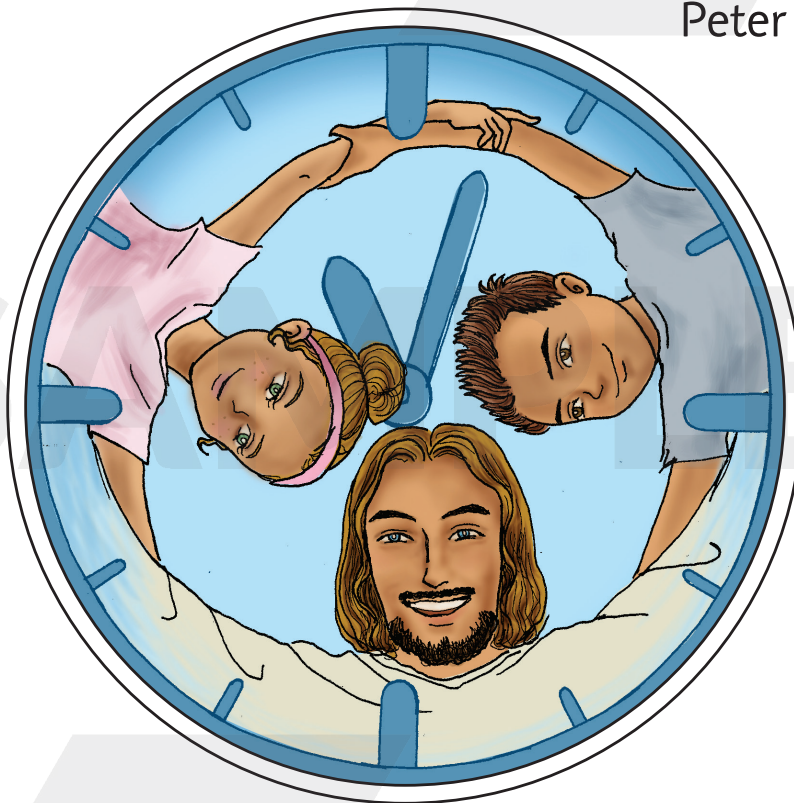


Make Jesus Real

A
BOOK
FOR
LIFE

Written by
Peter Mitchell



This book belongs to:



TASMANIAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

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INTRODUCTION...

Make Jesus Real (MJR) is a values education resource. MJR is centred on the belief that we are all God's children and are called to try to be like Jesus Christ in the way we live. We are Jesus' friends. He calls us into friendship with God and he calls us to imitate his way of living.

Make Jesus Real is aligned with Religious Education curriculums and Values Education programmes throughout Australia. In Tasmania it is specifically linked to the Jesus and Christian Life strands of the Good News for Living curriculum framework (Good News for Living, 2005). Likewise the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005, p. 3) states that all schools should be "ensuring values are incorporated into school policies and teaching programmes across the key learning areas".

MJR values include respect, honesty and trustworthiness, understanding, tolerance and inclusion. They focus on the Gospel values of compassion, justice, humility and forgiveness. These values also encourage students to do their best, treat others fairly, be responsible for their actions, follow principles of moral and ethical conduct and stand up for others against bullying.

MJR takes its focus from the mystery of the resurrection. The Christian Gospels record that Jesus rose from the dead saying, "I will be with you until the end of time" (Matthew 28:20). MJR stresses that Jesus' Spirit lives in our hearts 'in the now'. The 'Spirit of Jesus' is a scriptural phrasing (Acts 16:7) that begins to engage young people in the mysteries of the Trinity (God is a loving unity of Creator, Saviour and Spirit) and of Christ's incarnation (God became human in Jesus and God wills that all humans flourish).

Our main aim in Catholic Education is to invite students, parents and teachers to be aware of and grateful for God's loving presence in their daily lives. MJR's main aim is to get us 'switched on to God's presence' by reflecting on our lives each day to see where God has been in our experiences.

Another focus is not to leave Jesus as merely a person in history, but to emphasise that Jesus Christ is a mystery with us now. We live 'in the now' and we will always have 'the now'. MJR demonstrates a strong connection to many Catholic spiritualities, such as the

Ignatian and Franciscan traditions, particularly with aspects such as the imitation of Christ, respect for others and for creation, and reviewing the events in our lives. The Sacrament of the Present Moment is a central theme.

Through emphasis on simple and memorable prompts such as WEST (Welcoming, Encouraging, Sorry and Thanks), MJR inspires positivity and gratitude. Welcoming, Encouraging, Sorry and Thanks (WEST) also makes reference to the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

PEDAGOGY OF MJR

MJR is a ready-made resource that can be used across the primary grade levels but ideally in Year 5 and 6.

It can be used to immediately address specific issues or to allow students the ability to discuss and reflect upon values and virtues that are fundamentally based on Gospel values.

It is a flexible resource that can be used for five to ten minute insights as the need arises or as complete lessons focusing on core principles. Using memorable prompts, MJR core learnings are easily recalled by children as they grow to be teenagers, young adults and adults.

