

## St Joseph the Worker and the Complementarity of the Sexes

**ORIGINALLY** the optional memorial on 1st May for St Joseph the Worker was a first class feast — a solemnity. It was a practical answer by Holy Mother Church to the Communist May Day celebrations.

It is a feast which emphasizes the Catholic idea and ideal both of work and of masculinity:

Man is a worker in the image of His Maker with a duty & dignity of perfecting God's work of creation. Here, 'man' as human being is both men and women.

More particularly, St Joseph the Worker is man the husband and father, the provider for wife and child, acting under the Providence of God the Almighty Father and on His behalf.

This latter aspect is a timely reminder of something much neglected, indeed largely negated, in our own day. It concerns the complementarity of the sexes.

God Himself provided Our Lady with St Joseph as her husband. His status as her spouse would shield her from misunderstanding and slander which might be occasioned by the miraculous pregnancy of the Child Who was not his. Further, he would be head of the Holy Family, exemplifying a Gospel paradox of the greatest being the least.

What is more, God provided St Joseph as an example of masculinity to the Lord Jesus, his foster child. A boy needs a father-figure, a visible representative presence of God the Almighty Father. Every boy is entitled to it. This ideal was important enough for the Lord Jesus to be given a foster father.

The Catholic understanding of the sexes is that "God made them male and female" and that they are complementary, that is, they complete each other in achieving what God wants. See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§ 372, 2333.

Thus St Joseph the Worker is the breadwinner, Our Lady the homemaker. The sexes were not the same. They are still not the same. They are not interchangeable. One cannot be substituted for the other.

Therefore sons need to be brought up to fulfil the male role; and daughters the female role.

### **AVOID A UNISEX UPBRINGING**

In 2001, the upbringing of one's sons and daughters at home and school is often unisex. Unisex is a vital doctrine of the false creed of the feminist philosophy.

A square with diagonals illustrates the relationships between father, mother, sons, daughters. Each relates differently to the other three. Father and mother relate as husband and wife in their marriage. Sons and daughters relate as brothers and sisters. A father re-lates to their sons but not in exactly the same way as he relates to their daughters. Similarly a mother to their sons and to their daughters. The mix is enriched with cousins and friends, and the development of some activities which are single sex: brothers with each other, and with their male cousins and friends.

The vital formative, influences in an upbringing depend on the father and mother taking responsibility for the appropriate needs of their sons and daughters, and on the dutiful response their sons and daughters make to their mother and to their father.

Both the sons and the daughters need their mother, but not in exactly the same way. Both the sons and the daughters need their father, but not in exactly the same way. Each parent has an extra responsibility with regard to their children of his or her sex.

A mother has a unique contribution to make to ensure that their daughters are brought up prepared for the female role of wife and mother in marriage, a Christian lady modelled on Our Lady; and a father a unique contribution that their sons are brought up prepared for the male role of husband and father in marriage (or for the spiritual fatherhood of a priest), not a wimp or a brute but a Christian gentleman modelled on St Joseph.

### **MODERN DILEMMA**

It is hard to see how the complementary role of the sexes in marriage will be practical for young men and women who have been brought up unisex at home and at school. How will they switch

to a new outlook based on the complementary role of the sexes in their courtship and marriage?

Obviously, they need to be brought up with this complementarity of male and female in mind.

Therefore the upbringing of sons and daughters is considerably different, albeit with a deal of overlap.

There must be some things boys do that girls do not, and some things girls do that boys do not.

In the present crisis of sexual roles, boys can do very little without girls, but girls can have it both ways by joining in all boyish activities and organizations, and nevertheless keeping whatever they wish of female exclusivity. Blessed are those few activities boys can join without girls — and if in Australia secular society and the Catholic Church do not provide them, it is up to the private enterprise of families to do so.

### **RAISING BOYS FOR COMPLEMENTARITY**

Under the patronage of St Joseph the Worker, a father needs time with his sons on manly activities.

In 2001, this still might be St Joseph's "carpentry", building or repairing things indoors or outdoors; or it might be motor mechanics; or growing flowers, fruit or vegetables; or getting firewood, even felling trees.

Alternatively, a father and his sons might follow sport as spectators, participants, or coach and players.

A third area of masculine activity geared to the complementarity of the sexes is bushwalking and camping, expeditions with Dad and with other boys free from the prevailing unisex activities. A father can tutor his sons to take responsibility for themselves and for each other so that they can go on their own bush expeditions without him. This will require tutoring at least one son for the leadership of his brothers and cousins and friends. Please turn over for details.



