



Dialogue Australasia Network

Fostering and promoting excellence in the teaching of **Values, Philosophy & Religious Studies**
Bringing together educators who have a shared sense of the importance of DAN's purpose

FROM THE EO

Thank you to everyone who completed and returned the **DAN Survey**. Your feedback is directly influencing the future priorities of the network that will in turn benefit you. It is not too late to contribute your ideas.

Many of you generously offered to share units of work. Amongst other resources cited in this newsletter, I am delighted to feature the excellent Yr 13 Christian Education Programme: *The 10 Commandments* from St Kentigern College, Auckland

NZ. Further units of work will be available when the new DAN website is launched.

In his **recent address** to The Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, Pope Benedict emphasised the need for educators to be "*well formed in their own beliefs & well informed about those of others....*" Beyond our own knowing is the ability to stimulate and encourage independent critical thinking by our students. No small ask, particularly for the many non-specialist teachers who are still called upon to take RAVE classes in most schools throughout Australasia.

Help is out there! One highly recommended post-graduate study option is profiled on Page 4 - the **Graduate Certificate in Religious and Values Education** offered by The School of Theology at Charles Sturt University by distance learning. The course is designed to provide teachers with a grounding in biblical, philosophical, ethical, and multi-faith disciplines within religious studies. Current Course Director, Sarah Bachelard, has prepared extracts of two units exclusively for DAN to illustrate the scholarly and pedagogically rigorous approach taken in this course.

Those schools who have yet to renew their DAN Membership for 2008 (yes, there are still some of you out there!) will be unable to access the links to resources in this newsletter and on the new DAN website (which is taking shape). *New passwords were issued to financial members with effect 1 May 2008.* If you have forgotten your password, or are unsure if your school has renewed its membership, please **email** me.

May a refreshing break reward you all...

Belinda Hill, EO



FOR
YOUR DIARY

15-17 April **2009 DAN CONFERENCE** Canberra
- THE ABRAHAMICS - More details to come...



Much debate was stimulated over the recent SBS Insight Programme *In Good Faith*. If you missed it, you can read the **transcript** or **watch** the show in three parts.

The basic premise for the programme centred around the increasing popularity of independent, faith-based schools. Critics argue that some discourage critical thinking, and can damage social cohesion by fostering insularity.

Insight posed the question “*what is a faith-based education and what happens if religion collides with the curriculum?*” A Christian, Jewish and Islamic school were featured to see what they were teaching and how they were teaching it.

Continuing the discussion, Insight’s online forum **Have Your Say** asked, ‘*Do religious schools unite or divide the community?*’ Some 300+ responses were logged. But as UK based philosopher Steven Law noted - “the smoke generated by the battle over whether religious schools are a good idea has obscured a more fundamental question: a question about *the kind of religious education schools offer.*”

Read more of what Steven Law has to say on Page 3.

Whatever the merits of SBS’s programme, it is always a good exercise to make time to reflect on *what* are we teaching and *how* are we teaching it...

Tony Blair
Faith Foundation

Tony Blair launched his Faith Foundation on May 30 with a call for the

creation of a new coalition to harness the moral leadership of people of faith to do good and to show the relevance of faith to the challenges of the modern world.

Blair opined in his launch speech that:

Faith will be of the same significance to the 21st Century as political ideology was to the 20th Century. In an era of globalisation, there is nothing more important than getting people of different faiths and cultures to understand each other better and live in peace and mutual respect...



In the first three years of the Foundation, priority will be given to encouraging inter-faith initiatives to tackle global poverty and to improve through education the understanding of the great religions.

Read Tony Blair’s Launch Speech
Learn more about Faith Foundation Projects
www.tonyblairfaithfoundation.org

ABC Religion & Ethics

Click on the heading to read a transcript of recent **ABC Religion & Ethics Programmes**.

In Our Name - Attitudes towards Torture, *Compass*, 22/6/08

A hard-headed and provocative dissection of the moral ambiguities underlying contemporary attitudes to torture featuring Australian writer and philosopher Raimond Gaita.

Radical Islam in Indonesia, *The Religion Report* - 18/6/08

Radical Islam in Indonesia is on the march, and the religious pluralism enshrined in the doctrine of Pancasila is coming under direct attack...The moderate Wahid Institute says the country is on the brink of becoming an Islamic state.

