



# Keeping in Touch

A quarterly newsletter for Catholic homeschooling families

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## NO MORE POSTED COPIES OF KEEPING IN TOUCH

**KEEPING IN TOUCH** will no longer be printed and distributed by the Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc at Merrylands. No more donations should be sent there, except in acknowledgement of past services.

KIT will continue to be available electronically on the website of the Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc. ([www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au)) for reading or downloading.

If you would like to be notified by email when a new issue of KIT is coming online, please advise Mr. Shaun Fanning, who currently maintains the address list, by email on [tarlohill@bigpond.com](mailto:tarlohill@bigpond.com).

If you need a printed copy and cannot get a friend or neighbour to download and print it for you, please contact:

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## PUBLICATION

KEEPING IN TOUCH is published about the end of the fifth week of each term. Contributions are invited from Catholic homeschooling families and from priests, religious and laity supporting them. Children's poems, stories and book reviews are very welcome.

Please send contributions on A4 paper, or (preferably) via e-mail where possible.

## MATERIAL DEADLINE

Please note that the deadline for contributions from readers is the **end of the second week of each term.**

## CATECHETICAL NEWS

Father Tierney regrets to announce that his personal newsletter "Catechetical News" will cease with issue 183.

He cannot cope with the work of preparing it. However new issues of his single sheet handouts will appear periodically and will be available on the website [www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au).

On request, they will be posted as quality master prints to those who wish to multiply them for apostolic purposes. He will refund any donations towards either newsletter made during 2004 to those who feel that they have not got value for money in what they have already received.

The newsletter "Book News" of the Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc. will continue to be mailed out and may sometimes include articles by Father Tierney. It will also appear on the website.

## TERM ONE 2005

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## ICE CREAM FROM THE DESSERT

A friend recently pointed out to me that few people can spell “dessert” correctly. They usually spell it with one s, which turns “a sweet course eaten at the end of a meal” into “a dry, barren area covered with sand.” Maybe they had sandwiches for the main course and wanted to continue along the same theme.

So, is the yummy dish (if you eat your veges) spelt with one s or two? It's two, but how are you supposed to remember that? Pronunciation isn't any help, because 'dessert' is one of those rare English words where the double 's' is pronounced as a 'z.' Dee-zert.



You could make some incidental connection to something you're more familiar with. For example, you could think “the impoverished area of sand can only afford one 's.' The sweets at the end of the meal indulge in two of them.” Or simply “double s – double serving.”

### Understanding and memorisation

Actually, there's a key to remembering anything which can be a great help: understanding why it is so. If you had to remember the phrase: “What can't be cured must be endured” you probably wouldn't have much trouble doing it. It might help to write it down or maybe to explain it to someone. The phrase rhymes, too. Now try to remember this sequence of letters:

Aabbccdddeeeehmnnrrsttuuw

In fact, they are the letters in the phrase you have just memorized, but this time they are in alphabetical order. You can remember that many letters in a different order if you've remembered the saying. What if we jumbled them up, so that they weren't in any order at all? Pretty difficult. As you can see, it's so much easier to memorize once you understand it.

Let's apply that rule to remembering how to spell 'dessert' and 'desert.' Remember, that Something Sweet has a double 's', and the land of sand has only one. Why?

The word 'dessert' comes from the French word *desservir*, which is made up of *des-* (expressing removal) and *servir*, 'to serve.' The idea is that the dishes served in the main course are cleared away before you can follow up with something sweet. So if you clear the table before you serve out the chocolate mousse, you are doing your guests a disservice!



### Deserting dessert

The word desert (pronounced *dez-ert* with the emphasis on the first syllable) originates in the Latin *deserere* meaning “something left waste.” A desert is a dry, barren area of land, especially one covered with sand. How does a tropical island become a desert island? Simply by being remote and uninhabited (apart from treasure hunters and broken-hearted poets). The verb *to desert* (with the same pronunciation as the yummy food, but the same spelling as the very large sandpit), simply means to abandon, usually in a treacherous or disloyal way. “He deserted the army as soon as the war broke out.”

Somehow or other, you should remember by now that dessert is Something Special, and has a double 's.' So, if you eat your greens have you got your just desert or just your dessert? Both, in fact. You get your dessert (double s) because you get to eat Something Scrumptious. And you get your just desert, because you get what you justly deserved. You probably didn't end up with the Sahara, though, because you never asked for or were promised a sandy desert. The word in 'getting one's just desert' comes from the Latin *deservire*, 'to serve well or zealously.' (Not to be confused with *dis-servire*, to un-serve. The prefix *dis* almost always expresses negation. Add *dis* to 'advantage', 'able', 'honor' or 'own').

Finding out the origin of words can be helpful in understanding their meanings as well as remembering how to spell them. Understanding is a great help to memorization. So, if you want a cold dessert, have some ice cream, but if you're after a cold desert, go to Antarctica.

If you think you have digested this dissertation on desserts and deserts, read the title of this article out loud.

**Anthony English**

## SEPTEMBER CAMP AT FITZROY FALLS

As of the first week of second term, we will be taking bookings for our annual September camp.

Daily Mass, Rosary and Benediction concluding with a Procession on the last day. Daily classes in Religion, Drama, Singing, stage design and Science as well as organized and free time sport and games in the evenings.

If you are able to come, please send your \$50 deposit made out to Homeschooling Catholics, to Mrs. Michele Vieira 1585 Taralga Rd, Tarlo, 2580

Dates: 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2005

Place: Fitzroy Falls Conference Center,

## A POEM

A poem inspired by Turner's painting *The Fall of an Avalanche in the Grisons*.

On the mountainside up near the sky,  
Sits a snow mound one mile high,  
A pile of frost, a great hill of ice,  
Of size enough to coat a city twice.

A heap of untapped kinetic force,  
Potential power of a million horse,  
It looks below where it doth stand,  
At peaceful and undisturbed land.

Unknowing of danger on the mountain top,  
An apocalypse that upon it may drop,  
The land sleeps ignorant to all,  
And high above, the avalanche doth fall.

**Duncan Elvis**

## HOW SCHOOL IMITATES LIFE

“Oh that’s alright for you – you’re a teacher!” How often have I had something like that said to me when I tell others we are homeschooling. Behind that statement there seems to be the presumption that only school teachers are good teachers, that the school is the place where real education happens and that since I have some tertiary teacher training and experience in schools, it’s OK for me to homeschool.

I find this attitude very exasperating, but over the checkout counter I can’t really go into the reasons why it is fundamentally mistaken. I just smile and pray for patience! So please bear with me now if I take this opportunity to say what I would like to say to the nice old lady at Woolies who so earnestly believes that schools are the only way to be educated.

Yes, I was a school teacher. I have experience in general primary teaching and also in specialist teaching of reading, music and English as a Second Language. There were many aspects of teaching that I enjoyed and I worked with some talented teachers, and very hard workers they were, too. Yet, after we got married and were blessed with our first baby on the way, Anthony and I started to reflect upon the grave duty we have to educate our children. This is a duty the Church has constantly recognized.

Could we entrust our duty to others in full confidence? Would our children grow to know and love the Catholic faith? Would their innocence and purity be protected? Would they be educated in all that is good and true and beautiful? Could any school guarantee these things – even those schools that are sincerely trying to uphold Church teaching? Our thoughts turned more and more to homeschooling. The more we read about it and saw happy homeschooling families first hand, the clearer our decision became.