The simplicity and effectiveness of MJR is its explicit focus on values using broad and creative pedagogies and memorable mnemonics, that students recall years later. Its universal impact, reinforced through feedback, directly improves the climate of a classroom – even a school culture as a whole – and thus importantly creates positive morale for teachers and support staff. Its explicit naming of 'the Spirit of Jesus' and 'God Moments' engenders a Christocentric reminder to all learners – students and teachers alike – to live gratefully and compassionately with a particular focus on care and concern for one another.

FROM THE AUTHOR...

When students graduate from Catholic schools our core hope is that they have a real sense that God is present with them, and that they can sense this presence of the Spirit of Jesus through the people and events of their daily lives.

MJR aims for students to become aware of what we call 'Living Jesus' values and attitudes, and to be encouraged to live them out on a daily basis. When they leave our Catholic schools they are much more aware of living out Jesus' attitudes and his values. They are encouraged to see themselves as 'Good News people' living out the Gospel.

When we talk about positive attitudes we put them under these headings:

- » Positive attitude to people – Jesus' message is summed up by GTS (the way we 'Greet, Treat and Speak with' people) and WEST (the way we Welcome, Encourage, say Sorry and give Thanks).
- » Positive attitude to life – students are encouraged to participate in many healthy activities including music, drama, art, sport, scouts and guides and community service, etc.
- » Positive attitude to themselves – students are taught about a healthy diet, sleep, exercise, to BIY (Believe in Yourself) and their friends.

Other topics include self-discipline, good decision-making, friendship, positive behaviour management, having a sense of humour, handling problems, resilience, being a 'giver' rather than a 'taker' and being a team player at home and school.

The book is divided into three sections:

- » Values and Attitudes
- » Spirituality of the Everyday
- » Reflective Journal

Parents are encouraged to assist with their child's MJR homework when the book comes home and to discuss the monthly topic with their child. Many parents enjoy the book coming home as they like to discuss the affirming topics.

Often at the end of a year, a reflective four hours is completed, focusing on what students have learnt from MJR and how they have grown as a person. Students are also given a card which has the challenging question, "Where did you see the Spirit of Jesus in you today?" The students reflect upon the good memories throughout the last six years of their life, as well as the question, "What sort of a person do I want to be in Year 12?"

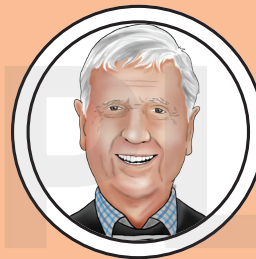
We try not to call MJR a programme, but a Christian way of life. We live our daily lives and the best results occur when we reflect for 40 seconds and ask, "Where was Jesus in my life today?"

MJR is a resource for life. It is not expected that MJR is completed in one or two years. Many ex-students have said that they still have their books, and that on occasion they read their old journal entries and other sections when seeking guidance.

I wish to thank Tony Lennard, Diana Batchelor and Tony Brennan for being cheerful givers, and also to passionate MJR leaders and teachers all over Australia who live the Spirit of Jesus.

Best wishes,

Peter Mitchell (aka Mitch)



*See how
you can Make
Jesus Real!*

VALUES & ATTITUDES ...

JESUS LIVES IN US WHEN WE ...

MJR IS 24/7

Have a positive attitude ✓

Say encouraging words ✓

Thank people ✓

Smile ✓

Say hello ✓

Wave ✓

Are Givers not Takers ✓

Do the right thing ✓

Make good choices ✓

Are the 1 percenters ✓

GTS – greet, treat and speak to people ✓

Are Grinners and Winners ✓

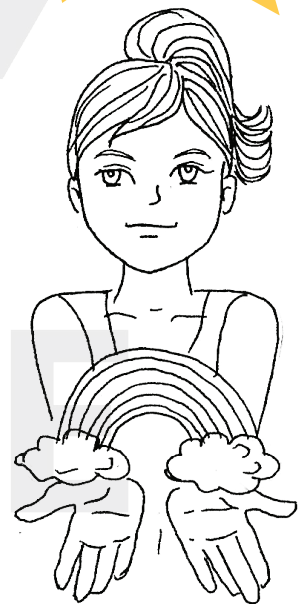
High Five ✓

Are WEST people ✓

BIY – believe in yourself ✓

Have an attitude of gratitude ✓

**MJR IS A BOOK
FOR LIFE**



**ALL DAY, EVERY DAY,
IS AN MJR DAY**

HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE ...

Your attitude to life and to people is similar to a motor in a car. If you have a good motor it will take you places in life. If your motor is in neutral (don't care) or reverse (negative attitude) you won't go far. There are people in your school and in your life (home, your interests, music, drama, sports, etc.) who also provide examples of how a positive attitude to life takes you places.



ACTIVITY

Name three people that you know; students or adults who have a positive attitude to life.

