupils' religious faith. Such thinking tends to devalue classroom religious education as if it were somehow less faith-intensive than intimate group processes; and it tends to obscure the complexity in links between religious education and students' spiritual development. Examples of such problematic thinking are still evident in contemporary Catholic religious education.

What is needed in Catholic religious education is a more discriminating use of the concept faith development – in particular, a use that does three things:

1. reflects the important contribution of classroom teaching and learning;
2. does not oversimplify the complexities of spiritual development; and
3. acknowledges the tenuous links between teaching and young people's spiritual-moral development.

16.2.3 The development of diocesan guidelines for Catholic religious education

A 1997 article on Catholic schooling noted that the guidelines produced by various Australian Catholic dioceses had contributed significantly to the support for Catholic school Religious Education.¹⁰ In terms of the personnel, time, funds, trialling, dissemination and inservice programs associated with these documents, their development represented an extraordinary commitment to religious education in this country. Many Catholic dioceses have their own guidelines, while some of the smaller dioceses have adopted or modified the programs used in metropolitan centres.

The ways in which diocesan documents have affected classroom practice in religious education have changed since the 1970s. Originally, they functioned as guides, with extensive school-based curriculum development being the norm; the school program was the focal point. While there has been little systematic research on the effectiveness of diocesan guidelines as a strategy for improving the quality of religious education, there were indications that in those early years they received little attention from teachers, the exception being those responsible for the school programming and resourcing of religious education.¹¹

In some instances, the choice of student resources was more influential in shaping the curriculum than the diocesan documents. For example, in the 1990s, student materials originally developed for Catholic religious education in New Zealand (*Understanding faith*) were used extensively in Australian Catholic schools. An Australian edition was produced and marketed successfully. Where these materials were used, it would be difficult from classroom observation alone to determine which particular diocesan guidelines the teachers were working from. The student materials themselves had a significant influence on lesson-planning and classroom teaching. This raised questions about whether or not diocesan curriculum documents resulted in different and distinctive teaching styles and content selection for Catholic religious education around the country.

However, as the 1990s progressed, and as school curricula generally became more centralised around authoritative documents that spelled out specific outcomes, the principal focus of attention shifted from the school religion program towards the diocesan guidelines. School-based curriculum development in religious education declined in the 1990s, even though the number of qualified religion teachers increased considerably. The more prescriptive and extensive diocesan religion documents included background theology and support material such as units of work, lists of teaching resources and directions for pedagogy. Internal and external evaluations of diocesan guidelines affirmed their role in support of religion teachers.

Since their first publication in the 1960s, generations of diocesan documents reflected changes in thinking about the nature, purposes and methods of religious education. Both the quest for personalism and relevance and the centrality of faith development (16.2.1, 16.2.2) were evident; two aspects only will be considered here: values and faith outcomes; and the ‘relevance’ of content.

Values and faith outcomes

In the 1990s, the outcomes format was adopted into various diocesan guidelines. With measurable products, evidence-based reporting and an emphasis on effectiveness and accountability, the outcomes-based religion curricula affected both teaching and assessment. The new system appeared to work well for knowledge and skill outcomes, but had difficulties when it came to the personal or values areas.¹²

The focus on knowledge and skills was beneficial in drawing attention to immediate and achievable educational goals; to some extent, these were neglected where excessive attention had been given to the aim of faith development. Also, the outcomes orientation helped keep religious education on a par with other key learning areas. But ambiguity remained about the use of values and faith outcomes – in particular, questions about their nature and educational appropriateness, and about whether or not they could be measured and reported in an ethical fashion.¹³

Relevant content

It is ultimately the Catholic bishop in each diocese who approves the diocesan guidelines. The purpose of ‘handing on the religious tradition’ will therefore always be prominent and will affect scope and content. While this emphasis does not in itself make the material less student-centred, it contributes to the overall impression that the documents are primarily concerned with ‘conserving’ the tradition. This is not undesirable per se – giving young people access to their religious heritage. But considered from the perspective of developing curricula that are personally relevant, most diocesan guidelines are too tame. More issue-oriented content is needed.

Reflection on implications

Faith and values outcomes as ‘hopes’

Problems with the use of values and faith outcomes can be addressed by differentiating hopes from measurable outcomes. This solution is congruent with the conclusions in **16.2.2** above – acknowledging the intricacy of links between educational processes and desired spiritual development (see Chapter 13). While it is important to articulate hopes that give a valuable direction to religious education, to try to measure and assess them is ethically inappropriate.

