



Seton Home Study School

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“Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church”

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Queen of Apostles

As apostles of Jesus Christ, we should be looking to His Mother, the Queen of Apostles, to help in fulfilling our home schooling duties. The directive by Jesus to His Apostles to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28: 19ff.), entreats us not only to convert those in foreign lands, primarily to witness to those right in our own home.

The immediate willingness of the Blessed Virgin Mary as she accepted the call by God at the Annunciation to be the Mother of the Savior showed us that she never hesitated to take on the responsibility to be an apostle, in a certain way the first “apostle” of her Son.

The Blessed Virgin accepted more than carrying the Christ Child for nine months when she said, “Let it be done to me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38). She accepted the responsibility to raise Him, to train Him in a human way, and to help Him teach the Gospel to others. Her commitment was not only to those apostolic duties in the home but to the duties to those outside the home as well.

One of Mary’s first acts, even before the birth of Jesus, was to visit Elizabeth who was carrying in her womb the “Gospel-Bearer”, St. John the Baptist. St. John the Baptist recognized His Creator in the womb of Mary. Mary’s visit anticipated her role as Queen of Apostles as she visited the Precursor to the Apostles.

A second anticipation of Mary’s apostolic work came when the shepherds visited. Presenting Jesus to the shepherds, presenting the Holy Family in fact, was her first apostolic act to humanity, to the working class, to the poor. She must have

said, “Here is the Gospel Incarnate, the One Who will save us from sin, Our Savior and Messiah. Hear Him!”

When the three kings, or the wise men, appeared later, they represented the scholars as well as the government leaders of mankind. In humility, they recognized their inadequacies and that Jesus is Eternal Life. In view of her future role as Queen of the Apostles she presented the Christ Child, and certainly presented the Gospel to them by her words and her actions.

The scholar-kings, traveling a great distance at a great sacrifice through worldly dangers, including the hypocrisy and deceit of King Herod, received the Gospel from Jesus, Mary, and Joseph--the Holy Family. The sacrifices of the scholar-kings, in their mission to find Christ, were deserving of additional help from an angel, and they were able to travel the way home safely by another route from which they came. They were spiritually guarded so that they, too, could spread the Gospel in their own families and neighborhoods.

At the wedding feast of Cana, Mary again anticipated her role as the Queen of Apostles when she asked Jesus to display His miraculous powers for the sake of a young couple at their wedding. As this young couple began their journey on the life of raising and training their children, the Blessed Virgin Mary showed them the blessings of Jesus the Christ. Through her, the Queen of Apostles, they experienced the miracles the Savior brings to the home of those willing to follow Him as apostles.

From the place of Mary at the foot of the Cross, as well as from her honored

place with the Apostles in the Upper Room, and from her special place at the time of the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, we see that Mary, the Mother of the Savior, was respected by the Apostles as their Queen.

It is not difficult to imagine how much Mary must have helped the Apostles after Jesus ascended to Heaven! How she must have helped them to further understand the teachings of her Son, to increase their Faith, to support them in their times of trial. It was Mary who revealed to them many of the mysteries which they could not yet understand. She surely was their teacher on a daily basis. She surely reflected in her life the perfect living of the Holy Gospel. The Apostles learned from her how to live the Gospel to perfection.

O Blessed Mother, Teacher and Queen of Apostles, help us to learn to live the life of an apostle, and to be good examples and teachers for our children. Help us homeschooling parents to train our children to be apostles for Jesus, to learn the teachings of Jesus, and to be filled with a desire to communicate them to others. O Queen of Apostles, help us to dedicate anew our lives to the “preaching” of the Gospel through our own good example right in our own home.

- MKC

Inside . . .

<i>Questions</i>	2
<i>Obedience and Authority</i>	4
<i>Homeschool Conference</i>	6
<i>News and Notes</i>	7
<i>Family Rights</i>	8



Questions We Are Asked

by Dr. Mary Kay Clark
Director, Seton Home Study School

I struggle each and every day to get my homeschooling done. What helpful tips can you give me.

Homeschooling is not easy. When you have all the duties relating to your home, taking care of the baby or babies, fixing the meals, it sometimes seems like an impossible task.

Every day must start with prayer. I found that getting up early before the rest of the family, and starting my day with prayer made a tremendous difference. This can be from fifteen minutes to one hour, but this time of peace and dedication helps you to start the day in spiritual and emotional control.