Talking to Terrorists, *The Spirit of Things* -15/6/08

Aaron Klein, an Orthodox Jew and intrepid journalist speaks to young men from the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad to find out what motivates a suicide bomber.

World Youth Day - Tolerance, ABC Unleashed

Criticisms about Catholic World Youth Day highlight the importance of celebrating faith in public life, writes Bishop Anthony Fisher.

To receive a weekly listing of upcoming ABC Religious Program News for ABC TV and Radio, visit abc.net.au/religion/maillinglist add your details, and click on 'subscribe'.

RE - Some recommendations from Stephen Law



Stephen Law - Senior Lecturer at Heythrop College, University of London, and author of *The Philosophy Gym*, *The Philosophy Files*, *The War for the Children Minds* - writes an interesting **Blog**.

In late 2007, Stephen questioned whether or not there is a good case for ensuring that *every* school, state-funded or not, should do the following:

1. have a syllabus that includes periods in which open, philosophical discussion of important moral, cultural, political and religious question takes place. These sessions should be run by educators with some training in running a philosophical discussion. Safeguards should be put in place to ensure that pupils are not subtly (or not-so-subtly) psychologically pressured into not asking certain sorts of questions or making certain sorts of point (e.g. about religion).
2. present their pupils with a broad range of different political, moral and religious beliefs and arguments. It's important alternative points of view are not caricatured or demolished as mere straw men. One way to avoid this is to allow pupils to *hear these alternative points of view from those that hold them*. Students should get at least some chance to actively engage in discussion with those from other faiths.* And also, I should stress, with *those of no faith*. While many religious schools have few qualms about exposing their pupils to those from other faiths, they often get very nervous indeed about handing them over to an atheist for half an hour...
3. Where religious education is given, include at least some basic philosophy of religion. This should include some discussion of the classic arguments both for and *against* the existence of God. Any child that leaves school having received a 'religious education' in which all objections to their faith have been airbrushed out has, in truth, been indoctrinated, not educated.

* ABC Religion reported some years ago how many university educated Australians had never met or formed a significant friendship with someone of a different faith. The imperative to redress this situation was accentuated during a scene with students from the recent **SBS Insight Programme**:

Students are being interviewed following a Building Bridges Inter-Faith day in Victoria:

GIRL: Before you came here and found out what Islam really is about, what did you guys think about, you know, Muslims?

GIRL 2: Like, you know. The class, that they weren't going to blow us up.

GIRL...We were actually kidding about like before you guys came, like you guys were saying, "Oh my god, they're going to blow us up." We were like, oh, let's pretend we're going to blow them up. Just as a joke. Like yeah, but it's not really.

JB: Caitlin.. you go to a Christian school in Victoria. What have you learnt at interfaith days?

CF: ...it was really good just to get to know some of the girls there. They're just really normal people.

JB: And you didn't think they were before?

CF: No, actually I did. I was one in the class telling them that they weren't going to blow us up.

JB: Gosh, so are you serious? I mean, are you being serious about that, that there was that feeling amongst some of your other...

CF: I'm serious. Some of the boys are like, "Are they going to blow us up? Are they going to jihad us?"

The Building Bridges Interfaith Program is one programme that has been embraced by the Victorian education system in an effort to break down social barriers. For information about other projects see: www.jcma.org.au/otherprojects.html

Graduate Certificate in Religious and Values Education

The School of Theology at Charles Sturt University offers a **Graduate Certificate in Religious and Values Education** by distance education.

CSU's Graduate Certificate is designed to provide teachers of religious and values education with a grounding in biblical, philosophical, ethical, and multi-faith disciplines within religious studies.

This postgraduate course arises from recent theoretical and practical movements in Australia and the United Kingdom to develop a broad-based religious and values curriculum. It is:

- **practical** (4 units based on the 5 strand approach in manageable timescale)
- **flexible** (can be done part-time or full-time by distance education), and
- **relevant** for the classroom (combines both theory and pedagogical emphasis)

Upon completion of the course, graduates will be able to:

- provide knowledge of basic scholarship in biblical studies, philosophy, ethics, and world religions.
- develop skills appropriate to the teaching of religion and philosophy.
- foster a critical appreciation of the nature and purpose of religious values and philosophical education in the school curriculum.
- provide materials for the development of subjects that incorporate academic rigour, philosophical reasoning, and opportunities for spiritual development.
- examine assessment issues particular to the teaching of religion and philosophy.