# Dad tutoring his Sons in Campcraft and Leadership

## Father and sons should read *Bush Boys* and study its appendices.

The adventure, freedom and beauty of 'the great outdoors' comes with a price tag: **the prevention of accidents**

### 1. A PROGRAMME IN TEN STEPS

Dad, or an older brother, becomes 'a master of novices', a master to apprentices, a tutor to students, to teach bush facts and skills, instill attitudes to safety and to develop the virtues, through graded activities:

1. Enjoying day trips in the bush with Dad.
2. Dad's backyard tutoring in making fireplaces and fires: at least boiling a billy and cooking sausages.
3. Day trips without Dad to the familiar places in 1.
4. Day trips without Dad to new places.
5. Enjoying overnight bush camping with Dad.
6. Dad's backyard tutoring in cooking breakfast and a main meal, and pitching and striking a tent.
7. Overnight 'camping' in the backyard, with meals.
8. Overnight camping without Dad to places in 5.
9. Overnight camping without Dad in new places.
10. Two night moving camp without Dad.

#### Tutoring

- On bush trips **Dad shows how** to do things in 1, 5; then in the backyard in 2, 6.
- Dad watches patiently(!) as each boy does things '**hands on**', just like learning to drive a car or work a computer, in 1, 2, 5, 6, as also the trial camp in 7.
- Dad quizzes his sons on the "how, why, when, where, what" of bush knowledge and skills.
- Each step is repeated until it is mastered completely before moving on to the next step.

#### Reporting back to Dad

Dad 'debriefs' the boys after all trips made **without him** (3,4, 8, 9, 10):

- first, he listens to them, and gauges *his* own success or failure in tutoring them;
- he quizzes them on "how, why, when, where, what";
- he gives remedial tutoring in knowledge and skills;
- he checks their **attitudes to accidents**, and the many virtues they need to avoid accidents.

### 2. MANY FACTS & SKILLS

1. **Fires:** finding or making kindling despite rain; making fireplaces; avoiding burns, scalds and bushfires; finding and purifying water; billy supports, hot handles, making tea (everyone must drink tea).
2. **Clothing and gear:** life may depend on them.
3. **Finding your way** there and back.
4. **Avoiding the Seven Deadly Dangers** that lead to death in the bush, not by chance but by planning.

### 3. VIRTUES required before boys 'go bush'

Character reference as required by God:

1. **GOD** first — source of our duty, dignity, destiny.
2. Honour His NAME (see Holy Name Pledge).
3. Keep His HOLY DAY; and keep all days holy: pray!
4. HONOUR & OBEY parents and all lawful authority.
5. **Respect** life: be KIND + FIRM and keep your temper;
6. also God's 'TEMPLE' (our bodies) and the opposite sex;
7. and also PROPERTY: it's on loan from God.
8. Be TRUTHFUL, also hold your tongue.
9. **Think CLEAN THOUGHTS**
10. and GENEROUS THOUGHTS: imitate God's goodwill!

### 4. LEADERSHIP by the boy-in-charge



A boy-in-charge is a tutor to the others, particularly in teaching them to avoid accidents by **Safety First** and developing common sense 'safety attitudes'. He must be competent to give **First Aid**. He has the characteristics of leadership: dependable, true & trustworthy; determined but not stubborn; competent in all the bush skills; and able to get the other boys to obey him **without being bossy**; to keep the

party together without it breaking up; and to keep them busy and cheerful without frowns or grumps.

### 5. DAD'S CHALLENGE TO HIS SONS

"If you do not obey your mother and me at home, how will you ever keep my rules when you are away? Can I trust you to obey your big brother? Before Mum and I let you go into the bush by yourselves, every single one of you must **prove himself by cheerful obedience at home**, obeying when you do not feel like it and even when you cannot see the reason. **You must obey first and ask questions afterwards.**"

Discipline is a means to an end: (1) self-conquest, (2) defeating the effects of original sin, and (3) a foundation for the 'survival virtues' for body and soul. Bush discipline is particularly concerned with the prevention of accidents. Its rules are: "Answer properly when you're spoken to", and "Obey, straightaway".

"**ANSWER & OBEY**" is also courtesy and it is never too late for Dad and Mum to insist on it — just as the army does, over and over again, with each new intake of under disciplined young men. There is no other way.

For *The Australian Bush Catechism of Camping* (from the appendix in *Bush Boys*) see *Handouts* no. 2.