At the same time, getting your house ready for the day can make a difference. You will feel in control from the beginning of the day if your dishes are clean, and your kitchen and living room are straightened. Even if you take a half-hour, at the end of the day or in the early morning, to make the main rooms look organized, you will feel better and your children will feel that here is a place to get things accomplished.

A big problem with keeping the house in order relates to the amount of things you have in your home, and that you or someone must continue putting back in place or picking up. Every time you pick up, throw something out or give something away. Each month or two, take a day (perhaps when the kids are out shopping with Dad), to divest yourself of clothes and toys. Throw out broken toys and worn out clothing. Toys and clothing in better condition could be donated to a charity.

Ask relatives and friends not to give gifts of clothes and toys, but rather books and other educational materials, such as videos or the Bible on disk or a set of encyclopedias. Or a bookcase! Another help would be to come over for an hour

or two, and help clean a closet (when WAS the last time you organized the linen closet?), or clean out your kitchen shelves, or help you organize the tools in the basement.

Be sure your homeschooling materials are organized. Each child needs his own book case or at least a few shelves. The school materials need to be kept there all the time. The only time these things are off the shelf is when they are being used. They need to be out of reach of the babies and toddlers. There is nothing worse, for you and for your children, than to be wasting time looking for the books and the paper or notebooks.

Moms sometimes get frustrated because of the necessary cleaning in the kitchen. Use paper plates, bowls, even plastic spoons and forks, for breakfast and lunch. Plan easy meals for breakfast and lunch. For years during my home schooling, lunch was always soup and sandwiches. Each person in the house had his own cup with his name on it.

If possible, give your children assignments to help out. Classes after breakfast and lunch should not begin until after kitchen and/or dining room cleanup. You cannot teach in peace if a pile of work is waiting for you in the kitchen.

You need a safe yard for the little ones to play outside. You may want to consider having a fenced area of the yard in which you know your little ones will be safe.

It is all these things surrounding the homeschooling situation which usually causes the struggles and frustrations.

My boy of ten just does not want to sit down and do his work!

Don't worry, he is normal. He needs to exercise and jump about. What you need to do is give him time between classes to have his exercise. And consider which classes he can do while on his feet.

Let him jump-rope while doing some memory work (aloud, of course). He can bounce a ball while reciting the spelling words. One reason that boys have trouble in the classroom is that the teachers don't understand the need for boys to exercise. As I have reported in my book, my boys had physical chores to do between classes. This gave them the exercise they needed, and the chores were finished by the end of the school day!

Consider also whether your son is having problems because the work may be too difficult or too easy. Sometimes you may want to challenge your son, but he may be too young emotionally to respond to the challenge. You may need to use materials at a lower level because his mind is more on finishing up and going outside to play. Your son needs to continually progress but during these young years, he may need to progress more slowly.

One of the best training ideas to teach your son to sit quietly for a period of time is to get him interested in reading. Find books that he can read quickly.

If your son is bored, or says he is bored, consider giving him only part of the assignment, or part in writing and part orally. Tell him that the other part need not be done if he does the first part perfectly.

One of the best training ideas to teach your son to sit quietly for a period of time is to get him interested in reading. Find books that he can read quickly, even if these books might be at a second or third grade level. Some of the story books or biographies, which are only thirty, forty, or fifty pages, a book he can read at one sitting (you hope), will train his little muscles to relax for thirty minutes at a time.

Boys can be a challenge in home schooling, but keep in mind your boy may be a future priest or leader in the Catholic Church or community. You want to give him your very best efforts.

Some of my friends in the support group are telling me I am crazy to be on a program which demands a schedule. I should relax, they say, and just give the kids what I think they need when I think they need it. How should I respond?

There are some people in this world who can achieve without structure. But not many. Not only do you need structure in your life, the children do also.

There are some people in this world who can achieve without structure. But not many. Not only do you need structure in your life and daily activities, the children do also.

When you read books on how to achieve in the work world, the constant theme is to have a plan and work the plan. What Seton does for you is send a plan, a plan of work and specific assignments in specific subject areas.

Some say we should not bring the classroom into the homeschooling. However, there are many things in the Catholic classroom we need in homeschooling--Catholic books, for instance. In the opinion of the Catholic educators of the past, teaching the student is a good classroom idea. The philosophy of the student simply discovering the world on his own does not come from Catholic educators.