[Click here for Enrolment details](#)

The Graduate Certificate consists of four semester-length subjects:

Teaching the Bible
Teaching Philosophy of Religion
Teaching Religious Ethics
Teaching World Religions

TEACHING THE BIBLE

Extract from THL471 Study Guide

Written and compiled by

Felicity McCutcheon

(Current Head of Philosophy & Religious Studies at Melbourne Grammar School)

Scope:

- An overview of biblical literature with detailed study of selected chapters from the Hebrew and Christian scriptures
- Identification of issues that arise when teaching the Bible to school students
- An examination of strategies to help overcome difficulties in teaching the Bible today
- Suggestions for developing connections with philosophy, ethics and world religions as well as finding opportunities for reflective stillness and silence

[Click here for Sample Topic](#)
Prepared exclusively for DAN

Objectives of Sample Topic:

- To articulate the difficulties we face as teachers of the Bible (how to make meaningful the concept of Revelation, to deal with contradictions and repetitions in the text, address its factual accuracy and relevance to students).
- To examine ways of overcoming the 'credibility gap'.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Extract from THL472 Study Guide

Written and compiled by **Jeremy Hall** (New Head of Religious Education, Newington College, NSW from Term 3 2008)

Objectives of Sample Topic from *Introduction: Ways of Seeing*

- To explore the way in which the question of God is a question of 'world view' - the ways in which we 'see' and interpret our experience.
- To examine some of the competing world-views in modern society.
- To explore the place of philosophy as part of Religious Education.

[Click here for Sample Topic](#)
Prepared exclusively for DAN by Course Director, Sarah Bachelard



SAINT KENTIGERN
COLLEGE

FEATURE RESOURCE: THE 10 COMMANDMENTS YR 13 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

An Independent, Presbyterian school located in Auckland, New Zealand offering a premium education to girls and boys in Years 7-13.

Yr 13 Christian Education: The 10 Commandments

We are a Presbyterian school. Every student attends chapel every week. We talk about God but we let you make up your own mind. Our classes and our conduct are based on a strong culture of values that we talk about in every context.

Warren Peat
Executive Head
St Kentigern College

The Yr 13 Christian Education Programme *The 10 Commandments* was developed from an initial concept by Rev Hamish Galloway, St Andrew's College, Christchurch.

Members of the St Kentigern Christian Education Team including Susan Mumford and Mike Meyer have written the current course which is a *work in progress*.

The SKC CE Team has generously made these lessons available to DAN members for classroom use only. They are not to be reproduced for any other purpose.

Overall Aim: The task of the Christian Education department is to fulfil the College's mission statement of providing students with a Christian focus on life, based on the tradition and theology of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, in order to "inspire students to strive for excellence in all areas of life, for the glory of God and service to others".

Preamble: As an intrinsic part of the special character of Saint Kentigern College, Christian Education is compulsory for all Year 7-11 & 13 students.

A new course in 2006, the Christian Education Department is constantly evolving the Year 13 programme to ensure that it is both interesting and relevant to our students at this stage of their individual faith journeys, whatever they each perceive that to be.

Specific aims:

- To further build upon and enhance students' awareness and understanding of the Judeo/Christian view of life and living,
- To equip students to interface with the world outside the constraints and special nature of the Saint Kentigern College community,
- To have the opportunity to dialogue with students at the most 'mature' point in their college life, and thus have greater potential impact.

Specific Learning Objectives: By the end of this course, students will:

- Have explored questions of morality and moral decision-making within the context of the 10 Commandments being 'life-enhancers', rather than a set of antiquated 'rules'.
- Have reflected on the meaning of morality and the existence of God.
- Have explored the role of stillness and reflection in their lives.
- Understand and have reflected upon the concepts of relationship, honesty and truth from both a secular and Christian perspective.
- Understand relative morality and reflect upon the sanctity of human life.
- Have explored the concept of 'finding meaning in life' or 'being contented'.