Now, as I reflect on my school-teaching years, I know that I learned to be a teacher primarily by teaching, not in my pre-graduate training. I also learned by watching carefully those skilled and experienced teachers whom I admired. I tried to glean the best of what I saw. I also, of course, learned from my mistakes what works with kids. So, Mums who have no teaching background, have no fear! You will learn on the job in a far more effective way. In this sense,

the “Amateur” can do as well as the “Professional” because the root of her teaching, like the root of the word “amateur” is love. Comparing school education to home education, I can see now that schools are in reality always trying to imitate the home. They are trying to do what only a family can fully do! A quick look at some of their goals and programmes will show what I mean.

“Holistic education.” This has been the catch-cry for many years. Schools aim, they say, to educate “the whole child” – physically, socially, spiritually, academically etc. How can a school teacher realistically do this? How long does it take her to get to know each child in her class in each of those areas? How can she meet all these needs for 35 individuals? Parents know their children best of all.



### Special education.

Schools try their best to educate children with all kinds of special needs. It is a mammoth task, considering the overwhelming needs in present-day schools. There are learning difficulties, depression, hyperactivity and speech problems. A child with severe problems might be lucky enough to get an hour or maybe two a week with a special teacher for one-on-one teaching. Most schools, though, cannot afford to provide for all the special needs they have in their schools. A parent can teach a “special” child at his own pace without the stigma or labels he would receive at school. A parent can seek help with special needs to complement their work at home.

### Accelerated learning.

Schools often talk about helping gifted and talented learners to progress faster. In reality, most become bored with school and often become disruptive – the classical “gifted underachiever.” Home education is perfectly suited to accelerated learning as the parents can have one student doing Year 6 maths and Year 3 English if that is the right pace for him. Parents can tailor their programme to the talents of their children very well.

### Peer tutoring.

Many schools have this programme whereby older students tutor the younger ones or act as their mentors. This can work well, as it is a tremendous boost to the older child who enjoys helping, and a wonderful comfort to the younger one,

who is finding a certain subject difficult. However, it takes a lot of organisation in schools to achieve a good Peer Tutoring programme. At home it is also a terrific teaching idea, and much simpler to implement.

These are just some ways in which school is imitating life, or in other words, trying to do what the home can do much more effectively. Let’s take heart from this and keep on learning ourselves as we teach our children about truth and goodness and beauty. We believe the home school can be a little domestic church where Christ the Teacher dwells (despite all our weaknesses) and draws us towards Himself in happiness and holiness.

### Lisa English

*A Child's Prayer to  
Blessed Jacinta and Francisco*

Blessed Jacinta of Fatima, help me to live a life of prayer and sacrifice for sinners as you did. Help me to love the Immaculate Heart of Mary as you did and work to save souls from Hell.

Blessed Francisco of Fatima, pray that I, like you, will think often of God and console Him who is so sad because He is offended by sin. Obtain for me a strong will to walk away from bad companions as you did.

Blessed Jacinta and Francisco, help me to pray the Rosary and my daily prayers properly while thinking of the mysteries of Jesus and Mary. Ask my Guardian Angel to lead me to adore the hidden Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament as the Angel of Fatima led you to Jesus. Pray that I offer the Blessed Trinity the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, as both of you did.

Blessed Jacinta and Francisco, Pray that I be pure in thought word and deed as you were. As you are the youngest children the Church has ever declared Blessed pray that I too will someday live in heaven with you. Amen.

## EUCCHARIST ADORATION

I encourage Christians regularly to visit Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament, for we are all called to abide in the presence of God. In contemplation, Christians will perceive ever more profoundly the mystery at the heart of Christian life. Teach young people the value of Eucharistic Adoration.



I urge priests, religious and lay people to continue and redouble their efforts to teach the younger generations the meaning and value of Eucharistic adoration and devotion. How will young people be able to know the Lord if they are not introduced to the mystery of His presence? Like the young Samuel, by learning the words of the prayer of the heart, they will be closer to the Lord, who will accompany them in their spiritual and human growth. The Eucharistic mystery is in fact the "summit of evangelization" (Lumen Gentium) for it is the most eminent testimony to Christ's resurrection.

Pope John Paul II tells us *Dominicae Cenae* that the church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic Worship.

### INSPIRED BY A YOUTH

The main point of every retreat and homily that Bishop Sheen ever gave was an effort to inspire everyone to make a daily Holy Hour.

Before he died, Bishop Sheen was interviewed on TV. The question he was asked was, "Who inspired and influenced you to make a daily Holy Hour? Was it a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, a priest, or perhaps a nun?"

Bishop Sheen answered: "None of these. The one who inspired me to make a daily Holy Hour was a youth."

Then he explained that when the Communists took over China, they went to one church and locked the priest in his rectory. They next proceeded to go to the church where they broke into the tabernacle, took the Sacred Hosts, and threw them onto the floor.

What the soldiers did not see was a young girl kneeling in prayer, for she was too small to notice.

That night the young girl returned and, sneaking quietly past the guards at the priest's house, entered the dark, cold church.

There she knelt in a Holy Hour of prayer before going into the sanctuary to receive her Lord and her God in Holy Communion.

At that time, Communion could only be received once a day and on the tongue. For that reason, the little girl came back every night until all the Sacred Hosts were consumed. She would kneel and, bending down to the floor, receive Jesus on her tongue. The parish priest witnessed this from his window for he could see the little girl in the moonlight.

The priest knew exactly how many Hosts were in the ciborium because he had counted them before consecrating them. On the thirty sixth night, when the last Host was consumed, the guards discovered the little girl as she was leaving. They grabbed her and beat her to death. The priest lived to tell the story.

When Bishop Sheen heard this as a seminarian, he promised God that he would make a Holy Hour every day of his priestly life – and he kept that promise until he died at the age of eighty-two!

By then he had inspired countless bishops and priests to do the same, but few knew it was a young person who had inspired him to do so.

**Hearts Aflame Magazine Autumn 2004.**



### Become a member of the *Fraternity of Kindness*

No enrollment is necessary. There are no officers, no meetings, and no dues. You must make up your mind that you want to belong to it and then begin immediately to keep the rules.

The rules are simple—three little *don't's* and three little *do's*.

#### *Don't's*

1. Don't speak unkindly of anyone.
2. Don't speak unkindly to anyone.
3. Don't act unkindly toward anyone

#### *Do's*

1. Do speak kindly of someone at least once a day.
2. Do think kindly about someone at least once a day.
3. Do act kindly toward someone at least once a day.

#### *For any unkindness committed:*

1. Make a brief act of contrition, such as "My Jesus, mercy!"
2. Offer an apology, if possible.
3. Say little prayer—such as "Bless N., O Lord"—for the one to whom you have been unkind.

### PRAYER TO ST ROCCO

O Great St Rocco, deliver us, we beseech thee, from the scourges of God; through thy intercession, preserve our bodies from contagious diseases, and our souls from the contagion of sin. Obtain for us salubrious air; but, above all, purity of heart. Assist us to make good use of health, to bear sufferings with patience; and, after thy example, to live in the practice of penance and charity, that we may one day enjoy the happiness which thou has merited by thy virtues.

St. Rocco, pray for us - 3 times

## “YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE MY ONLY SUNSHINE”

Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her 3-year-old son Michael, prepare for a new sibling. They found out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his little sister in mommy’s tummy. He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.

The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, and active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. In time, the labor pains came and soon it was every five minutes, then every three and then every minute. However, serious complications arose during delivery and Karen found herself in hours of labor. Would a csection be required? Finally, after a long struggle, Michael’s little sister was born, but she was in a very serious condition.

With a siren howling in the night, the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary’s hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inched by, but the little girl grew worse.

The paediatrician had to tell the parents there was very little hope and so to prepare for the worst. Karen and her husband contacted a local cemetery about a burial plot. They had fixed up a special room in their house for their new baby, but now they found themselves having to plan for a funeral. Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. “I want to sing to her,” he kept saying.