Relevant content

While more attention will be given to what constitutes ‘personal relevance’ in the next chapter, at this point it is sufficient to note that it means content that is perceived to be important for the students’ lives: it has implications for life and is not just theoretical. While theological and scriptural content may well be taught in ways that highlight such implications, one could expect that personal and social issues would have more natural relevance. If this is the case, then it would be desirable to include an appropriate amount of issue-related content in the religion curriculum, giving it a prominent place alongside traditional religious topics.

Given the origins and purposes of Catholic diocesan religious education documents, it is unlikely that their ecclesiastical and theological emphasis will change – even more the case in a time of religious conservatism. While many of the documents include social justice and morality, the bulk of their content would be perceived as traditionally religious because at heart the curricula are tradition-conserving. Such an emphasis leaves little place for personal and social issues.¹⁴ However, even a marginal increase in the proportion of issue-oriented content would be helpful. Such a change could increase the perceived relevance of the religion curriculum without compromising the attention given to traditional religious content. Relevance could also be enhanced through pedagogy that taught religious content in a problem-posing way.

16.2.4 Student resource materials

While diocesan curriculum documents have been prominent in the evolution of Catholic school religious education in Australia, it was the student resources that gave a better picture of developments. Apart from the catechisms of the early 1960s, some primary school programs in the 1970s, and the Year 12 *Come Alive* series in 1970, the Catholic dioceses did not invest significantly in producing student materials; their interest was in guidelines that supported school-based curriculum development.

Hence the writers and publishers who produced student resources had a *de facto* influence on the curriculum. This was evident as early as the 1960s when series of student texts and program booklets developed in the United States were used extensively in Australian Catholic schools; these gradually displaced the official ‘green’ and ‘red’ Australian catechisms used in primary and secondary schools. While there were some texts and series produced in Australia (for example the *Move out* program by Dove Communications and other programs at primary school level) materials from the United States were more prominent (together with some from the British Isles).¹⁵ The publication of the Year 12 program of booklets *Come alive* sponsored by the Australian Catholic bishops in 1970 met with mixed success. While the books became icons of the new experiential approach, they also prompted

controversy because they were perceived by opponents as too non-traditional.¹⁶ This would be the last major set of student resources produced by Australian Catholic authorities for thirty years (with the exception of the Australian edition of the New Zealand texts, *Understanding faith*).

Gradually more Australian texts were developed by individual educators and local publishers, a trend that continued into the 2000s.¹⁷

In 2000, at the initiative of Archbishop Pell in Melbourne, a series of religion texts (*To Know, Worship and Love*) was produced for K–10 students. After the Archbishop moved to Sydney, the texts were revised and introduced in that archdiocese; the new edition was also adopted in Melbourne and in a number of other Catholic dioceses. These texts represented a major development in Australian Catholic religious education. Also prominent during the 1990s and early 2000s were various commercial texts produced to support the new Religion Studies programs that were popular at Years 11–12 level in Catholic schools.¹⁸ More recently, texts have been developed in support of Catholic Studies programs in the senior school.¹⁹

Interesting questions now arise as to the status of authoritative diocesan student texts. Do they become the curriculum? How will they relate to diocesan guidelines? Will they be the exclusive resources to be used in the classroom? In addition, the texts have implications for pedagogy: How can set texts be used creatively? For inexperienced teachers, and for those with an inadequate background in the subject, the texts provided support for the students, giving them basic resources on the syllabus. A key purpose in providing texts was to take Catholic teachings directly into homes.

Reflection on implications

Improvement in the quality of classroom religious education draws on a number of sources, especially the professional development of teachers, normative curriculum documents and student resource materials. The history of Catholic school religious education in Australia showed the prominence of all three.

If the case for more issue-oriented content and teaching is accepted, then the challenge for student materials development is to give this aspect more attention. It is to be expected that authoritative student texts such as *To Know, worship and love* would not highlight this dimension, just as they do not have a strong place in normative curriculum documents; the initiative will then rest with teachers to incorporate more issue-oriented content into the school program and to find suitable resources.