See individual lesson notes for specific learning outcomes.

Course structure: Students will have 2x 50-minute lessons per 10-day cycle (one per week) for one semester (approximately 12 to 14 lessons). Classes will be approximately 10 to 15 students.

Methods of Assessment: This is a non-assessed, non-reported course in what is generally a discussion based theological and philosophical exploration of "human" issues. Attendance and participation in the course will meet the Christian Education requirements for the Year 13 Graduation certificate.

Resources: Lessons are researched and written by Christian Education Department staff, using encyclopaedia, Internet resources, Bibles, clips from contemporary movies, current affairs programmes, magazines, newspapers, books outside sources (organisations, people) and other material. New and appropriate resources are incorporated into the teaching programme as and when they become available (refer to Teaching Notes for specific details).



SAINT KENTIGERN
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YR 13 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

TIPS ON HOW TO ACCESS

- Click on the lesson heading
- Enter your DAN User Name
- Enter your Password

*Please note, Passwords were reset on 1 May and new details advised to 2008 DAN Financial Members. If you have forgotten your new password, or are unsure if your school has renewed their membership, please **email the EO.***

ORDER A CD

Each of the lessons have accompanying resources which are not listed here (PowerPoints & Commentaries, Details of Movie Clips, Worksheets etc).

To request a CD of the whole *10 Commandments* Programme (with lessons and resources), please **email the EO** with your postal address details. An invoice for \$49.50 including postage will be sent with the CD. Proceeds from the sale of CDs will be divided between DAN & SKC.

All lessons make extensive use of clips from contemporary movies, some of which are listed here by way of example.

Introductory Lessons (3)

Movie Clips: *Demolition Man, Contact, The Empire Strikes Back, Face Off, Jesus of Montreal, Bruce Almighty, Signs, The Truman Show, Phone Booth, The Matrix*

Commandment #1

Movie Clips: *Lord of the Rings - Return of the King, Hotel Rwanda, Schindler's List, Star Wars III - The Revenge of the Sith*

Commandment #2

Movie Clips: *The Ten Commandments, The Prince of Egypt, Bruce Almighty, Dogma*

Commandment #3

Movie Clips: *Monty Python's The Life Of Brian, The Passion of the Christ, Bowling for Columbine, Shawshank Redemption*

Commandment #4

Movie Clips: *Groundhog Day, The Matrix, Schindler's List, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Chariots of Fire, The Lord of the Rings - The Return of the King*

Commandment #5

Movie Clips: *Finding Nemo, Dead Poet's Society, Episode from Desperate Housewives*

Commandment #6

Movie Clips: *Dead Man Walking, Minority Report*

Commandment #7

Movie Clips: *City Slickers, Indecent Proposal*

Commandment #8

Movie Clips: *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves, A Simple Plan*

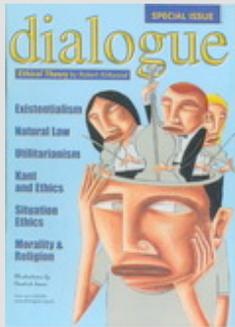
Commandment #9

Movie Clips: *To Kill a Mocking Bird, A Few Good Men, Episode from The Simpsons*

Commandment #10

Movie Clip: *The Castle*

End of Course Lesson



Special Dialogue UK Issue:
ETHICAL THEORY

by Robert Kirkwood
(University of Edinburgh)
Illustrations by Hendrik Jonas

Topics:

- Existentialism**
- Natural Law**
- Utilitarianism**
- Kant and Ethics**
- Situation Ethics**
- Morality and Religion**

This Special Issue of Dialogue - for older students - provides a firm grounding in Ethical Theory in a style that is humorous and accessible.

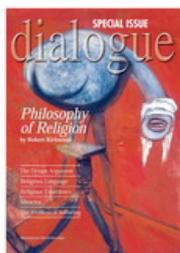
64 pages

Over 50 original cartoons
Structured questions for mixed-ability teaching

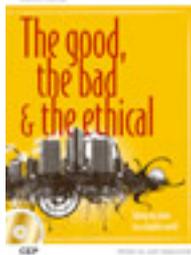
Download a Sample Page

Single copy of special issue is available at price of AUS\$30.00.