Week two in intensive care looked as if a funeral would come before the week was over. Michael kept nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are never allowed in Intensive Care. Karen decided to take Michael whether they liked it or not.

If he didn’t see his sister right then, he may never see her alive.

She dressed him in an oversized scrub suit and marched him into ICU.



He looked like a walking laundry basket. The head nurse recognized him as a child and bellowed, “Get that kid out of here now. No children are allowed.”

The mother rose up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glared steel-eyed right into the head nurse’s face, her lips a firm line.

“He is not leaving until he sings to his sister,” she stated. Then Karen towed Michael to his sister’s bedside. He gazed at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. After a moment, he began to sing.

In the pure-hearted voice of a 3-year-old, Michael sang: “You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are grey.” Instantly the baby girl seemed to respond. The pulse rate began to calm down and become steady.

“Keep on singing, Michael,” encouraged Karen with tears in her eyes. “You never know dear how much I love you, please don’t take my sunshine away.”

As Michael sang to his sister, the baby’s ragged, strained breathing became as smooth as a kitten’s purr.



“Keep on singing, sweetheart.” “The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping, I dreamed I held you in my arms.” Michael’s little sister began to relax as rest, healing rest, seemed to sweep over her.

“Keep on singing, Michael.”

Tears had now conquered the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glowed. “You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. Please don’t take my sunshine away...” The next, day...the very next day...the little girl was well enough to go home.

Woman’s Day Magazine called it The Miracle of a Brother’s Song. The medical staff just called it a miracle. Karen called it a miracle of God’s love NEVER GIVE UP ON THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE. LOVE IS SO INCREDIBLY POWERFUL. GOD IS GOOD LET’S RETURN HIS LOVE FOR US!!

## Prayer to Our Lady

Remedy against the “Spirits of Darkness” and the forces of hate and fear

“August Queen of the Heavens, heavenly sovereign of the Angels, Thou who from the beginning received from God the power and the mission to crush the head of Satan, we humbly beseech Thee to send Thy holy Legions so that under Thy command and through Thy power, they may pursue the demons and combat them everywhere, suppress their boldness and drive them back into the abyss.”

Who is like unto God?  
O good and tender Mother, Thou shalt always be our love and our hope!

Divine Mother, send Thy holy Angels to defend me and to drive far away from the cruel enemy.

Holy Angels and Archangels, defend us, guard us. Amen.

## INDULGENCED PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

O most glorious Virgin, chosen by an eternal decree to be Mother of the Divine Word, Treasurer of divine graces and Refuge of Sinners, I, thy most unworthy servant, have recourse to thee, that thou mayest graciously be my Guide and Counsellor in this vale of tears. Implore for me, through the Most Precious Blood of thy Son, forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the necessary means to obtain it. Procure also for the Holy Church triumph over her enemies, and the propagation of the Kingdom of Christ over the whole earth. Amen.

(100 days Indulgence, Leo XIII, Nov. 23, 1880)

## PLAIN JANE

It was a cold wintry day in January of 1992. Ten inches of snow had fallen. Because of the weather, I did not expect any visitors ringing the rectory doorbell. So I was somewhat surprised when the doorbell did ring on that memorable day. Standing outside on the front steps of the rectory was a young lady who introduced herself immediately. "My name is Jane Mercier, Father. Everybody just calls me 'Plain Jane.' I would like to talk to you," she said.

As soon as she was seated, Jane declared, "Since you haven't been in this parish very long, you probably did not recognize me. I do come to Mass every Sunday morning," she explained.

"I live with my mother in Lost Forest quite a few miles from Dakota, Minnesota. My mother is a widow and we manage to survive by raising a few animals, cultivating a garden, and selling apples from our orchard.

"Father, I read your story about My Lady, the famous llama of Lost Forest. She is one of my friends. I have also befriended Samantha the cougar who roams the area adjacent to our house. "You may wonder why people call me Plain Jane. I was not attractive as a child. For that reason my classmates often teased me about my appearance. If it were not for my mother's assurance that I would become a beautiful lady some day, I would have left school and never returned."

While she was talking, I did notice that she had blossomed into a very lovely lady. "Father," she continued, "I am troubled and I don't know where to begin because you may not believe what I am going to say. Perhaps you will think that I am emotionally unstable and that I imagine things.

A few months ago I began hearing voices similar to those heard by St. Joan of Arc. Sometimes those voices were accompanied by visions. The voices have revealed rather startling and prophetic messages. For example, they have told me that certain people were going to die in our community. The voices not only described the manner in which some of those people would die, but also the exact date of their death. I was reluctant to believe what I was hearing as I thought that I was dreaming and everything I heard would be forgotten.

I was mistaken. As weeks elapsed, the predictions came true and people died exactly as the voices had predicted. I became frightened and felt that I ought to share those experiences with my mother. She was not at all surprised to hear about the voices. She did caution me, however, not to mention these experiences to other people lest they ridicule me and recommend that I be confined to a psychiatric ward. My mother also suggested that I ought to visit you and discuss this matter. What should I do, Father?"

We priests have been trained not to be gullible and certainly not to be cynical. So I began to question her in more detail about her visions and voices. Jane Mercier answered all of my questions in a very direct manner. She was most sincere in her responses.

To confirm the veracity of her statements, Jane surprised me when she said, "I can prove that what I am saying is true. In fact I believe you will find my story credible when I reveal to you the winning numbers of the Illinois lottery which will be announced next Saturday night on television. The winning numbers for the 47 million-dollar jackpot will be: 2-17-43-31-18-25. Of course, Father, that information is privileged and part of the seal. I mean you will not be able to buy a ticket and use those particular numbers for your benefit or the benefit of the Holy Cross and Precious Blood Parishes."

If I were inclined to believe her story about the voices, I certainly did not think that the Lord or any spiritual being would become involved in a multi-million dollar lottery. Interrupting my thoughts, Jane excused herself and said that she would return on the following week to continue our discussion of what she had shared with me. She needed a confidant because she could not bear the burden of keeping everything to herself.

For the remainder of the week I was distracted by other events, which demanded my attention. Consequently, I forgot about the winning numbers for the Illinois lottery. While watching the 9:00 o'clock news on Saturday night, the program was interrupted momentarily to announce the winning lottery numbers. Slowly they called out the numbers:

2. That was the first number revealed by Jane. It was probably a lucky guess.

17. I still wasn't impressed. Very likely it was a coincidence that Jane's first were correct.

43. This was another correct number disclosed by Jane. I began to question why she would be given such information and not permitted to utilize it for herself or for the benefit of others.

31. I thought I was dreaming. Thus far everyone of Jane's numbers was correct.

18. If I had any doubts about the voices heard by Jane, those doubts were now dispelled. She had certainly not imagined hearing such voices – they were as the lottery numbers announce on television.

25. The chance of selection six correct numbers in a lottery was one in twelve million. Jane Mercier had defied those odds. She knew with certitude that her information could not be false because it came from sources beyond the realm of human experience.

For several minutes I remained in a trance before I began to realize the implications of Jane's prophetic words. I often read about people who have the special gift of prophecy from the Holy Spirit, but I never expected to meet in Dakota, Minnesota with such extraordinary powers.

I wondered how Jane was able to hear these prophetic messages and still remain silent when the messages came true.

Can you imagine how you would feel if it were revealed to you that a person would die and precisely when that person would die? Suppose that, before thirteen-year old Jason Johnson of La Crescent, Minnesota had died in an accident last year on the 25th of August, you knew in advance when he would die and in what manner he would die. If you were warned not to divulge that information, would you have the strength to remain silent? Jane Mercier was confronted with that dilemma several times and did not falter.

