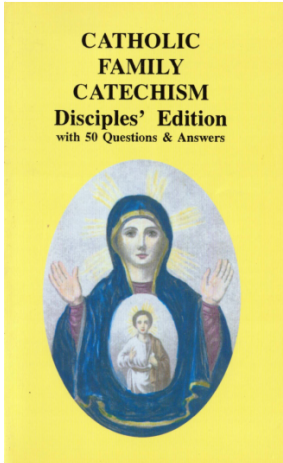


“A suitable catechism for families”

as required by Pope St John Paul II in *The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World* (22-11-1981)

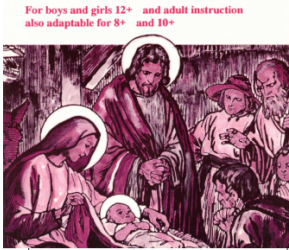
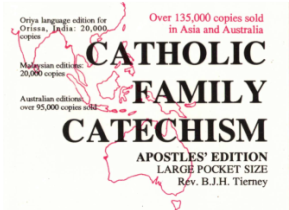
“Prepare a suitable *catechism for families* (italics in JPII) ... clear, brief, and easily assimilated by all,”

— and the *Catholic Family Catechism* (6-8-1981) fulfils Pope St John Paul II’s requirements:



First, it fulfils his memorization list (*Catechesis in our Time*, 16-10-1979) with its logical sequence of thought — a helpful example of how understanding complements memorization, making both easier:

1. **The words of Jesus;**
e.g. *Our Father, In the Name of the Father.*
- [and] 2. **important Bible passages;**
e.g. “God so loved the world...” John 3:16.
3. **The Ten Commandments;**
e.g. Exodus 20, with shorter and also sung forms.
- [and] 4. **the Creed(s);**
e.g. Apostles and Nicene.
5. **The Liturgical texts;**
e.g. learn the responses from a Sunday Missal
- [and] 6. **the essential prayers;**
e.g. *Hail, Mary*, Act of Contrition.
7. **key doctrinal ideas, etc.,”**
e.g. a catechism of Questions & Answers.



St John Paul II concluded by repeating his insistence on memorization:

“We must be realists. The blossoms, if we may call them that, of faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory-less catechesis” — e.g. a *desert of memory-less* from which we are still suffering in Australia.

Two editions of the CFC are in print:

- **Catholic Family Catechism Disciples' Edition** (CFCDE, 2004/2009) only 50 Q&A 129pp. It reduces many of the earlier Q&As to supportive notes; has more Bible texts and illustrations. It was inspired by the success of a mere 50 Q&A in the *ABC of Camping* as easier to memorize. .
- **Catholic Family Catechism Apostles' Edition** (CFCAE, 1991/2009) 500 Q&A, 145pp.; translated for dioceses Berhampur & Balasore (India) 1993., and Trobriand Island PNG 2000; plus Australian editions donated to Honiara (Solomon Islands) and Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, Philippines, Nairobi, and to Salesians in West India. It developed the earlier *Catholic Family Catechism Revised Pocket Edition*, (6/8/1981) 404 Q&A, 224 pp. After careful scrutiny, Cardinal Oddi (Rome, 1982) declared that “We [the competent dicastery on catechisms the Congregation for the Clergy] hope it will be widely used in all the English-speaking countries.” . It was this edition that was reprinted in Malaysia 1983 and Canada,

Each edition of the *Catholic Family Catechism* includes St John Paul’s list (not n. 5). Moreover, it expresses n. 7 in the dynamic dialogue of **Questions & Answers**, rather than a static glossary as at the end of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or word definitions in a dictionary.

Teaching from a catechism needs a worshipping community and a fervent believing catechist who enriches instruction with life-situations.

Q&As favour clarity, brevity and mental digestion. They are a necessary skeleton (without which we are jelly fish) and necessitate en fleshment with explanations, illustrations and Bible texts. Catechism techniques can be seen more clearly in a non-religious context like camping.