Order Form



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155 articles in PDF format from Issues 1-20
AUS\$ 45.00 for 12 mths



The good, the bad & the ethical
Taking my place in a complex world
For years 9-11

Written by Josh Apiezonek
Christian Education Publications

This new resource encourages students to think about the type of person they hope to become while giving them tools for ethical and moral decision making.



CONTENTS

Part One: Ethical Systems

- Introducing Ethics
- Chapter 1 Individualism
- Chapter 2 Rules vs Results
- Chapter 3 Values

Part Two: A brief introduction to Biblical Ethics

- Chapter 4 Foundations
- Chapter 5 The Fall /What went wrong?
- Chapter 6 Redemption
- Chapter 7 The Mutual Love Ethic

Part Three: Ethics in the Real World

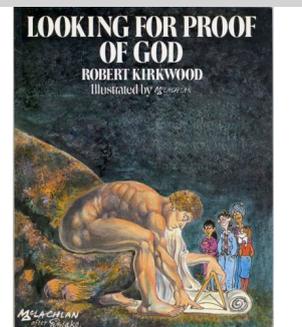
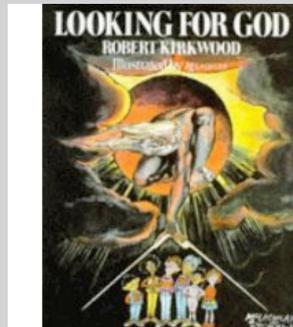
- Chapter 8 War
- Chapter 9 Environmental Ethics
- Chapter 10 Marriage and Sex
- Chapter 11 Human Rights
- Chapter 12 Compassion
- Chapter 13 Altruism
- Chapter 14 Sanctity of Life
- Chapter 15 What do you think? Personal Reflections

Teachers Manual (\$19.95) contains clear lesson aims and outcomes, multiple extension activities, film and pop culture illustrations and a CD-Rom of the whole manual in Pdf.

Download a Sample Lesson: Introducing Ethics

Student Handbook (\$6.95) a full-colour, chapter-by-chapter look at various ethical systems of thought. Contains a wealth of quotes, questions, case studies, and challenging scenarios.

Download a Sample Lesson: Introducing Ethics



Other excellent titles by Education Writer Robert Kirkwood & international illustrator Edward McLachlan include

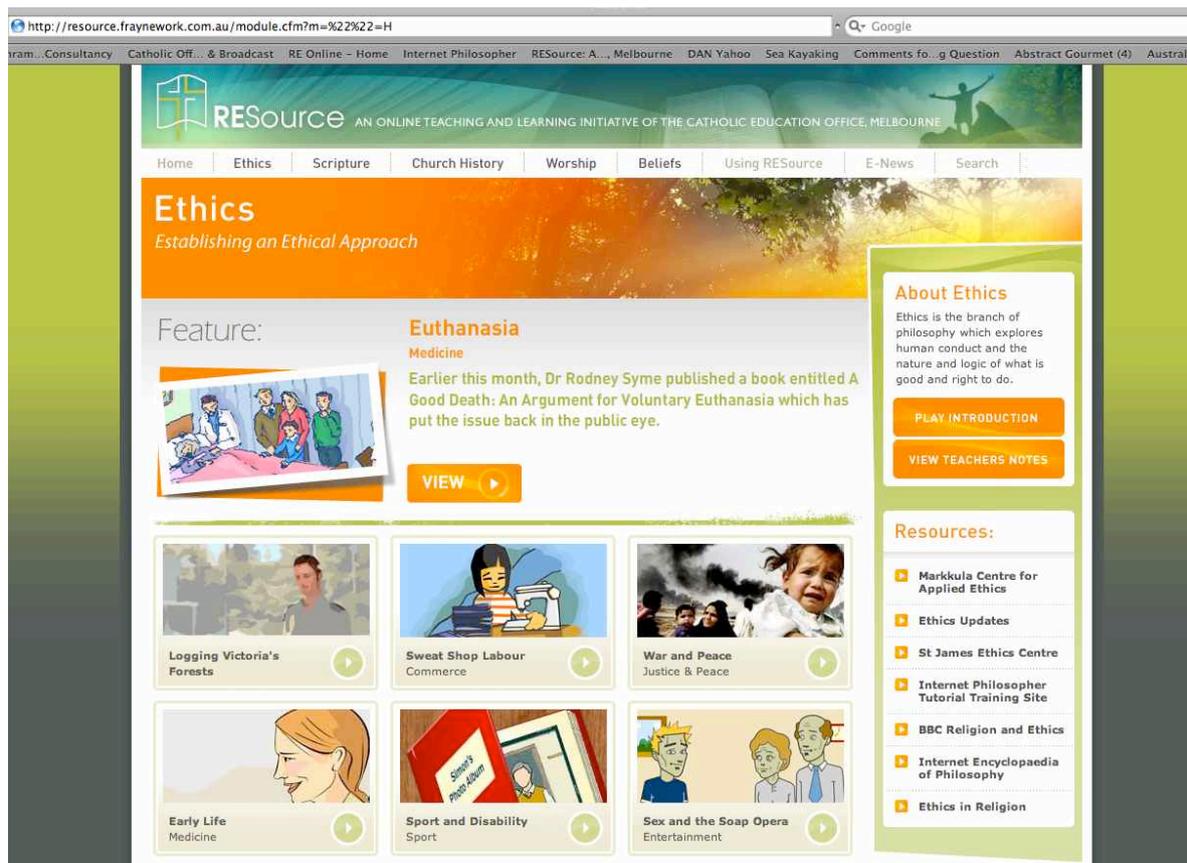
Looking for God, Looking for Proof of God & Looking for Happiness.