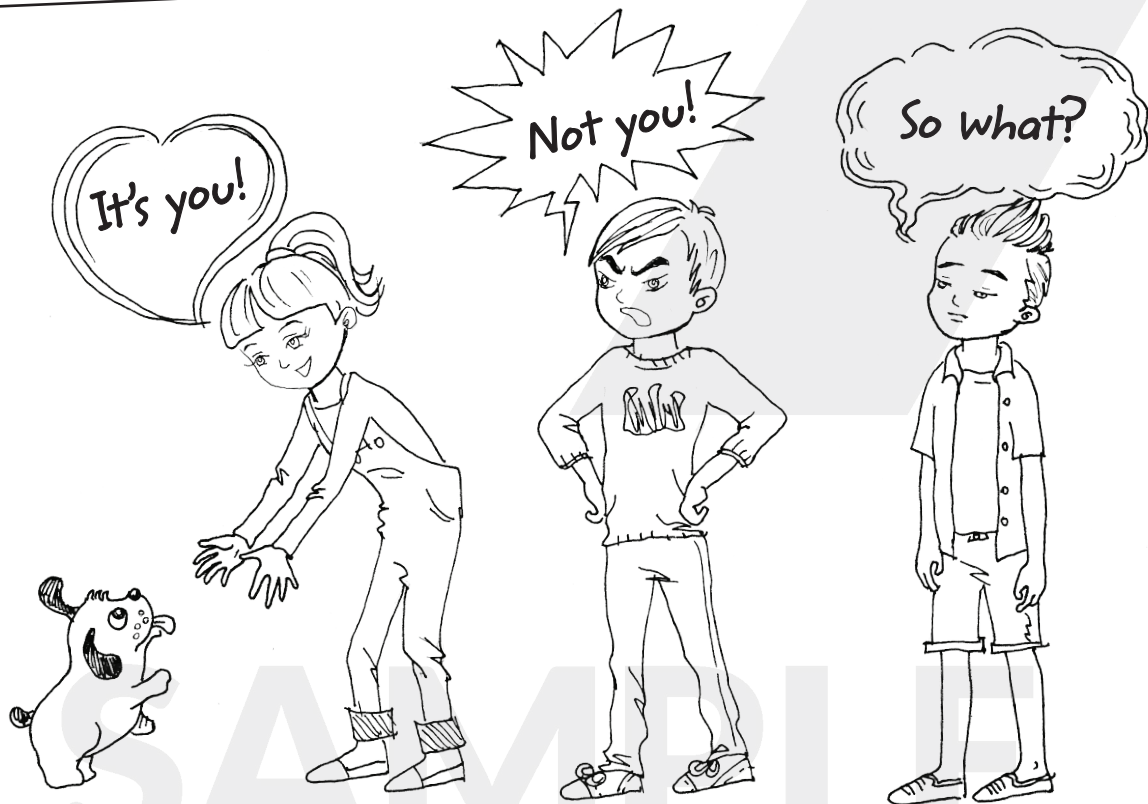
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If you wish to have a positive attitude to life, hang out with positive people. If on the other hand you hang around with Moaners and Groaners (at times we all moan and groan), you will be dragged down by that Negative Attitude to people and life.

YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF YOUR ATTITUDE TO LIFE...



REFLECTION

WHO ARE YOU?

You can be a

HAPPY CHAPPY



cheerful

gentle

humble

friendly

smiling

good listener

giver

generous

kind

forgiving

helpful

OR a

NASTIE PASTIE



moan and groan

negative thoughts

give in easily

put people down

poor people skills
and body language

take poor options

can't be bothered

don't have a go

ACTIVITY

Which qualities would you like to have?

POSITIVE SIGNS ...

Take the good with the bad

Be able to say sorry

Be cheerful
and obedient

Eye contact

Smile a lot

Greet, treat
and speak

Encourage and
compliment

Include others

ACTIVITY

Can you name three examples of Positive Thinking?

Name a person who is a good example of positive body language:

Mention some positive statements that you can make:

List some negative statements that we sometimes hear:

TAKING THE GOOD WITH THE BAD ...

At an early age in life we realise that we have great times, good times, ordinary times and not so good times. Life is like that. If we dwell too much on the not so good and think that is our lot in life, then it will be. It is important to take the hard times on the chin, try to be positive and get on with life. At times that is easier to say than do, particularly at the death of a loved one or a pet, but it is much easier when we are talking about the ordinary little things that get us down.

Some people are always Moaning and Groaning. It is their first reaction to anything they don't like.

ACTIVITY

When was the last time that I accepted a disappointment in my life and didn't moan? What about umpiring decisions? In the schoolyard, have you noticed anyone in your team who accepts decisions well?

BUILD A BRIDGE AND GET OVER IT!

When a problem comes our way, very often we can drop our bundle and give up, or get our parents or another adult to solve it. Sometimes you hear the expression "accept a challenge". You can feel a lot better about yourself if you can build a bridge and get over a problem. Obviously if there are really big problems you need help from parents and teachers. For the small things that can upset us, such as not having your joggers, hat or bathers and you have to miss an activity, try and manage them yourself – build a bridge and get over the small problem. This is clearly linked with being resilient.

**DON'T HANG ON
TO RESENTMENT –
LET IT GO!**