Every student resource makes an implied statement about the nature and purposes of religious education – hence their ongoing development needs to acknowledge and address conflicting views of what is appropriate content for religious education, and what constitutes good pedagogy.²⁰ Further research is needed to inform dialogue about content and method; if a wide consensus is not achievable on this question, then at least there should be a tolerant pluralism. The same question about content and pedagogy is equally important for the next area to be considered: state-based Religion Studies courses.

16.2.5 New state Religion Studies courses and the quest for academic credibility

One of the major problems faced by Catholic school religious education for many years has been its academic credibility, and its poor status in the eyes of students. Catholic schools have long claimed that a subject like religion, which deals with ultimate meaning, beliefs and values, should have a philosophically central place in any school curriculum. However, the very subjects concerned specifically with the personal and spiritual dimensions to life can have their credibility subverted by the ‘psychology of the learning environment’ (14.3.1). A number of factors have influenced the poor level of involvement of many students in religious education, even when they enjoyed it.²¹ Of particular interest here was its academic credibility – or what students called its ‘mark status’.

Earlier, when the approach to Catholic religious education was experiential, informal and community-oriented, some attempts were made to increase its academic rigour at secondary level. This was a difficult task, not only because of student perceptions, but because it went against the grain of teacher thinking at the time; the ‘academic’ and ‘personal’ approaches were felt to be incompatible, and it was the latter that was in favour. By 1972, some Catholic school Year 11–12 religion programs had gained partial accreditation as ‘Other approved studies’ in New South Wales; religious education was included on the graduating students’ final certificate as a school-developed unit, but it did not count towards university entrance scores.

Even though Tasmania had a fully accredited state Religion Studies course in the 1970s, it was not until the 1990s that these programs were introduced in the other states, with the exception of the Northern Territory (see Part V).

Catholic schools embraced the new state courses enthusiastically. Catholic religious educators from Education Offices, schools and the Australian Catholic University were key players in the development of the courses and in the production of student materials. The majority of the candidature of the Religion Studies (or studies of religion) courses came from Catholic schools.

The courses were taken up for a number of reasons:

- Their academic credibility helped religion to become more accepted as a regular, examinable subject in the Catholic school curriculum.
- The subject made a contribution to university matriculation requirements and entrance scores.
- Religion was presumed to be compulsory in the senior classes in Catholic schools; with Religion Studies, there could be some academic recognition for their work.
- The purposes of Religion Studies courses were considered appropriate enough to be accommodated within the purposes of Catholic religious education.
- The Religion Studies syllabuses tended to bypass ongoing debate about content and method in Catholic religious education by providing clear content with examinable outcomes; there is nothing like an examinable course to galvanise teachers’ efforts.
- The educational purposes of Religion Studies seemed to some extent to avoid problems associated with the excessive attention that had been given to long-term religious goals like faith development and to ecclesial constructs like evangelisation and catechesis.

The arrival of Religion Studies courses on the Australian educational scene, and the way in which they were embraced by Catholic schools, have made an invaluable

contribution to Catholic religious education; they became the *de facto* religion curriculum for Years 11–12, along with religious activities like liturgy, prayer and retreats. They enhanced the academic credibility of religious education, and this had repercussions back through the junior secondary school. More importantly, they provided a context within which students could experience the study of religion with academic rigour.

So in effect, Religion Studies added a crucial element to the formula for Catholic religious education: academic study and research, which had been difficult to achieve earlier because of the non-accredited status of diocesan programs.

While currently Catholic school students make up the large majority of the candidature in state Religion Studies courses in Australia, some Catholic educators have doubts about their suitability – they would prefer more overt Catholic content and are not comfortable with so much attention given to world religions. In New South Wales, a diocesan program for Years 11–12 – like a Catholic studies course – is endorsed as an approved program by the state Board of Studies, without university entrance status. Some schools offer this and Studies of Religion as alternatives. It remains to be seen if there will be a significant movement away from Religion Studies programs towards Catholic studies.²²

In schools that have both options it is evident that the selection of Catholic studies is often made by students who wish to do the minimum. This is not necessarily an anti-religious gesture; it may be a way of balancing the competitive pressures in the final year of schooling. But for whatever the reasons, students in these classes have a recognisably different and noticeably poorer attitude to engagement in studying religion. It poses an interesting conundrum: the content in a school-based course may be more relevant than that in a state Religion Studies course; but the students may get less personal benefit from the former because they study it with ‘half a brain’; whereas the latter, with less relevant content, may be more beneficial because they study it with a ‘whole brain’.