Each book introduces students to key ideas in the Philosophy of Religion in a simple and direct way using language and pictures which are clear and accessible.

Material is appropriate for pupils of varying ages and abilities.

RESource: www.resource.melb.catholic.edu.au

An Online Teaching & Learning Initiative of the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne



RESource is a response to the challenge and opportunity offered by the Internet for learning both in and beyond the classroom in the context of an Australian educational environment.

Modules offered:

Ethics Scripture Worship (including Sacraments) Church History

The **Ethics** module is the most developed part of RESource. It offers a large range of Internet resources to guide teachers through the exploration of various contemporary ethical issues including:

- **Logging Victoria's Forests**
- **Sweat Shop Labour**
- **War & Peace**
- **Euthanasia & Early Life - Medicine**
- **Sport & Disability**
- **Sex & the Soap Opera - Entertainment**
- **Multiculturalism -Identity**
- **Refugees and the Local Community**
- **Capital Punishment - Law**
- **Censorship - Education**
- **Distribution of Wealth - Economics**
- **Uranium - Environment**
- **Honesty vs Self-Interest at Work**
- **Debating the Da Vinci Code**

Each ethical issue features a scenario or story which provides a life setting for a particular question. Most of these stories are true stories. The scenario is followed by five steps through which teachers may, either work systematically to gain an overall grasp of the topic, or use selectively according to need. As with any resource, teachers are invited to tailor the material according to the interests and abilities of their students.

The 5 Steps followed in each topic: Scenario, Broadening Perspectives, Exploring Sacred Texts, Understanding the Tradition, Respecting Other World Views, Examining Personal Experience +Links to Related Material

2008 Calendar of Events

The following Events, Seminars & Conferences are listed to promote awareness of the range of Professional Development opportunities available to teachers in Australasia in the areas of Religious, Philosophy & Values Education.

Please Note: DAN is not able to guarantee the quality of all events listed or that they further the purpose and vision of DAN.