When Elizabeth Ann Seton began her homeschooling along with a few neighborhood children, she had a schedule. She would start the day with two hours of prayer, start her schooling at nine, have lunch at one, continue

schooling until five, and then be back in her chapel for prayer at 6:30. She wrote that her curriculum included reading, writing, arithmetic, English and French, and "plain and fancy needlework." Later, she taught history herself, and added geography, spelling, and grammar. Every Friday, the children would read the Lord's Passion from the Bible. She was fortunate to have a priest come for religious instruction.

When Elizabeth Ann Seton became a nun, she had five children and kept the children with her as she established her nuns' community and school in Emmitsburg. No matter what difficulties she encountered, her children always came first. She would never allow anyone else to be the guardian of her children even when she became a nun. She wrote: "By the law of the Church I so much love, I could never take an obligation which interfered with my duties to them." She went on to say that a guardian could never supply her judgment as a mother, nor replace her responsibility. While she was willing to compromise to the rules of the order of the Sisters of Charity, she never was willing to compromise her responsibilities to her children.

We can learn from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton that structure, order, and discipline are vital for children's environment so they can learn properly. We also learn from her that since God gave us our children to raise, they must come first. Our duties to our religion are fulfilled as we teach the children God has given us.

I have been home schooling for several years, but I can see my teen age boy starting to be affected by boys in the neighborhood. What are your suggestions?

If your son is going in the wrong direction in his life, you have to start him going back in the right direction. In this case, you need to take your son to daily Mass with you. You cannot listen to those who would say, "Well, you can't force him to go." You must do everything to encourage him to go, and eventually make it impossible for him not to go. If your son were having a medical problem, you would take him to the doctor and force him to take his medicine. How much more important

it is for him to take his spiritual medicine!

You must do what you can to break the relationship with his bad companions who are leading him into sin. You might start by getting him involved in a homeschooling or church teen group. Making sure he has good companions will leave less time for bad companions. However, if you live in an area which is filled with bad companions and bad situations, you might want to consider moving. You can move across town, or even out of town. You can take him to visit relatives for a month or more to break the pattern of the relationship.

The problems and situations that our children face in this pagan society are not small problems that will have little effect. These problems are life-scarring and soul-scarring. Just because the society is accepting of these pagan practices does not mean you or your children can take them less seriously than the teaching of the Church.

My daughter seems to be moving very slowly through her high school courses. In fact, she seems depressed because she thinks she will not be finished by summer. What do you suggest?

We cannot forget that many younger high school students are going through physical and emotional changes. With homeschooling, and the added responsibilities for independent work, the pressure and stress of a teenager can become very great.

When doing your teaching, remember that the lesson plans that we send are a suggestion, and all items are not required. If it is taking too long to finish, cut back on the assignments, either by cutting out some assignments or by lessening assignments.

Help your daughter to focus on only two subjects at a time. Take the two which are the easiest for her, and have her do one all morning and the other all afternoon. She will get through the courses more quickly, get her grades and credits, and see that she is in fact accomplishing something. For some kids, having no final grades for a year becomes depressing or frustrating. Success will encourage her to move on to the next two subjects in the same manner.

Guidelines, Obedience, and Authority in the Church

As more dioceses continue to discuss and implement homeschooling guidelines, there is a constant question of what should be the position of homeschoolers regarding guidelines and what should be done when guidelines are implemented.

Guidelines or No Guidelines

First, on the question of whether dioceses ought to have guidelines, there are two sides to the argument. On the one hand, it is said that in a diocese with no guidelines, there might be parish-level restrictions placed on homeschoolers which might prevent or delay reception of the sacraments. It is said that with a diocese-level policy in place, homeschoolers are protected from the vagaries of these individual parish policies. Therefore, diocesan homeschooling policies are generally a good thing and homeschoolers should try to have guidelines put in place.

On the other side, it is said that diocesan guidelines almost always impose more burden on families than no guidelines. Further, it is argued that guidelines are not really necessary because the Code of Canon Law, papal encyclicals, and other Church teachings are sufficient guides to the rights and responsibilities of parents, bishops, and priests. Finally, it is sad that if a particular parish is hostile to homeschoolers, most guidelines are sufficiently vague to allow that parish to impede homeschooling if it chooses, and the guidelines won't change these attitudes.

At Seton Home Study School, we favor the anti-guideline side of the argument, despite whatever guidelines might say, even if the guidelines are very good (and some are). We simply do not see that guidelines are helpful to homeschooling parents. Plus, the

situation for most homeschooling families is not bad. There is certainly a risk that implementing guidelines will make the situation more difficult. It seems more likely to us that burdens will become greater than that they will lessen.