Reflection on implications

If Catholic and other religious schools are to implement state-based Religion Studies courses with confidence, there is a need for a good rationale to show how they contribute to the school’s traditional religious purposes. Catholic schools have embraced these programs with a general acceptance of their value both educationally and with respect to their pupils’ spiritual development. But in the long term, particularly when some oppose the adoption of such programs as compromising the school’s Catholicity, a more comprehensive and robust case justifying their adoption is required. As yet, this question has not been given the attention it warrants (cf. Chapters 21–22); at this point it is pertinent to note some of the issues.

First, there is the question of harmonising the purposes of state courses with the school’s aims for denominational religious education – in other words, showing how Religion Studies are congruent with the school’s religious purposes. An analysis is required that acknowledges theological and educational issues, as well as political ones, and commonalities and differences between denominational religious education and Religion Studies courses need to be articulated. For example, the following early statement referring to the Victorian course gave the false impression that the two were incompatible:

A phenomenological approach to the study of religious traditions has been adopted in the (Victorian) *Religion and Society Study Design*. This is intended to encourage open, critical and dispassionate study of religions throughout each unit in the Study Design. The approach taken to Religion should not be confused with religious education or Religious Instruction. These are two quite different methodologies, both requiring a confessional approach to the study of one religion only.²³

The statement oversimplified relationships between the programs. Nevertheless, it highlights problems to be negotiated.

On the positive side, the implementation of Religion Studies has helped resolve the problematic dichotomy between the academic and personal dimensions to Catholic religious education. As explained earlier, academic respectability seems to be an essential element for a healthy personalism in any classroom studies (see Chapters 13–14). However, as far as personalism and relevance are concerned, Religion Studies courses still have problems. In section 16.2.3 above, it was claimed that Catholic diocesan curricula were too tame, with not enough content that is issue-oriented and personally relevant. In general, state Religion Studies courses in Australia are also too tame in their content, but for different reasons; their content is too traditional – in terms of the world religions material in British school Religion Studies in the 1970s. The principles for content selection and methodology for the Australian courses relied too much on the dimensional analysis of religion derived from the work of Ninian Smart, and from typological phenomenology.²⁴ This resulted in content that was mainly descriptive and factual, with little that was issue-oriented and personally relevant.

While it would be a mistake to overload these courses with issues, the extent to which they are present in current courses could well be increased. One state education officer acknowledged that the Australian Religion Studies courses were politically constrained to stay with what he called ‘traditional religious content’; they could not afford to be controversial.

In both Catholic diocesan religion curricula and in state Religion Studies, the content has a ‘political correctness’ about it that is influenced by their respective contexts, inhibiting the inclusion of questions that are likely to be controversial. In the former, the influence is primarily ecclesiastical, in the latter it is both political (to satisfy different religious authorities that the content on their traditions is accurate and adequate) and traditional (in tune with the 1970s world religions movement in British Religion Studies). Both types of course need to be more issue-oriented; but such a change has to be pursued diplomatically, because if the content is too controversial the move will be counterproductive with respect to public opinion. Also, a course overloaded with personal and social issues would be educationally unsound for students. It is a question of finding the right balance.

In an educational environment where spiritual-moral issues are increasingly becoming prominent across the curriculum, it would be ironic if such issues were being better handled elsewhere in the curriculum where there was more freedom to address them educationally. If issues are screened out of Religion Studies and religious education, this could compromise the integrity of religion itself, which has always been controversial; this also implies a narrow epistemological view of religion. In addition, this view tends to ‘domesticate’ religion and it could reinforce

for many young people their feeling that much of religion is irrelevant to their lives anyway.

16.2.6 The spirituality of contemporary youth

The detailed consideration of youth spirituality in Chapters 8 and 9 is pertinent here. At this point, it is sufficient to recall four key aspects:

- It is often secular in tone and not so dependent on traditional religion.
- It is eclectic drawing on a wide range of resources, not the least significant of which is the world of film and television, and the entertainment and consumer industries that support it.
- Seeking identity is a major developmental task; it is difficult to balance the polarity between the core personal need to have *distinctive individuality* and the feeling of a *sense of belonging* to groups.
- Personal freedom is presumed to be an absolute – at least in Western countries; balancing freedom and responsibility is often problematic.