Sunday 22nd-Friday 27 June, Shoalwater WA

Residential Retreat: Non-violence in the Mainstream: The Daily Practice of Peace with Brendan McKeague, from Pace e Bene St John of God Retreat Centre, Shoalwater, WA
P. 042-944-8090 E: mckeague@iprimus.com.au

Tuesday 24- Friday 27 June, Sydney NSW

International Moral Philosophy Conference - *Truth and Faith in Ethics* presented by the University of Notre Dame, Sydney
www.nd.edu.au/sydney/philosophyconference/index.shtml

Thursday 26 June, Sydney NSW

Public Debate - 'Is God Necessary for Morality?' with John Haldane and Raimond Gaita, Chaired by Phillip Adams & broadcast by Radio National's Late Night Live 21
7.30-9.00pm, Seymour Centre, Chippendale
www.nd.edu.au/sydney/philosophyconference/index.shtml

Sunday 6- Friday 11 July, Auckland NZ

2008 International Congress for the Study of Bible, Religion and Theology presented by the Society for Biblical Literature & AASR
E. k.mcphillips@uws.edu.au
For more info: www.aasr.org.au/conferences.htm

Thursday 31 July, St John's Grammar School, Belair SA

Jim Wallis & Tim Costello present a forum for Educators
How can we promote values that will enable the next generation to transform the world?
P. 08 8238 4603 E: tenille.chambers@worldvision.com.au

Fri 22- Sun 24 August, St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, Karrinyup WA

Australian Anglican Schools Network Conference 2008
For more info: www.aasn.edu.au/zone_files/Conference_2008/aasn_2008_conference_flyer.pdf

Thur 11- Fri 12 September, Nunyarra, Adeldaide Hills SA

Primary Religious Education Coordinators Association (Catholic Education, Sth Australia) Conference: "Earth Our Home, Experiencing, Enlivening, Enabling" with Megan McKenna
For more info: mary.kelson@ceo.adl.catholic.edu

28 September – 1 Oct, Melbourne Grammar School, Melbourne VIC

AARE National Conference 2008 -
Wind, Fire & Water: Finding God in the 21st Century
For more info: www.aare.org.au/docs/flyer_conference2008.pdf

28 September – 1 Oct, Melbourne Grammar School, Melbourne VIC

AARE National Conference 2008 -
Wind, Fire & Water: Finding God in the 21st Century
For more info

1 – 3 October, Melbourne Cricket Ground VIC

Australian Conference on Lutheran Education 3 - "Weaving Threads Togethercreating a tapestry of Lutheran schooling"
For more info: www.lutheran.edu.au and click on the ACLE 3 link

3-4 October, Strathfield NSW

Catholic Institute of Sydney, Biennial Conference in Philosophy, Religion & Culture
For more info: www.cis.catholic.edu.au/biennial_conference.htm

Faith & Reason Conferences with Peter Vardy & Julie Arliss

E. faithandreason@wombateducation.com
For more info: www.wombateducation.net/faithandreason/

July 25	MAROOCHYDORE Emmanuel Lutheran College 07 5477 3444 - Students
July 23	CAIRNS Catholic Education Office 07 4050 9700 - Teachers
July 29	MELBOURNE Ivanhoe Grammar School Book through Wombat Education - Students
July 30	MELBOURNE De La Salle College 03 9509 3011 - Teachers
July 31	HOBART Sacred Heart College 03 6279 4090 - Teachers
August 1	HOBART St. Mary's College 03 6234 3381 - Students
August 4	NEWCASTLE St. Francis Xavier's College 02 4961 5536 - Teachers
August 5	NEWCASTLE St. Francis Xavier College - Students
August 6	TWEED HEADS St. Joseph's College Book through Wombat Education - Teachers
August 7	BRISBANE Padua College 07 3857 2022 - Teachers
August 8	BRISBANE Marist College, Ashgrove 07 3858 4555 - Students
August 11	CANBERRA St. Edmund's College 02 6295 3598 - Teachers
August 12	CANBERRA Daramalan College Book through Wombat Education - Students
August 13	BENDIGO Catholic College 03 5443 7722 - Students
August 14	SYDNEY Marist College, Kogarah 02 9587 3211 - Students
August 15	SYDNEY Marist College - Teachers
August 28	AUCKLAND St. Kentigern's College 09 576 9010 - Students
August 29	AUCKLAND Diocesan School for Girls 09 520 0221 - Teachers
September 2	ADELAIDE Loreto College Marryatville Book through Wombat Education - Teachers
September 3	ADELAIDE Mercedes College Book through Wombat Education - Students
September 4	PERTH Lumen Christi Book through Wombat Education - Students
September 5	PERTH John XXIII College 08 9385 2173 - Teachers