It seems that some homeschoolers interpret opposition to diocesan guidelines as an attack on bishops or as disloyalty to the Church. Nothing could be further from the truth. We encourage homeschoolers to interact with their priests and bishops and to take leading roles in their parishes. Indeed, Seton itself has very friendly relations with many bishops. We have invited bishops to our conferences. We have had bishops and cardinals visit our headquarters. We have bishops give the *Imprimatur* to our books. Our corporate bylaws specifically acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Arlington, in whose diocese Seton is located.

The question is not whether one is obedient to the bishops, but whether contemplated new regulation, in the form of diocesan guidelines, is necessary. There can certainly be no disobedience to a rule which is only contemplated and not yet promulgated. While one may be bound to follow a promulgated law, that does not prevent one from opposing the law beforehand.

But, if diocesan regulations have been promulgated, what to do then? The problem comes, of course, when parents feel that diocesan guidelines are not just onerous but are morally unacceptable. For example, parents wonder what to do when their pastor is insistent that their children attend the parish religious education classes. These parents believe that because the children from the public school bring topics to the class, especially in

the area of sex education, they do not want their children exposed to these conversations. When they talk with the religious education teachers about this, the teachers believe it is their responsibility to deal with these topics because the public school children are learning this at the school. The parents have been told they are being disobedient to the authority of their pastor, or to the authority of the bishop if the diocesan guidelines require them to attend religious education class in order to receive the sacraments of Holy Eucharist, Penance, or Confirmation. This question of obedience brings up the whole topic of the scope and limits of authority.

What is Authority?

What is the meaning of authority? Temporal authority is always limited and never omnipotent. Human authority is limited by scope and by matter. The scope of this authority limits those who might be subject to a law. For example, parents have a great deal of authority and can issue laws and edicts for their own family, but they have no similar authority to issue laws for other families, or for communities as a whole. Similarly, a state government can issue laws for their own citizens, but cannot issue laws that bind the citizens of other states.

Authority is also limited by matter, or to what a law refers. Parents have authority over their children in many things, but there are certain things which they cannot command. For example, a parent cannot command a child to marry a certain person, or command a child not to enter the religious life. Similarly, a government cannot command those things pertaining to the inner workings of families or of the Church.

Authority is also further limited by the fact that it must be exercised in accordance with both natural law and eternal law. We might add that, in the

case of Church regulations, authority must be exercised in accord with Canon Law.

Regarding the rules and regulations promulgated by parish pastors or diocesan departments of religious education, we can rightly ask whether these regulations are valid exercises of authority.

It would certainly be admitted by all that both parents and bishops have authority over religious education. Parents have authority first from the natural law, and then by the positive commandment of God to teach the Faith to their children. Pastors and bishops have the authority to teach, to sanctify, and to rule in the Church that Christ has established.

It should be obvious, however, that neither parents nor bishops can have total authority over religious education, because if one party or the other had total control, then there would be no room for any authority on the part of the other. Thus, we must conclude that authority is shared, and that any law or edict which places complete control of religious education in the hands of one party is invalid.

In several dioceses around the country, rules have been implemented which seem to place total control of religious education in the hands of the diocese or parish. These rules, for example, require certain religion texts to be used, and even prohibit the use of other texts. In several dioceses, the sacraments are denied unless homeschooled children are enrolled in a parish religious education program. Some regulations talk about the pastor or his agent visiting the home; others discuss a "covenant" or written agreement between the pastor and the parent. These kinds of requirements make the parent the mere agent of the pastor or diocese.

Many canons could be cited showing why this type of regulation is invalid, but suffice it to say that a

parent could reasonably deem such a rule as invalid based upon both the natural law and competent canon legal advice. See Dr. Edward Peters' Home schooling and the New Code of Canon Law; and CHSNA's Rights and Responsibilities of Parents in Religious Education (both available from Seton).

There is a crucial distinction to be made between a law which is burdensome and a law which is void. Clearly, one must follow a burdensome valid law (to the extent that one can). If the bishop of a diocese declared that all Masses in the diocese must be said between the hours of 1 and 5 in the afternoon, that would be a burden but would still be a valid law. However, if the bishop said that all Masses would substitute Buddha for Christ, the law would promote apostasy and be invalid. Catholics would be bound to follow the burdensome valid law, but would be bound to disobey the heretical invalid law.