From within their life-world, many young people do not have a traditional view of religion, and this affects the way they will approach its study. They start from the position that religion may well be of interest and even important for them – but not with the same sort of compelling importance that seemed to be the case for past generations. Many youth just do not have the time and mental space for serious attention to religion at this stage of their lives. While at times the search for meaning, identity and spirituality will be prominent and engaging for youth, for much of their time there is little need for it. And they can oscillate between these two states.

Reflection on implications

Religious educators need to develop a good understanding of the spirituality of contemporary youth so that content and pedagogy take into account the ways in which young people forge meaning and purpose, recognising that this is often quite different in approach and emphasis from that of older generations.

Hence, religious education in the church school should not proceed from the standpoint that the pupils *are* religious and *want* to immerse themselves in the study of religion and *acquire* a religious identity. Rather, it should begin from the position that any educated person needs to have a *basic familiarity with their own religious tradition*, as well as being proficient in understanding other religions and contemporary spiritual and moral issues. Understanding the role and psychological functions of religion is also pertinent, while educational endeavours in this direction should not aim at just a psychological reduction of religion.

While it is unrealistic to think that every topic in religious education should be perceived by students as personal and relevant, there is good reason for trying to get a significant amount of the content into this category. Research on religious education in Europe shows why.

In his 1998 study, the Belgian scholar Herman Lombaerts described the situation in Europe: ‘There are ever increasing efforts to have better more relevant and more effective religious education, but increasingly, young people are choosing not to be part of a practising community of faith.’²⁵ Formal religion itself is no longer regarded by many young people as a principal and relevant source for their spirituality and

identity. It does have much to offer in this regard, but this is not acknowledged or appreciated by the majority of the young. The situation of youth in Australia is not all that different. Hence they are not at a spiritual starting point where the study of traditional religious content, in the traditionally accepted way, is going to engage them. Rather, they need to be educated in relation to issues in meaning, identity and spirituality that bring them to the *beginning point* of seeing that religion does have something valuable to contribute, and that it warrants study. Possible engagement in systematic study of theology is further down the track as an option; getting to the spiritual starting point is the task of the compulsory school religion curriculum.

Empirical research on German youth by Nipkow in the 1990s found that if the teaching of religion did not focus in some way on what young people perceived to be the main spiritual and moral issues of the day, then they tended to regard descriptive content as religious paraphernalia, more concerned with institutional maintenance than with people's search for meaning and values.²⁶ Similar findings were returned in an extensive survey of students in Catholic schools in Italy in 1991.²⁷ Teachers and scholars in the United Kingdom, Ireland and other European countries have verbally reported the same interpretation. It is likely that research would yield similar findings in Australia. Nipkow considered that religious education should follow a principle he called 'elementarisation'; that is, it should focus on 'elementary' or fundamental spiritual issues that youth see as relevant to their life and world, so that whatever their formal religious affiliation or lack of it, the study of religion will be valuable for their spiritual life.

16.3 Other perspectives that should have a bearing on the further development of Catholic school religious education

This chapter has identified key principles and issues that emerged in the historical development of religious education in Australian Catholic schools. However, there are other perspectives that have as yet had little impact on theory and practice. They will be signposted briefly as part of the future agenda, while not addressed in any detail.

16.3.1 The development of personal meaning and identity

The last sections of Chapter 21 looked at trends in religious education in the United Kingdom and continental Europe which showed a range of new developments in theory and practice. They were presented as part of a spectrum of approaches that could be used for locating and evaluating Australian Religion Studies courses. They are just as challenging for denominational religious education. For example, they show that increasing attention has been given to the development of personal identity and meaning as a principal operation of religious education. In Australia, phrases like 'helping young people in their search for meaning' have been reasonably common in writing about religious education; but little has been done to expand on what this means in any detail – with even less written about what is involved in personal identity development. Hence, the agenda on meaning and identity taken up in Part II of this volume is pertinent. The final part of Chapter 6 examined British and European research and writings concerned with the role of education or religious education in promoting young people's identity development. The references are listed in note 32 in that chapter.

