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"clear, brief and easily assimilated by all" 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

Handouts n. 207

## Catholic Homeschooling

### Open Letter to the Successors of the Apostles in Australia for the Fifth Plenary Council

Dear Archbishops and Bishops,

Please consider giving our **Catholic homeschooling** families an encouraging message at the Fifth Plenary Council, and also to the kindred older apostolate of **Family Catechetics**. Jordan Peterson, Canadian psychologist, says how much it helps to give people even a little encouragement.

**Family Catechetics** was required of parents in 1937's Fourth Plenary Council (n. 600), to educate their children in the prayers and doctrines of the Faith by example and instruction. In 1939, Archbishop Michael Kelly of Sydney required that the "old green" Catechism be taught in **home, church** and **school** -- Home first, school last, and "school" normatively meant Catholic school.

**Catholic Homeschooling** developed from Family Catechetics after 1980. **See overleaf**

Some bishops, priests and people are shocked at the very idea of homeschooling -- until they witness it for themselves, and discover its success for religious practice and entry to universities or TAFE -- and not graduating anyone onto the dole.

Just as CCD catechists for public schools are no longer seen as a threat to the default priority of Catholic schools, and VCII's assertion of the parental rights of choice (canon 793), so now the legitimacy of Catholic homeschooling is increasingly recognized. See *Homeschooling and the New Code of Canon Law* by Edward M. Peters, Chrysostom Press, 1988. Moreover, it is based on the family as the Creator's own structure for populating Heaven via our testing on earth. "Family" is currently under-valued, even opposed, by those negating God and matrimony, yet vital for forming lay apostles. It is the cradle of civilization, and best left without bureaucratic meddling. Over 100 years ago St Pius X declared, "What is most needed in the Church today is to have in each parish laity who are at the same time virtuous, enlightened, determined and really apostolic". He understood the place of laity in the Church.

Homeschooling is a quite different style of schooling. Surprisingly to many, its first benefits are **socialization** and that intense enrichment of family life we so urgently need to heal our world.

Please grant your episcopal blessing and be assured of my prayers for you, as I remain always,  
Yours sincerely, obediently and gratefully in Our Lord,

Father James Tierney

Eye-witness to success of homeschooling, tutor in Mathematics, Physics & Chemistry and educator of catechists.  
Born 1935; Convert 1955; Priest 1964; originally A/diocese Sydney, now Broken Bay; retirement apostolate in letterhead.

#### PUBLISHED WORKS

*Catholic Family Catechism Apostles' Edition II* (500 Q&A's); *Disciples' Edition II* (only 50 Q&A's);  
*Confirmation Kit for Home Preparation*; *Heart Speaks to Heart* prayer book;  
*Apostles of Christ in High Schools*, duplicated Teacher's Books;  
For other publications: Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc, 02 9673 2235 and see  
[www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au) for regular *Handouts* (A4 sheets)

*Bush Boys and Cuthbert* (2 in 1);  
*Bush Boys and Bush Rangers*;  
*Bush Boys on the Move*;  
*New Boys in the Bush*;  
*Squiggles and Squinter*;  
*New Boys Go Bush Again*.

# Catholic Homeschooling

an alternative to "Schooling in Schools"

**HOMESCHOOLING** by Catholic families is often adopted after success with Family Catechetics. Some call it **HOME-TUTORING** to emphasize its one-to-one teaching of tutor to pupil, parent to child. In Victoria, **HOME-EDUCATING** is the preferred term to emphasize the totality of an upbringing. By any name it produces lay apostles for our pagan society.

Marriage/Matrimony is the normative human vocation for the **mutual sanctification** of spouses, for which their souls and bodies are designed, and the children whom they procreate and educate in Godliness and conscience, grace and goodness,

Homeschooling combines an upbringing and a schooling in a full education of 7 R's, not just 3:-

1. **RELIGION** brings us to God and God to us, so we can achieve our created dignity, duty and destiny.
2. **RESPECT** for self & others, manners & self-control, that help us to live with ourselves, and be easy to get on with.
3. **REASON**, along with memory, understanding and free will, are the image of God in us, and to be cultivated.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY** for our thoughts, words and deeds: conscience and discernment to choose good and reject evil.

nn. 1-4 are the **upbringing** aspects of VCI's *Gravissimum Educationis*.