Indeed, there is a third type of situation which seems to come up regarding homeschooling regulations. Perhaps it is the most common. This is the type of law which could be considered void by reason of lack of authority but does not actually violate the conscience. Such a case would be a regulation which provides for home visits by a DRE for home-educated children. There is simply no authority in canon law or tradition for Church authorities to make such an unprecedented claim to interfere in the inner workings of a family. Parents would not have to obey this law or regulation. However, parents would not be obligated to disobey this law since it would not be a sin to comply.

Thus we have three situations which will need to be addressed in different ways. In matters where the bishop has authority to command and does validly command, Catholics must obey. In matters where there is

no authority to command, Catholics may choose to obey or not, depending on their assessment of the prudent action. In matters where a regulation violates the conscience, the parent cannot comply.

Considering that the Church is extremely zealous in protecting the rights of parents in the exercise of their role as primary educators of their children, one would think that regulations issued by pastors or diocesan departments would be salutary and beneficial. Sadly this is not always the case.

Obedience and Prudence

The question then is one of conscience and prudence. In the case of conscience, parents must not follow parish or diocesan regulations if these are reasonably believed to be forcing an occasion of sin on the child. In the past five or six years, the parish religious education classes have been introducing sex education topics. However, Catholic home schooled children have been pulled from schools primarily because of the sex education and other offensive programs. Parents object to them not only because they go against the teachings of the Church, but also because these topics are too sensitive for children in a group situation, and often are introduced to children when they are too young. To have these topics discussed in parish religious education classes offends the consciences of parents and children alike, and often are believed to be occasions of sin.

Obedience to proper authority is not only an action, but also a virtue. One might ask whether as a matter of spiritual perfection, parents should simply submit their wills in everything to proper authority. After all, in a religious order, one of the perfections of the members is to accept the decisions of the superior without any individual judgment, accepting the directive as from God. Since all

authority is from God, should parents not accept any directive from a diocese in the same way?

To this one must say that parents and monks are not in the same position. Just as bishops have responsibility for the society of the diocese, so parents have responsibility for the society of the family. It is the obligation, not the option, of parents to make decisions for their children. Obedience is a virtue, but it is not the only virtue. There is also the cardinal virtue of prudence. An important virtue in raising children is making judgments constantly, many times each and every day, about what is good and what is bad for our children. Indeed, why would parents be homeschooling if they did not intend to make such choices?

In light of our obligations as parents to make such judgments for our children, it is not reasonable that parents should be expected to accept all diocesan regulations without thought, regardless of what the regulations are. The Catholic Church institutionally and theologically upholds parental rights, but it could happen that an individual pastor or diocesan department of religious education could issue regulations which are not in conformity with Church teachings or with the natural law. How can it be unreasonable or disobedient then for a parent to look at diocesan regulations to see if they conform to natural law and to Canon Law? Indeed, how would it be reasonable not to do so?

We want to make it clear that Seton believes that we and other Catholic homeschooling programs, along with homeschooling parents, should be partners with our pastors and bishops, not adversaries. The best way to be good partners is for everyone to recognize the valid limits of authority, and not to overstep the boundaries set by natural law, Canon Law, and tradition.



Immaculate Heart of Mary Homeschool Conference

Sponsored by
The National Home School Conference Coalition

Friday, June 7: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
(Conference opens at 10:00, first speaker at 11:00,
vendor area opens at 12:00 noon)

Saturday June 8: 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

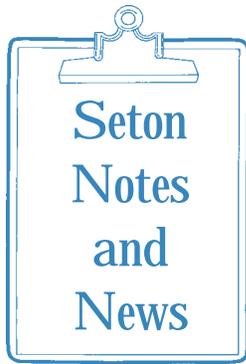
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Rev. Shannon Collins	Dr. Thomas Droleskey
Rev. Robert Levis	Dr. Patrick Keats
Rev. Frank Papa	Dr. Marguerite "Peg" Luksik
Rev. John Perricone	Mr. Joseph Kung
Rev. Joseph Salazar	Mrs. Virginia Seuffert
Rev. Ray Williams	Mrs. Catherine Moran
Sr. Agnes Cousins	Mr. Joseph Sobran
Cong. Robert Dornan	

Updated information available at
www.ihmconference.org



Conferences

Many state and local groups are now sponsoring their own conferences, inviting various Catholic vendors and curriculum providers. Seton is happy to participate at these conferences as a vendor. Dr. Mary Kay Clark is often available to speak at these conferences. For more information, contact Mary Lou Warren at 540-636-9990.