The young prophetess of Lost Forest did return a week later. I no longer hesitated to believe her messages.

Again she revealed to me some very dire predictions about the future of our world. It was distressing to listen to her words.

## PLAIN JANE (Continued)

When Jane began to talk to me about her spiritual life, I learned that she was a very special soul who had cultivated a life of prayer from the time she had been five years old. She told me that she spent many hours every day making acts of love to God. "I will never be able to love God as much as He wants me to love Him. So I simply ask the Lord to show me how to increase my love for him. I also ask Jesus to come into my soul and permeate the entire fiber of my being so that every breath I take, every beat of my heart, every thought I entertain, every image I have in my imagination, every word I utter, and every movement of my body will be offered to him as an act of love," she confided.

"Father, there are so many people the world today who do not love God. Some, I am convinced, hate and despise him. Therefore, I ask God to help me make up for that lack of love by loving him more and more each day."

"Perhaps this sounds strange," continued Jane as she described her prayer life to me. "I ask God to help me love him so much that my soul can no longer endure to be separated from him. I yearn to become a bride of Christ so that I may enjoy for all eternity the most intimate union that a soul can experience living with God. I sometimes am given a foretaste of that happiness when God reveals himself to me. The ecstasy and the intense joy that fill my soul are indescribable. I believe that is how every soul will feel when it beholds the Beatific Vision and sees God face to face. There is no joy in this world comparable to such an intense experience." Her face was aglow as she spoke.

I could relate to such experiences because I was aware from my study of Mystical Theology that some saints loved God so much that their souls could no longer be contained in their bodies. For example, St. Philip Neri's heart literally burst with love and some of his ribs were fractured when he died. St. Philip loved God so much that his soul could not bear to be separated from him.

Likewise, St. Francis Xavier experienced such deeply felt delight from loving God that he could hardly endure such emotion in his human body for a prolonged duration of time. I also recall that whenever St. Alphonsus Liguori was given a vision of heaven, his heart and soul were so filled with joy that he begged God to terminate his

state of ecstasy because his body could not sustain such intense feelings.

I have met a goodly number of people in my ministry whose love for God was extraordinary. But Jane Mercier is the first person I have ever met who radiated that special love of God by the thoughts she shared with me, by her words, and by her behavior. Now I understand why God had favored her with so many special locutions and visions.

Before Jane left the rectory to return to her home in Lost Forest, she asked to see me periodically and talk about her spiritual experiences. I gladly agreed to her request.

Approximately a week later I received an emergency telephone call at midnight. "Father, I am Jan Mercier's mother. Please come to administer the Last Sacraments to my daughter. Jane is dying," she sobbed. I assured Mrs. Mary Mercier that I would come as soon as possible.

Only the mother greeted me when I arrived at the Mercier farmhouse in Lost Forest. She quickly ushered me to Jane's bedroom. After giving that young lady Holy Viaticum and then anointing her, I noticed a radiant smile on her face. She glowed with holiness. The beauty of that radiance was mesmerizing. Never before had I experienced God's presence as I felt it at that moment.

Jane tried to speak to me. However, all I could hear were the words, "Jesus I love you. I want to be with you for all eternity." Then she expired. The smile remained on the face. Both Mrs. Mercier and I were deeply moved by what we had witnessed.

Turning to me, Mrs. Mary Mercier declared, "I have never seen anyone happier than my Jane. God seemed to be with her at every moment of her life. I felt that divine presence whenever she was near me. O Lord," this mother cried in agony, "I'm going to miss her! I don't know how I will be able to live without her."

The doctors who examined Jane's body after her death were mystified because she had been in excellent health, no one expected her to die. Following an autopsy, one of the doctors mentioned that he found an one organ which seemed abnormal. "Jane's heart," he said, "had ruptured." So far as Mrs. Mercier and I were concerned, there was no need to offer any other evidence to account for Jane's death. We knew that she had died from the love of God.

On the third day following Jane Mercier's departure from this world, I celebrated her funeral Mass at Holy Cross Church. Every person who knew this loving person attended that Mass. In the course of my homily I proposed to the congregation that Jane ought to become a model for all of us. We too should aspire to love God so much that we will no longer be able to endure separation from him. In other words we too will be able die on account of our love for God.

I did mention that some people may object to that proposal by saying, "Oh, but I'm too unworthy to die such a noble death!" Of course, all of us are unworthy. "Even if we fall short of attaining that goal," I added, "we will advance much further in the spiritual life and achieve more intimacy with God than we ever dreamed possible." After we laid Jane's mortal remains to rest in our parish cemetery, many people approached me. Some said, "She touched so many lives." Others remarked, "Never again will we refer to her as Plain Jane. She was truly Saint Jane!"

The people of Holy Cross and Precious Blood Parishes will never forget Jane Mercier as long as they live. Everyone agreed that we had a saint in our midst and did not really appreciate her presence until she had died. Jane will continue to be an inspiration for all of us to live a better life and to strive to love God as much as she loved Him.

**Joseph C. Frisch.**  
**From the Apostles of Mary**  
**Newsletter, October 2004**

### PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH IN TIME OF NEED

O glorious St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary, be mindful of us, watch over us, help us to work out our salvation. O thou whose power with God makes possible things which are seemingly impossible, look to our present needs. Come to our aid in the distressing circumstances in which we find ourselves and take under thy protecting wing, the direction of those important and difficult matters which we recommend to Thee. May their happy issue tend to the greater glory of God and the good of souls.  
St. Joseph, helper in time of trial pray for us

## I AM A SLOW LEARNER

I am a slow learner. Very slow. But God in His mercy keeps plodding away, making sure I eventually learn the lesson. I thought I'd share with you something I've just realized God's been trying to teach me for a while.

Did you know that to teach children anything, you need to break it down into smaller parts and work upwards until the whole is mastered? That's what God has finally got through my head. Four things have happened which got me thinking along these lines.

I first got an inkling of this idea when I was talking to my friend about the virtues of hospital-based nurse training. She remarked that, under the old system, you learnt your ward management by working up to it through increasing responsibilities. For those who have not had the benefit of a hospital based nurse training, the system was that basically you were taught a few skills like bed-making, taking temperatures and pulses, how to make patients comfortable and sterilizing of pans. Then you were sent out into the wards to practice these skills. On that first day in the wards, it was amazing how long it took to wash one person! You finally got your one patient washed in time for your morning tea break and then got back to do your temperature and pulse round. As the days on the ward went on, you got quicker at it and, by the time you went back to the classroom, you were ready to take on more. Now you learnt how to take blood pressures, more difficult pulse taking and how to do dressings. Then back on the ward again. And so it went throughout your nurse training.

The next step in God's teaching of me was a conversation I had with my cousin at a family gathering. She was working with drug addicts in the Cabramatta area of Sydney. I asked did she have much success. She replied, it depends what you mean by success. If I meant did many people give up drugs completely then the success rate was not all that high. But, she said, she had learnt to set smaller goals and build on success. If the client came back to the next appointment, that was a success. If they kept coming for a week, that was a success. You have to set achievable goals for along the way to the final goal of being drug-free, she said.

Then the Board of Studies meeting prompted thoughts about how children learn again with all the talk of an outcomes based syllabus. I initially

thought this was a lot of educational jargon – and a total waste of time. But actually, the outcomes listed in the syllabus are often ideas of the steps needed to be taken for a full coverage of a topic.