Sample Q&As from the CFCDE for saving souls

2. Who is God?

God is the Creator of every thing, for He made all things from nothing; He is the Holy One, the Mystery Awesome and Wondrous, the Supreme Being, the Supreme Spirit, All-knowing, All-loving, Almighty and Eternal.
Italics in answers can be omitted for simplicity.

3. Is God the Blessed Trinity?

God is the Blessed Trinity, one God in Three Persons, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

5. What is man?

Man is a creature of God with a soul made in His image and likeness intelligent, free and responsible, and with a body procreated by parents.

6. Why did God make us?

God made us [in His image: our DIGNITY]
to know, love and serve Him here on earth [DUTY]
and to see & enjoy Him forever in Heaven [DESTINY].

10. Did Jesus Christ really rise from the dead?

Jesus Christ really rose from the dead; the stone was rolled back and the tomb was empty; the Apostles and holy women saw Him, spoke with Him, touched Him and ate with Him,

49. What is prayer?

Prayer is raising our minds and hearts to God especially in a Morning Offering and bedtime thanks and sorrow.

Sample Q&As for “bush survival” written before the *Bush Boys* books were even thought of. However, the adventure stories add a feeling of reality, of “life-&-death situations”, to the theory.

The camping catechism offers us **FACTS, DOs and DON'Ts, is clear, brief, easily learnt by anyone, with rhyme, rhythm and sense-lines.**

1. Its 50 Q&As average 22 words each.
2. It has rhyming consonants (alliteration) and rhyming vowels (assonance) rather than rhymes to end a line, and rhythmic, like poetry.

5. What are bush clothes?

Bush clothes from, top to toe are hat, shirt, shorts, socks and boots, to suit walking, work and weather, for modesty, self-dignity and honouring others.

6. What are hats for?

Hats are to keep off sun, rain, cold, falling sticks and stones, for fanning fires, carrying water and charging head-down through the scrub.

8. Describe good boots.

Good boots are light and tough, grip the ground, fit the foot, and easy to lace and unlace.

11. What if clothes get dirty, wet or torn?

If clothes get dirty, we wash them; wet, we dry them; torn, we mend them.

13. What are pockets for?

Pockets are for handkerchief, pocket knife, matches, string and Rosary Beads.

14. What are handkerchiefs for?

Handkerchief are for blowing noses, mopping faces, drying hands, holding hot handles, bush baths and bandages.

18. Describe a good knot.

A good knot does not slip and it does not jam.

30. Describe a good campsite.

A good campsite has level grassy ground, no branches overhead, and is out of the wind and above the flood, with wood and water handy.

38. What are the two rules for good discipline?

The two rules for good discipline are ANSWER properly when you're spoken to and OBEY instantly and cheerfully.

See New Boys Bush Rescue for all 50 Q&As.

Father Jim Tierney (aged 89) lives in retirement from the parish ministry at *Rockview*, 143 Old Trunk Road, The Rock NSW 2655, phone/fax 02 6920 2000. He welcomes enquiries on his catechisms and the *Bush Boys* books, especially on his techniques revealed in *Handouts* n. 1 – a single A4 on website below.

Cardinal Newman Faith Resources for sales 15-21 Collins Street, St Marys NSW 2760, PO Box 359, St Marys NSW 1790; phone 02 9673 2235, fax 02 9623 3181, email fr@cardinalnewman.com.au. buy both *Catholic Family Catechisms* of 50 and 500 Q&As for **\$10** (or posted, \$21); **or a BARGAIN CHRISTMAS PRESENT for all the family** of nine books: the six ‘freebies’ (of the six earlier *Bush Boys*’ books, worth \$80); *New Boys’ Bush Rescue* (\$16.50); the two *Catechism* (\$10), postage/packing \$23.50, **all for \$50**

WHERE DO THE BUSH BOYS ADVENTURES FIT IN?

The *Bush Boys* adventures (1990-2024) enliven the dry bones of Q&As in the *ABC of Camping*, and the *ABC of Camping* (1989) was to justify the use of Q&As in the *Catholic Family Catechism*.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS can be made “clear, brief, easily assimilated by all”.

These samples from the religious catechism are illustrated by techniques use in the bush catechism:-