16.3.2 Addressing questions raised by cultural postmodernity

Until fairly recently, for most people in Western societies, their ultimate meaning was a religious belief system that strongly influenced their thinking and spirituality. This remains the case for some. But for others, the onset of what is called cultural postmodernity has changed the way they interact with religious traditions. There has been a radical shift towards a more hermeneutic consciousness of reality; there is a more widely accepted view that religious conceptions of reality are ‘interpretations’, and that reality is larger than any one religion can adequately grasp. Hence the traditional doctrines of religion do not have the same compelling power over what people believed as formerly. They *themselves* are now judging the appropriateness of beliefs, according to their own lights and experience. This has tended to rupture traditional patterns in the understanding of religion and ways of relating to it; while for others, the change is resisted as they take defensive refuge in the way they have always believed. Divisions between the religious and the non-religious aspects of life tend to break down, creating difficulties as regards the nature and function of spirituality. This new cultural situation creates problems for religious educators who are structurally located in a religious school with institutional sponsorship and loyalties, while they are trying to comprehend and address the problem of educating children to survive and flourish in a postmodern world (see relevant sections in Part II).

16.3.3 The hermeneutic task of religious education

Given a social context of postmodernity, the hermeneutic function of religious education becomes more prominent, as evident in British and European developments (21.4.9). While the educational implications in hermeneutics have been considered, little attention has been given to its significance for Australian religious education.²⁸

16.3.4 Other trends in religious education in the United Kingdom and continental Europe

Other aspects of British and European religious education that have potential implications in Australia include ideas about constructivist theory, cultural and religious plurality and contextuality, and ‘critical’ religious literacy (21.4.8).²⁹

16.3.5 The spiritual-moral dimension to the school curriculum

Church schools have often made use of the ‘permeation’ theory as regards their spiritual-moral influence on pupils. Gospel values are said to ‘pervade’ the school. However, such generalisations in mission statements need to be elaborated considerably to spell out what is actually entailed in school structures, curriculum and social life. The conceptualisation of the spiritual-moral dimension to the school curriculum in Part III may help with this clarification.

16.4 Conclusion

This interpretation of the history of Catholic school religious education through the lens of six themes does not cover every historical detail. But it shows a spectrum of the intentions and practice that have developed over the years. Religion teachers can be located on this spectrum depending on the positions they take on each thematic. Thinking about religious education has changed principally in response to cultural changes in which people, and youth in particular, no longer look to established

religious traditions as central reference points in their construction of meaning. Some significant adjustments in purposes and practice are needed if religious education is to be relevant – as considered further in the following chapters.

Many of the authorities in Catholic education would not be positioned at the leading edge of this thinking; they retain more traditional assumptions about the role of the Church as an institution. Hence there remains a tension in expectations between educators who are trying to address the problems related to cultural modernity and those who do not see the current situation in the same light. What the former see as much needed changes in content and pedagogy to address problems will be regarded by the latter as unnecessary, because they do not diagnose the social situation in the same way, or at least not to the same extent. In the extreme, some of the former will be focusing on young people's 'quest for meaning', while some of the latter will be more concerned with a 'quest for orthodoxy'. In this instance they are not talking the same language of religious education. Nevertheless, debate and dialogue are needed between people at different points on the spectrum of intentions to see what can be done to make religious education within Catholic schools relevant to the spiritual-moral development of pupils.

Part of the difficulty is that the great success of Catholic schools in the well-rounded education they provide and in their popularity with students, parents and teachers can be misread as an indication that religious education must also be in 'good shape'. It is not that Catholic religious education is in 'bad shape', but there is always room for ongoing refinement to make it more personally relevant for its pupils. There is some dissonance between prevailing understandings of religious education and a diagnosis of the cultural and psychological situation of many youth. This dissonance could be reduced, and the personal relevance of religious education enhanced by even a small shift towards a more issues-oriented approach. This is not a new trend that needs to be pushed to the limit; there already are content and pedagogy that satisfy the criteria. But what is needed is a greater proportion than there is at present.

It may seem ironic that we regard 'personalism' and 'relevance' as key issues for Catholic religious education today; they were sought after vigorously in the 1970s and 1980s, but the structural and pedagogical formula then was too informal and artificially personal. Today the question is being asked again. But this time, with a wiser perspective on historical developments, it should be possible to make a more substantial and lasting improvement.