The final step in my learning process was started this year. I went back to learning tap dancing. I had learnt tap as a child and teenager and loved it, but had not tapped for 27 years. I started practicing what I could remember at home, which were mostly things from the last grade I had studied. My darling husband bought me a pair of tap shoes for Christmas and I intended learning tap in an adult class this year. As it turned out though, there was only one other lady interested. And she had never tapped before. So the teacher started out with the first grade work. Until the teacher started doing this, I had not realized how the steps of later grades build so much on the steps of earlier grades.

How often learning is like this for our children! They start learning their numbers or their phonic sounds. It can seem painfully slow to us, but we keep plodding away at it and they increase their speed and accuracy. Then it's time to start to put sounds together or to work with those numbers they've just learnt. Once they can read some words, we can put simple words together to make sentences. From sentences we progress to paragraphs then onto longer pieces of writing.

Similarly with numbers. It's no use racing on to long division if they haven't mastered their tables – it will just be frustrating. So we go back to the building blocks.

So, if you are having any struggles with your children learning something, try breaking it down into smaller parts. Then build on successes until you reach your goal. Maybe that's what God was doing with me – maybe being a slow learner is a part of learning things thoroughly – who knows?

**Michelle Vieira**



## MUM'S METHODS

I have never been to school. My older sister, Megan, went to school for a term but it just didn't work. So Mum decided to homeschool. Mum has been busy ever since, trying out different methods.

First we tried the "slack method". The way it worked was that every now and again someone would say "You haven't done this in a while", but then nobody knew if we had done enough school work each term.

Then we tried the "table method", where we had the work for the week laid out on a piece of paper. It worked all right, but Mum thought she could make it even better.

The final method was the "lesson plan", where we have the terms work laid out clearly for each child in a little booklet. That method was the best one, because if Mum wasn't around to tell me what I needed to do, I didn't have to wait around to start school work. It is very routine. I don't think the lesson plan could get any better, but Mum keeps coming up with ways to surprise me, and improve the way I learn.

## A DEVOTION IN HONOUR OF THE WOUNDED SHOULDER OF OUR LORD

Sweet and gentle Jesus, who so meekly suffered that cruel pain from the wound inflicted by the Cross on Thy Sacred Shoulder, I desire to honour that hidden suffering of Yours. It is little honored because it is so little known, but I offer you the love with which, throughout all ages, the angels have worshipped that Sacred Wound. I unite my love to theirs, and I desire to bear in silence whatever hidden sufferings you may send me in memory of that sacred pain you endured in carrying Your Cross for men.

Amen.

(Partial Indulgence for saying the Lord's Prayer and three Hail Marys in honor of the Sacred Wound.)

Holy Spirit, guide me on my way. Make known to me what I should do and what I should avoid.

Precious Mother Mary, Mother of Divine Grace, you always make a way where there is no way. Please help me.

## DOVES HONOR OUR LADY OF FATIMA

The miracle of the doves, that remained at the feet of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima as quiet sentinels, was reported worldwide in the secular and religious press, to the wonderment of many. It all began in year 1946 when Portugal was celebrating three events: the third centenary of the revolution which gave Portugal its independence from Spain; the crowning of John IV as king of the country, and the king's declaration naming Our Lady as patroness of Portugal under the title of the Immaculate Conception.

The statue left Fatima on November 23, 1946, on a gilt platform, with white flowers surrounding the feet of the image. It was jubilantly greeted by thousands of people. At each church where it stopped for the night, great crowds spent the entire night in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which ended with the offering of Holy Mass.

As a special tribute to the Blessed Mother, a woman bought some white doves from a market in Lisbon and had them sent to Bombarral to be set free as the statue of Our Lady passed in procession...two doves flew high and then left, but three doves flew to the statue and settled among the flowers at the feet of the Madonna...as one witness wrote:

"The noise and acclamations of the crowds; the hymn singing; the bursting of festive rockets; the lights at night; the heat of the sun or the heavy rain during some days, or the entrance of the image on its flowered stand into the various churches where prayer vigils and night ceremonies took place – nothing made the doves abandon the touching and humble image of Our Lady."

The statue arrived at Lisbon on December 5, carried triumphantly through the crowd by Carmelite tertiaries to the new Church of Our Lady of Fatima. It was to remain there for two days.

At about nine-thirty in the evening of December 7, the statue was conveyed with all pomp and reverence in a candle-lit procession to the cathedral...

The image arrived at about one o'clock in the morning of December 8. Throughout the night, with the church filled to capacity and prayers sounding throughout...the doves remained quiet and still... but during the Holy Mass [later that morning] something

extraordinary took place.

The Very Reverend Canon J. G. de Oliveira, a representative of the Bishop of Fatima, who was an eyewitness, wrote, that that at the ringing of the bell to alert everyone of the imminent elevation of the Sacred Host:

"...two of the doves suddenly flew...after days of refusing food or drink and remaining at the feet of the statue...one sped straight to the Gospel side of the altar, and the other to Epistle side! There, as the bishop straightened to raise the Consecrated Host, they folded their wings...as though in adoration! As the Mass progressed, the two doves remained there to the bewilderment of the celebrants and servers and the stupefied congregation. But this was still not the end. The third dove had not left the statue. Suddenly. At the moment of Communion, the third dove flew up and perched on top of the statue's golden crown...and as the celebrant turned and held up Our Lord saying, "Ecce Agnus Dei" (Behold the Lamb of God), the dove spread its wings and held them open!"

Extraordinary as the preceding events were, there was still more to come the following year, when the miracle of the doves was repeated! For three months, from October 13, 1947, until January 12, 1948, the statue of Our Lady of Fatima was taken on another pilgrimage through cities and towns of both Portugal and Spain.

At the village of Cabecao (for example) one of the doves was removed from its reserved place at the feet of Our Lady and was placed upon the altar, where it quietly remained until the blessed of the Blessed Sacrament. Again, it flew to the feet of the statue.

While the statue was visiting the small village of Bencatel, thirteen doves nestled close by Our Lady ... During an overnight stay at the property of the House of Braganza... the doves were all sleeping with their heads resting against the mantle and feet of Our Lady.

After the image crossed into Spain, other wonders took place...

[One example occurred] during an all-night adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the town of Ferreira do Alemtejo. One of the doves flew to the monstrance on the High Altar and gently alighted on it. The dove remained on its perch throughout the night until it was time to restore the Sacred Host to the tabernacle. It then flew back to the Madonna.

When the statue returned to Fatima on January 12, 1948, four doves remained at the feet of Our Lady.

### I AM A FIREMAN AT THE BURNING HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT:

inspired by Turner's painting, *The Burning of the Houses of Parliament*.

There is a fire at the Houses of Parliament! I feel the hose; it is heavy in my hand. I see the flames moving, roaring like a live thing. The sparks fall around me like leaves as we fight vainly against the fire.

I sneak a look at the crowd. I can see their strained faces. Now I must look forward again. The hot air hurts my eyes. I hear a crash! The building we fought so hard for, is down.

I turn but I suddenly catch a movement on the river. I look up: there is some one in a boat. He is painting! The light dims. I can see him no more.

#### Imogen Elvis



## A STORY ABOUT WILLIAM TELL AND THE LOST CHILD

It is 10 am: morning-tea time. As the kettle is filled and cups are found, someone grabs a CD and soon Rossini's *William Tell Overture* fills the room. Our fretful toddler suddenly quiets as she recognizes the music and begins bouncing up and down as though riding a horse, in anticipation of the galloping theme. It doesn't take long for everyone, including babies, to become familiar with a piece of music and derive much enjoyment from it.

The study of music and art used to come last on our curriculum. It seemed to take all our time and energy to cover just the basics, let alone anything else. But that was before I became organised and combined these studies with the study of English.