5. **READING**, especially "living books", helps us share in the knowledge and goodwill of suitable authors;
6. **WRITING**, by which thought is expressed, clearly, briefly, and preserved, shared and disseminated.
7. **ARITHMETIC**, fluency in figuring  $+-\times\div$  hence algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, hence logical thinking.

\* nn. 5,6,7 are the **schooling** aspects, along with ("reading in") other subjects, of *Gravissimum Educationis* nn. 5-9 (with tertiary in nn.10-12).

\* nn. 5,6,7 are necessary life-skills, but a growing absence of nn. 1,2,3,4 often reduces school classroom teaching to "crowd control", or worse, to perversion, if based on school-induced Marxist mockeries of nn. 1,2,3,4.

**IS IT LEGAL?** YES, and, in some states more than others, is less oppressed by bureaucratic structures.

**ARE PARENTS QUALIFIED?** YES, mostly:-

- Grace of state in Sacrament of Matrimony: trust it !
- Unique loving interest for their own children.
- Their own schooling/post-schooling plus life-experience equips them to teach Primary.
- Experience builds up special skills for Years 7-12.
- Homeschooling parents engage in self-education and in ongoing study of curriculum, method etc.
- Creative coping with the diverse abilities, interests, effort -- the homeschooling one-to-one outdoes teaching of 25-30 pupils of disparate abilities, interests, effort and mixed family backgrounds.
- Moreover, homeschooling induces pupils to *work on their own* with texts, "living books" & internet. It is a much better preparation for tertiary study.
- Proven success: pupils get employed and university entry at age 16 or 17 through *Open University*.

# More On Socialization

in which homeschooling really shines

**HOMESCHOOLING** ensures (1) the practice of the Faith; (2) good academics; (3) great socialization.

Socialization **means getting on well** with parents, siblings, cousins, neighbours and strangers, both young and old. Big families are an advantage.

Many parents give socialization as their first reason for home-schooling. USA sociological studies show home-tutored pupils are mostly better socialized, more courteous, secure and 'open' than pupils at ordinary schools.

Others moved to homeschooling to impart Catholic faith and life when the official Catholic Schools failed to do so -- or even worked against it with false teaching endangering faith.

Champion of Christian homeschooling in the USA, psychologist Raymond Moore, found that schools do not socialize children, rather they make them **peer dependent**, i.e. subservient, enslaved. Peers at school can reduce, usurp, even negate parental influence so that children relate less well to older and younger siblings and their parents.

Yes, **children do need peer friendships** outside their family, beginning with cousins, other homeschoolers and selected peers in schools. In ordinary schooling, pupils easily lapse into 'human respect', i.e. thinking/speaking (even acting) false or ignoble ideas lest they lose esteem in the eyes of peers -- like crowds lowering moral sensitivities. Peer dependency easily slips into psycho-bullying.

Also, homeschoolers usually socialize with the local community in sports like soccer, touch-football, Karate, Little Athletics, and help with Meals on Wheels etc

- **Peer friendships** of the homeschooled do not weaken parental or sibling relationships.
- Homeschooling develops **inner security** in an increasingly insecure world.
- **Money is saved** from school fees or transport; and no time is wasted in travelling.
- Moreover **time** is used more **efficiently** at home without waiting around for others.
- Learning **at their own pace**, less distractions, and unlike schools' high ratio pupil-to-teacher.
- Children free to **work ahead of schedule** and with proven academic success.
- After hours **homework** is often unnecessary: much of afternoon and evening are freer for outdoors, hobbies, reading and family jobs.

**Regular gatherings** of homeschooling families give them vital **encouragement**, socializing, support, incentive, plus the sharing of techniques and texts.