While the chapter has argued the case for change, it is acknowledged that what is meant by 'relevance' 'personalism' and 'issue-oriented' content and pedagogy need further clarification; these questions will be taken up in the next chapter.

Notes

-
1. The material on which this chapter was based was published earlier as GM Rossiter 1999, *Historical perspective on the development of Catholic religious education in Australia: Some implications for the future*.
 2. J Pelikan 1984, *The vindication of tradition*, p. 65.
 3. The following give accounts of the historical development of approaches to religious education in Catholic schools: Buchanan 2003, *Survey of current*

-
- writing on trends in religious education; ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1985, *Teaching religion in the secondary school: Theory and practice*; ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1988 *Missionaries to a teenage culture: Religious education in a time of rapid change*; MF Flynn 1979, *Catholic schools and the communication of faith*; BV Hill 2004, *Exploring religion in school: A national priority*; T Lovat 1989, *What is this thing called religious education?* (2nd edn); J McGrath 2005, Expanded frameworks for religious education and learning; GM Rossiter 1981, *Religious education in Australian schools*, Chapter 5; RM Rummery 1975, *Catechesis and religious education in a pluralist society*; M Ryan 1997, *Foundations of religious education in Catholic schools: An Australian perspective*; 2001, *My way to God: The birth and early demise of the Kerygmatic renewal in Australian religious education*; 2006, *Religious education in Catholic schools: An introduction for Australian students*.
- 4 Groome's Shared Praxis: M Bezzina et al. 1997, Shared Christian praxis as a basis for religious education curriculum: The Parramatta experience; GM Rossiter 1997, The contribution of Thomas Groome's Shared Christian Praxis to Catholic school religious education: Reflections by practitioners; M Ryan 1997, Shared Christian praxis: A response to the Parramatta experience.
- 5 G Barry 1997, Religious education: A key learning area in Catholic schools; P Goldberg 2005, Teaching world religions: Developing critical religious literacy.
- 6 See the references in note 12.
- 7 See note 3.
- 8 H Loukes 1961, *Teenage religion*; H Loukes 1965, *New ground in Christian education*; H Loukes 1973, *Teenage morality*.
- 9 The place of personalism in the classroom teaching/learning process is considered in the following titles: ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1985, *Teaching religion in the secondary school: Theory and practice*; ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1988, *Missionaries to a teenage culture: Religious education in a time of rapid change*; GM Rossiter 1986, The place of faith in classroom religious education; GM Rossiter 1987, The place of knowledge and faith in religious education since the Second Vatican Council; GM Rossiter 1988, A cognitive basis for affective learning in classroom religious education; GM Rossiter 1994, Religious education and the spiritual development of young people: A reply to Gideon Goosen; GM Rossiter 1998, The centrality of the concept faith development in Catholic school religious education.
- 10 R Keane & D Riley 1997, *Quality Catholic schools: Challenges for leadership as Catholic education approaches the third millennium*.
- 11 PM Malone 1990, Teacher approaches to the planning of religious education (unpublished PhD thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney). This study, though limited to a small sample, suggested that guidelines did not have a significant impact on the planning and teaching of religion in the school and it was usually only the religion coordinator who read them.