Each term, I choose a composer or two and we attempt to get to know between 4 and 6 pieces of his works. We are very fortunate to have a classical music collection called *The Magical Music Box*, a Marshall Cavendish Children's Collection. They were first released as a weekly CD and book publication available from newsagents, some years ago. Each edition features a different composer. There is an analysis of several featured pieces of music, a story inspired by the music, a biography of the composer and other interesting antidotes. A very few of the stories have objectionable content but on the whole, the music collection is invaluable. If you do not have a similar music collection, look for a Naxos CD of your chosen composer. These retail for just under \$10. The Internet can be used to put together a biography, find out the story behind a musical composition or even listen to the music.

We start by listening to just one piece of music, noting the different instruments, themes etc. We play this music again and again until we feel we know it. Morning-tea times are good listening times! We read the book accompanying the CD and then I do further research using the Internet. For Rossini, I found a synopsis of each of his operas. Did you know that *William Tell* is an historic opera? *The Barber of Seville*, in contrast, is a comedy and *Semiramide* is a tragedy.

By listening to Wagner and Rossini, we have learnt about opera. Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky have taught us about the ballet. We know what an overture is, as well as a quartet, symphony and concerto.

For each piece of music, I encourage the children to write and draw something. It wasn't difficult to transform *The William Tell Overture* into a drawing. Those galloping horses were easy to imagine! The characters of *The Barber of Seville* were sketched after some research into what the costumes should look like. Stravinsky's *The Firebird* inspired a few legend stories while Gerswin's *Rhapsody in Blue* led to research on New York and stories set in this city.

In a similar way, we can study the famous works of artists. We decide which artist we'd like to know more about, and then I look out for a large-sized book containing this artist's paintings. Generally, I like to buy a second-hand book but if I cannot find what I am looking for, we use a library book. (I seem to remember that there is a Marshall Cavendish Weekly Collection called *The Great Artists*, which would be invaluable.)

Of course, all the great paintings can be viewed on the Internet. We have also used the Internet to have a virtual tour of Monet's Garden and the Tate Art Gallery. We are planning to visit The Louvre! If you have time to search the Internet, you can find all kinds of sites with activities and information aimed at teaching art and music appreciation to children.



Once we have chosen a painting, we examine it in detail and then we display it in a prominent position. A cookbook stand on the kitchen bench works well. After a few days, the children write a description of the painting from memory, Charlotte Mason-style. The most enjoyable part is using the painting as a basis for creative writing. Sometimes, we pretend that the painting has captured a particular moment in time and imagine what will happen next. A conversation can be recorded between two characters in a painting or the work of art might inspire a poem. Paintings with a Biblical theme can encourage the re-telling of a well-known story and the reading of the relevant passages from the Bible. Possibilities are endless. One of Degas' ballerinas may write a diary entry. A newspaper report could be based on Mc Cubbins' *The Lost Child* or Turners' *The Shipwreck*. An advertisement may be written, pretending

that the mill in Constable's *The Hay Wain* is for sale. Our children have imagined that they were fire fighters putting out the fire burning down the Houses of Parliament in Turner's painting. They have written poems based on Turner's *The Fall of an Avalanche in the Grisons* and imagined a conversation between the bridal pair in Bruegel's *The Peasant Wedding*.

Some aspect of a composer's or artist's life can be the basis for a story. Did you know that the first night's performance of *The Barber of Seville* was a total failure: cats on stage, leading performers with bleeding noses, the audience throwing things on stage. This scene was perfect for re-telling. Turner would sit on the steam trains imprinting the view in his memory in preparation for a painting. Imagine two passengers talking about their famous fellow traveler.

If you are looking at a painting and still do not feel inspired to write a creative piece, start with some questions: Who is in the picture? What are they doing? Thinking? Feeling? What could they be saying? What will they do next? What is the setting? The time period? The time of day? Is it a landscape painting? What is the weather like? What is the mood? Is there a prominent building? Who lives in that castle? How did that building fall into ruins? Who erected that monument and in who's memory? Who planted that garden? Who gathered those roses and why? What if that still life was knocked over: How did it happen? Questions are endless and so is the imagination!

Put on the kettle, grab a CD you've been meaning to listen to for some time and relax and enjoy. Or open an art book and brainstorm different story ideas while you sit around the morning-tea table. Do some research and then start writing and drawing. Soon the great composers and painters will be familiar friends and you will have a treasured book of writings inspired by their works.

**Sue Elvis**

## TOM PLAYFAIR; A REVIEW

*The book is a lively story built around a ten year old boy called Tom Playfair...* (Callum Elvis, aged 13).

*Tom Playfair* is the first of a series of schoolbooks written late in the nineteenth century by Father Finn, an American priest. The book follows the adventures of Tom Playfair, a new boy at a Catholic boarding school named St Maure's. Before coming to the school, Tom is spoilt, naughty and mischievous. Father Finn tells us how he adapts to school life, makes new friends and gradually reforms his ways in time to persuade his father to let him make his First Holy Communion. *"The basic plot of the story revolves around Tom's efforts to better himself in time for his First Holy Communion"* (Duncan Elvis, aged 16).

*"There are... three main events which one can see as marking different phases of the book. First, Tom's arrival at St Maure's. Second, the death of [Tom's school friends] Green and Jones, and finally, there is the James Aldine affair."* (Duncan Elvis). The book is made up of several loosely connected adventures, connected by their influence on Tom's character and their impact on his chances of receiving his First Holy Communion. Each adventure is very interesting, and often hilarious or moving. Father Finn shows a great skill in making readers laugh at one episode and cry with sadness at another. *"...parts of the story were so funny, I was laughing too much to form the words. In contrast, the final part of the book was difficult to read without tears."* (Sue Elvis, mother).

*"Tom Playfair can sometimes be naughty. He is helpful and he loves God."* (Charlotte Elvis, aged 7). Tom Playfair, though disobedient, is a good-humoured boy. He is generous and kind-hearted, especially to weaker boys. *"Tom [goes up to someone he has not met] ...and straight away introduces himself and hands around his inexhaustible packet of candy."* (Duncan Elvis). Father Finn obviously enjoys developing his character throughout the book, as Tom reforms himself to become a good boy, without losing any of his manliness.

Perhaps one criticism of the story is that Tom's personality overpowers the rest of his schoolmates, leaving them somewhat shadowy figures. *"...the already dominant Tom fills the whole story. I know Tom is supposed to be the centre of attention, but I reckon he becomes overpowering."* (Callum Elvis). This is a pity because several of Tom's friends are very good role models, being almost saintly. *"...I am sure we all yearn to have such a pure and innocent love of God as both Alec [Jones] and James [Aldine]."* (Sue Elvis, mother).

*"When Mum starts to close the book... we always beg for one more chapter because Tom is so interesting, he has me captivated"* (Imogen Elvis, aged 10). Father Finn's style is slyly humorous and entertaining. The book is written in an old fashioned and rather unfamiliar style, but is still very accessible for a book of its age. Many readers will probably find themselves giggling at the author's dry comments on the antics of the boys of St Maure's. *"[Tom's adventures were] ... greeted by peals of laughter by my brothers and sisters."* (Callum Elvis).

Most of the time, Father Finn handles his story very well. At times, however, he brushes over affecting parts of the story too lightly. Twice during the book, accidents kill some of Tom's friends, while Tom himself also barely escapes death. But, only at the end of the book, do the events seem to have

any effect upon Tom. *"During the course of the story, Tom meets with various disasters, some which would probably devastate a boy of his age...But somehow, Tom manages to escape being affected in any way."* (Callum Elvis).