Seton will be exhibiting and selling curriculum at the following conferences: Indianapolis, IN: June 1. Ginny Seuffert will be counseling at the Seton table. Contact Teresa at 317-849-9821, or email tgorsage@comcast.net

Green Bay, WI: June 1. Dr. Mary Kay Clark speaking. Contact Peg at 920-983-0932, or email ssalburg@aol.com

Richmond (Houston area), TX: June 1. Contact Theresa at 281-937-1843, or email tbruno@1caminoreal.org

St. Paul/Minneapolis, MN: June 1. Catherine Moran speaking. Contact Deb at 763-785-8922.

Lansing, MI: June 21 and 22. Dr. Mary Kay Clark will be speaking. Contact Cathie at 313-565-6129, or email mch001@juno.com

Milwaukee, WI: June 21. Contact Alicia at 262-369-9461 or email webmaster@love2learn.net

Kennebunk, ME (Portland area): June 29. Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Fr. Frank Papa, Mrs. Virginia Seuffert speaking. Contact Seton at 540-636-9996 email to conferences@setonhome.org

On-Line Grading

Our online grading project has been coming along very well. So far we have had nearly 3,000 grading items uploaded on My Seton. We are now electronically grading almost all uploaded items. We have electronically graded and returned approximately 1,300 items over the past few months.

The benefits to electronic grading are many. First there is the time benefit. All the time that a paper would spend in transit back and forth—which can be as much as a week in each direction—is saved. In fact, for some courses, items may be graded and returned within 24 hours of the time they are submitted. And, more time is saved in that grades are automatically entered in the computer, including quarter grades and final course grades.

Much more information is available when an item is uploaded to My Seton. The papers received function on My Seton is able to report the exact items that were received, rather than the more general report available for mailed items. And if there is any question about a grade, the graded work is available online to both parents and Seton administrators. Since all

the information is available, any errors may be corrected much more quickly.

Uploading an item online to My Seton is not difficult. The first thing you will need to do is go to your My Seton home page at www.setonhome.org/myseton. If you have never been to the My Seton page before, you will need to log in with your last name, zip code, and family number. (If you don't know your family number, there is a link to click on.)

From the main menu, go to the "Courses" menu and click on the item "Send/View Assignments." Then you will need to choose the course and quarter you want. At that point, a list of the assignments for the course and quarter will come up. Click on the assignment you want to send. Then you will need to choose the file on your computer that corresponds to that assignment. After you choose the file, click the "Upload File" button to send it to Seton.

In order to send a file to Seton, first you need to create it on your computer. This may be a word processing document, such as a book report. Or it may be a workbook page that you have scanned into your computer. If you scan only one page for an assignment, you can upload it as a single graphic file. If you scan multiple pages for an assignment, you need to place them into a "container" document, such as a Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format (RTF) file. We have more in-depth information about scanning files on the My Seton website.

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Family Rights in Education

Education is essentially a social, and not merely an individual, activity. Now there are three essential societies, distinct one from the other and yet harmoniously combined by God, into which man is born: of these, two, namely the family and civil society, belong to the natural order. In the first place comes the family, instituted directly by God for its particular purpose: the procreation and the formation of offspring. For this reason, it [the family] has priority of nature and therefore of rights, over civil society.

This is clearly set forth by Pius X, of saintly memory: "Whatever a Christian does, even in the order of earthly things, he may not overlook the supernatural. Indeed he must, according to the teaching of Christian wisdom, direct all things toward the supreme good as to his last end. All his actions besides, insofar as they are good or evil in the order of morality, that is, in keeping or not with the natural or divine law, fall under the judgment and jurisdiction of the Church."

The family holds, therefore, directly from the Creator the mission, and hence the right, to educate the young, a right inalienable because inseparably joined to a strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatever of civil society and the State, and therefore [a right] inviolable on the part of any power on earth.

That this right is inviolable, St. Thomas [Aquinas] proves as follows: "The child is naturally something of the father... so by natural right the child, before reaching the use of reason, is under the father's care. Hence it would be contrary to natural justice if the child, before arriving at the use of reason, were removed from the care of its parents, or if any arrangement were made concerning him against the will of the parents."

And as this duty on the part of parents continues up to the time when the child is in a position to provide for itself, this same inviolable parental right of education also endures. "Nature intends not merely the generation of offspring, but also its development and advancement to the perfection of man considered as man, that is, to the state of virtue," as St. Thomas himself says.

Christian Education of Youth, Pope Pius XI

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