-
- 12 The following publications considered the impact of the outcomes movement on Catholic school religious education: G Barry 1996, *Meditating on the decades: Guidelines for religious education*; G Barry 1997, *Religious education: A key learning area in Catholic schools*; L Crotty et al. 1995, *Reflections on an emerging religious education curriculum*; L Crotty & S O'Grady 1999, *Can outcomes transform the religious education curriculum?*; M Ryan 1997, *Foundations of religious education in Catholic schools: An Australian perspective*; M Ryan 1998, *An evaluation of outcomes based approaches in religious education curriculum guidelines*.
- 13 This question is taken up in Chapter 18 in the discussion of faith development.
- 14 Of the various Catholic curricula in the Australasian region, it is the New Zealand Catholic curriculum (*Understanding faith*) that gives most attention to issues.
- 15 For example, the program of booklets *Hi time*, and series of texts from US publishers such as Sadlier, Bengizer, Paulist Press, Winston, WC Brown, Silver Burdett and St Mary's Press; also used were some Irish and British programs from the publishers Veritas and Chapman. See GM Rossiter 1981, *Religious Education in Catholic schools*, in *Religious education in Australian schools*.
- 16 See Rossiter 1981.
- 17 The following are a selection from a wide range of Australian student texts on religion: ML Crawford 1991, *A history of Christianity: From St Paul to the Middle Ages*; R Crotty 1993, *The Jew called Jesus*; B Dwyer & G English 1988, *Catholics in Australia: Our story*; M Ryan 1998, *The Catholic Church in Australia*; Also a number of series of student texts by Ryan published by Social Science Press. See also K Engebretson et al. 2003, *To know, worship and love* (a series of texts from Primary to Year 10, for particular use in the Archdioceses of Sydney and Melbourne, 2nd edn).
- 18 M Beck et al. 1997, *Exploring religion*; M Crotty et al. 2003, *Finding a way: The religious worlds of today* (2nd edn); K Engebretson & R Elliott 2001, *Chaos or clarity: Encountering ethics* (3rd edn); T Lovat & J McGrath 1999, *New studies in religion*; T Lovat et al. 2006, *Studies of religion* (3rd edn); P Mudge et al. 1993, *Living religion: Studies of religion for senior students*; P Rule & K Engebretson 1990, *My story, our stories: Religion and identity in Australia*; M Ryan & P Goldberg 2001, *Recognising religion: A study of religion for senior secondary students*.
- 19 K Engebretson 2004, *Catholic ethical thinking for senior secondary students*; PJ Elliott et al. 2006, *Catholic studies for senior secondary students* (*To Know, Worship and Love* series).
- 20 The 2000 second issue of the *Journal of Religious Education* devoted special attention to the production and role of student text books in religious education. For example: M & R Crotty 2000, *Assessing the role of the RE textbook*; B Dwyer 2000, *Wanted: Textbooks with 'hilaritas'*; K Engebretson 2000, *The Melbourne Archdiocesan textbook project: An innovation in Australian religious education*; G English 2000, *Looking back on writing an RE text*; T Lovat 2000, *The support text and the public syllabus: A case for*

-
- integrity; GM Rossiter 2000, The qualities of an excellent student text in religious education; M Ryan 2000, Religious educator as curriculum resource maker. See also G English 2005, Highways, byways and dead ends: School textbooks in Australian Catholic religious education.
- 21 ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1991, Teaching wisdom: Religious education and the spiritual and moral development of young people. In B McManus (ed.) *Education and the care of youth into the 21st century: Proceedings*; ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1996, School education and the spiritual development of adolescents: An Australian perspective.
- 22 See, for example, the text for Years 11–12 Catholic Studies produced by the Archdioceses of Melbourne and Sydney: PJ Elliott et al. 2006, *Catholic studies for senior secondary students (To Kjoy, Worship and Love series)*; K Engebretson 2004, *Catholic ethical thinking for senior secondary students*.
- 23 Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board 1990, *Religion and society: Course development support material*, p. 1.
- 24 See Chapter 21. N Smart 1968, *Secular education and the logic of religion*; BS Moore & N Habel 1981, *When religion goes to school: Typology of religion for the classroom*; BS Moore 1991, *Religion education: Issues and methods in curriculum design* (Texts in Humanities).
- 25 H Lombaerts 1998, *The management and leadership of Christian schools: A Lasallian systemic viewpoint*; H Lombaerts & D Pollefeyt 2004, *Hermeneutics and religious education*; R Roebben 1997, Shaping a playground for transcendence: Postmodern youth ministry as a radical challenge.
- 26 KE Nipkow 1991, *Pre-conditions for ecumenical and interreligious learning: Observations and reflections from a German perspective*, p. 3.
- 27 G Malizia & Z Trenti 1991, *Una disciplina in cammino: Rapporto sull'Insegnamento della religione cattolica nell'Italia degli anni 1990* (An evolving enterprise: Report on the teaching of religion in Catholic schools in Italy in 1990).
- 28 On hermeneutics and education see S Gallagher 1992, *Hermeneutics and Education*, p. 21. On the implications for hermeneutics in Australian Catholic religious education see G English 1998, Participants in an unfinished church: Intercultural communication as a basis for religious education (unpublished EdD thesis, University of Sydney).
- 29 For notes on these trends see the final sections of Chapter 21. On critical religious literacy see also P Goldburg 2005, Teaching world religions: Developing critical religious literacy.