But these slips are fairly minor, and do not spoil the liveliness of the book. *Tom Playfair* is a book for anyone trying to find really interesting books about proper Catholic boys. The boys in this book are all "real boys" who have a real faith and are not at all ashamed of admitting it. Catholicism is completely natural for them and they do not see their faith as restricting their fun.

*"My verdict is that 'Tom Playfair' is an extremely readable and enjoyable book."* (Callum Elvis). *Tom Playfair* is a really excellent read-aloud book. When read aloud, humour and wit that might have been passed over by individual readers can be enjoyed. This is a book for both boys and girls, although boys may enjoy it the most as there are no girl characters in the book. *"A marvellous book. I think we can all learn something from Tom and all his friends who featured in this book."* (Imogen Elvis, aged 10).

Written by Felicity Elvis with generous quotes from her mother Sue and her brothers and sisters, Duncan, Callum, Imogen and Charlotte.

*Tom Playfair* and its companions *Percy Wynn*, *Harry Dee*, *Claude Lightfoot*, and *Ethelred Preston* are all available from the Cardinal Newman bookshop. Ring (02) 9637 9406 or email [fr@cardinalnewman.com.au](mailto:fr@cardinalnewman.com.au) to order. They are priced at \$16 each.

## TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

1. Speak to people. There is nothing as nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. Smile at people. It takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 to smile.
3. Call people by name. The sweetest sound to anyone's ears is the sound of his own name.
4. Be friendly and helpful. If you would have friends be friendly.
5. Be cordial. Speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. Be genuine and interested in people. You can like almost anyone, if you try.
7. Be generous with praise.
8. Be considerate with the feelings of others. There are usually three sides to a controversy; yours, the other person's and the right one.
9. Be alert to give service. What counts most in life is what we do for others.
10. Add to this a good sense of humor, a big dose of patience, a dash of humility and you will be rewarded.

Do you have trouble organizing your day? Maybe you just can't fit in that one task. Well we were like that but when we started using a task sheet, presto, we became better organised. You might like to try it out too. We use one for every weekday and Saturday with variations for weekly tasks set for those days. Any essentials not completed on the day are written in on the next day's sheet and given priority. A suitable task sheet easily downloadable can be found at <http://www.wastefreelunches.org/tasksheet.html> and edited to your situation

Task Sheet		
TASK DONE	DESCRIPTION OF TASK	ASSIGNED TO
	Morning prayers	Sinners
tick	Make Beds	All
these	Catechism	All
spaces	Music – violin	Thomas
when		Lucy
task		Mary
done	Piano	Johnny
		George
		Felicity
	Voice training (singing)	Stephanie, Margaret
		Benedict
	Recorder	Janet
	Other school subjects	Students
	Choose hymn for evening prayer	Catherine
	Prepare tomorrow's task sheet	Thomas
	Clean bathroom basin	Lucy
	Wash dishes	Paul
	Tidy desks	All
	Check that all prayers have been said	Dad
	Take holy water (soul medicine)	Sinners
	Say night prayers early	Sinners
	<i>Other</i>	
	<i>tasks</i>	
	<i>can</i>	
	<i>be</i>	
	<i>added</i>	
	<i>here</i>	



## *In Praise of Our Mother*

Be Her property, that She may use you in accordance with Her will, for any purpose, without limitation. – St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe

Where Mary is there the evil spirit is not. One of the most infallible marks we can have of our being conducted by the Holy Spirit is our being devout to Mary, our thinking often of her, and our speaking often of her. – St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Although Mary was of extreme beauty, she never awakened in others anything but holy desires. – St. Bonaventure

The Hail Mary, once learned, rises spontaneously and easily from the heart, wherever one may be and whatever one may be doing. And as the habit grows, there descends a great and hitherto unknown peace; not just from the external surroundings, as previously, but from within, in the depths of one's soul, falling like the dew, one knows not how, or from where, bringing life to what was arid, softening what was tense. – Leonard Cheshire (World War 2 Veteran awarded V. C.)

The force and unction of the words of Mary's servant, Louis Marie De Montfort, have not only touched but captivated many souls. – Pope Pius XII

From the time she conceived God in Her womb, she had, so to speak, a certain jurisdiction or authority over every intervention in time of the Holy Spirit, so that no creature receives any actual grace except through the dispensation of the Virgin Mary. – St. Bernardine

De Montfort was zealous in spreading devotion to the Holy Rosary wherever he went and in preaching Mary in season and out of season, and above all as the most effective means of winning back our separated brethren. – Richardson

The apostolate of Grignon de Montfort and his remarkable book promises to be the authentic opening of that particular devotion to Mary which is to be the characteristic grandeur of the later ages of the Church. – Faber

Modern times are dominated by Satan and will be more so in the future. The conflict with hell cannot be maintained by men, even the most clever. The Immaculate alone has from God the promise of victory over Satan. However, assumed into heaven, the Mother of God now requires our co-operation. She

seeks souls that will consecrate themselves entirely to her, that will become in her hands forceful instruments for the defeat of Satan and the spread of God's kingdom. – St. Maximilian Kolbe

Where Our Lady is no longer found, Christ effaces Himself, God disappears, nothing is any longer guaranteed. – Dillensberger

Whom had she greeted and not graced in greeting? When did she touch and not touch to his peace? - Chesterton

My Lady, Saint Mary, I recommend my soul to you. May you reconcile me to your Son, my Lord Jesus. – William the Conqueror (as he expired)

Enough that Lancelot from that day forth in the true knightly fashion of the times was sworn serf of Mary with a vow made inwardly. – Tennyson

Her name is sweeter to the lips than a honeycomb, more pleasant on the ear than the softest music, more delightful to the heart than the purest love. – St. Anthony of Padua

As soon as devotion to the august Mary has driven deep its roots into souls, then—and not till then—will he who labours for those souls see proceed from them fruits of virtue and sanctity corresponding to his toils on their behalf.—Pope St. Pius X

### Prayer

Eternal Father, Almighty all holy God, maker and master of all creation, You have revealed to St. Louis Marie de Montfort and others of your saints Your will that Mary, the Immaculate Mother of your son and the masterpiece of Your creation, should be known, loved and honoured by all as the easy, short, secure and perfect way to find Your Son Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth and the life. We earnestly implore you therefore to send soon to us your children now entering the darkness of another night of sin, those great and holy ones full of humility, grace, love and zeal, but little and poor in the world's esteem, You foretold You would raise up to make war against Satan by being truly devout to Your Son's Immaculate Mother, animated by Her love, illuminated by Her light, led by Her Spirit, strengthened with Her nourishment, supported by Her arm, and sheltered under Her protection to overcome and crush heresies, schisms, idolatries and impieties, and build the temple of the true Solomon and the mystical city of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Then we will rejoice that the way has been prepared for Jesus Christ Your Son, Who for us has died and is risen, to come again in glory. Amen.



## NEW MAGAZINE FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

**Educational Choices** is a new magazine for families choosing Home Education in Australia and New Zealand. **Educational Choices** aims to support, encourage and inspire homeschooling parents and provide information for those investigating education options for their children.

If you have more questions on **Educational Choices** write to:

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**PO Box 2157**  
**Tingalpa**  
**QLD 4173**

Or visit their website  
**[www.educationalchoices.com.au](http://www.educationalchoices.com.au)**

The magazine is only \$45.00 per year.

## HEARTS AFLAME: A REVIEW

Hearts Aflame is a Catholic youth Magazine published quarterly by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima. Its layout is rich in eye catching graphics that interest the reader in the topic presented (and makes me want to read to the last full stop). Every one of the issues that is raised in these articles apply to modern youth and give a Catholic viewpoint. Other articles bring out a moral in a subtle way by telling a story. The plots in these stories usually retell the mundane situations we have to face in life. But these stories have depth that make you reflect upon with profit. Every issue of the magazine has a page called "Youth Speaks to Youth" in which a reader can ask a question and be answered by other readers. It is very much like a forum. For example one question was "Does anybody have some advice for a hopeless procrastinator? Now that I am back in school, I can't seem to make ... Any ideas?"

A gift subscription for this interesting magazine should certainly make an enjoyable read for a teen and is sure to be read by older members of the family. Obtainable from World Apostolate of Fatima (Blue Army) Broken Bay Diocesan Committee 10/343 Condamine St. Manly Vale Australia 2093 PH: 61 (02) 9949 4194. Price \$A28 per year.

**Mary Rose Gale**



## Movie Flash!!!!

I must confess besides Our Lady being my super role model and a few other saints, St Therese of the Child Jesus is one of my favourites. Now you're probably asking, "what's this have to do with a movie?" Well in America they are showing a film called "Therese" and I'm hoping it will come to Australia. There is an official movie website for "Therese" and it is packed with samples of its beautiful soundtrack, clips from the movie and e-cards. Also you can enter the sweepstakes and read about the life of St Therese. On the website there is a fill-in page where you can show that you are interested in viewing it. I think it is truly an inspiring film from what I have seen of the clips. Lindsay Younce the one who plays St Therese is a convert and they say her presence on screen is very powerful. One hundred and eight minutes long, the movie is one, I think, that can't be missed. If you are interested the website is [www.theresemovie.com](http://www.theresemovie.com).

**Mary Rose Gale**



## THE FOLLOWING SHOULD SILENCE THE CRITICS OF HOMESCHOOLING, SURELY

Jean and Elizabeth Brazier graduated with Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of New England (Armidale) (UNE) on 19 March, 2005.

After completing their entire primary and secondary education at home and bypassing the HSC, they began full-time university studies at the UNE as external students. They studied for their degrees as 'homeschoolers' except for attendance at short residential schools in Armidale during each semester for the last three years.

Jean completed a double major in Classical Studies (Latin & Ancient Greek) and Ancient History. She also studied Italian, Modern History and Computer Studies.

Elizabeth completed a major in Classical Studies (Latin & Ancient Greek) and a sub-major in German. She also studied Ancient History and Italian.

During the course of her studies, Elizabeth received 13 High Distinctions, 7 Distinctions and 2 Credits, while Jean obtained 11 High Distinctions, 11 Distinctions and 2 Credits. Neither girl ever received just a simple pass mark.

On the completion of their first year of studies, both girls were invited to join the Golden Key International Honour Society which is made up of students in the top 15% of academic achievement at universities around the world.

Elizabeth, on going into her final year in 2004, received the University's much coveted 'Stanley Wilson Scholarship' which is awarded to that full-time student entering final year in the Faculty of Arts and has the most outstanding record to date.

Elizabeth also won an all expenses paid overseas 'Winter Course' scholarship to study in Germany awarded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). She spent seven weeks in Leipzig and other parts of Germany on this intensive language and cultural course during January and February 2005.



This year, both girls are completing an honours year for a B.A. (Hons.) degree and have both chosen to study Latin and complete their theses in that subject. Elizabeth is researching the influence of Cicero's Latin language style on the writings of the early Christian Fathers of the Church, especially Lactantius and with comparisons of the styles of St Ambrose and St Augustine.



Mr. and Mrs. Brazier with Jean and Elizabeth on graduation day

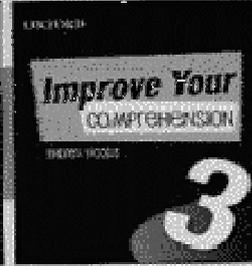
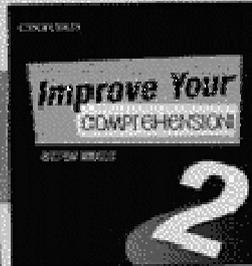
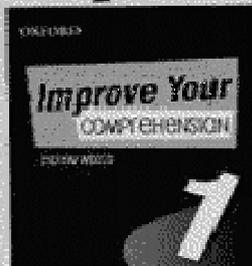
Both Jean and Elizabeth have each been awarded a prestigious 'Keith & Dorothy Mackay Honours Scholarship' which goes to only a handful of UNE students each year. They have also each won a 'Jean M Oxley Honours Bursary' as a further recognition of their excellent academic achievements.

Travelling in their older sisters' footsteps, Isabel and Paul are currently enrolled in 2nd year and 1st year respectively at the UNE. Isabel has been achieving HDs and Ds too in her Arts degree and Paul hopes to finish in 2010 with the combined Arts/Law degrees.

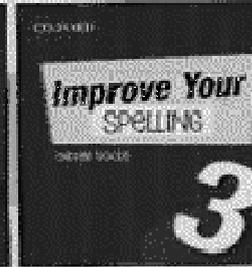
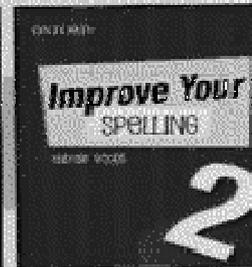
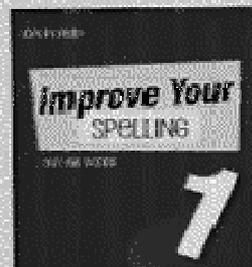
**IT IS GOOD TO REACQUAINT WITH THE BRAZIER FAMILY. THE GALES AND OTHER HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES HAVE LEARNT SO MUCH FROM PAUL AND GEORGINA IN EARLIER YEARS OF HOMESCHOOLING AND WERE PERSUADED BY THEIR EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE THAT HOMESCHOOLING IS THE ONLY FORM OF EDUCATION TO KEEP OUR CHILDREN CATHOLIC (AND, IT SEEMS, BETTER EDUCATED)**

A series strongly recommended by Sr Mary Bede

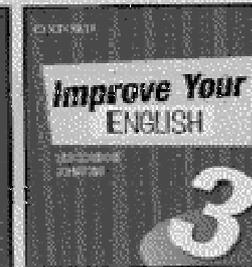
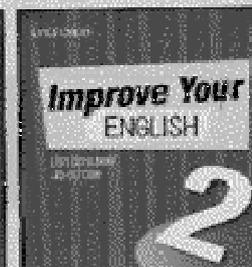
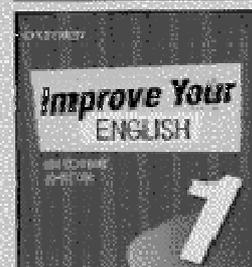
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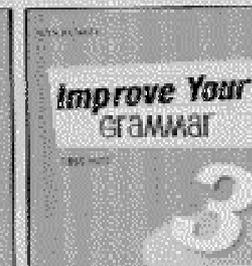
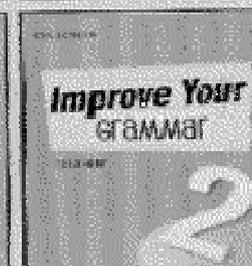
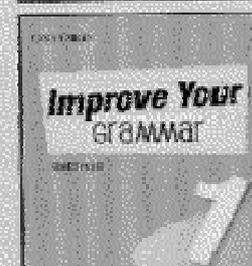
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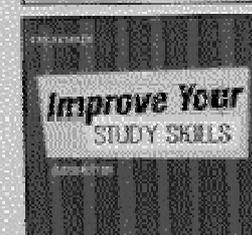
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