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# Keeping in Touch

A quarterly newsletter for Catholic homeschooling families

AMDG

Term Three 2007

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## The Family that Plays Together

By Anthony English

Whenever I speak to strangers about why we're home schooling, I usually find myself saying it helps to keep the family close. It is something that I have observed frequently in home schooled children that they are close to their siblings. The first concern most people have about home schooling is the apparent lack of socialisation. I really wonder what they can mean. One home schooling Mum comments with mock exasperation that we home schoolers get too much socialisation. If you live and study and play together you're more likely to get to know each other.

This closeness I think is not inevitably or exclusively the result of home schooling. I think it's much more a function of what we might call the culture of a family, but home schooling can be a major contributor. Perhaps this closeness is most obvious in younger children when they play together.

I remember hearing of a boy who had gone to kindergarten at a local school and who, in the school holidays, had to learn how to play with his little sister again. Whatever the benefits of having similarly aged children taught together in a classroom, I often wonder whether the experience

of playing only with children one's own age is altogether healthy. More concretely, children can go through their whole childhood now without ever really knowing their brothers or sisters. A friend of mine commented that she and her younger sister only really became friends after they had left school.

I don't mean to imply that all home schooled children get along well with their brothers and sisters and all children at schools do not. There are remarkable examples of closely united families among school families, and sadly, there are home schooling families with deep divisions. Still, siblings

who are used to playing together, living and learning together, nourished by a loving family atmosphere, are more likely to be friends as they are growing up and remain friends as adults. Conversely, one of the first signs of problems within families is when people stop talking to each other as friends.

A friend observed that the number of siblings in a family also affects their relationships. Every child is a gift, a blessing from God. Children who have been blessed with several siblings have to learn to share time and other resources. Playing with younger ones or having to care for them or maybe share a room with them can have long term benefits. This is something which becomes obvious later in life when, as adults, we are called to adapt to situations which can be very demanding.

A common objection to home schooling is that it leads to isolation, not equipping the children for life in the real world. In a sense, that isolation is exactly what can happen to children when they are uprooted from their family and thrown together with a near-random group of similarly aged children. Some of these friendships may be true and long-lasting, but they seem to be the exception. I wonder how many people keep up with their school friends after they've left school. Home schooling does allow you to keep your school friends for a very long time.

One of the great blessings which comes from home schooling is that children play together with their siblings and hopefully their extended family. It is a first and most important step in seeing the rest of the world as our brothers. As Our Lord told the Apostles just before His greatest act of love: "by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

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## The Thomas Dress

by Sue Elvis

Imogen never had a new dress until her brother died.

She was five years old and although she had plenty of pretty clothes, she'd never had a dress chosen especially for her, a dress that hadn't previously been worn by her older sister or cousins. It was a very special day, the day we went to town to buy Imogen her first brand new dress.

As soon as we entered the children's boutique, we saw the perfect dress. Imogen held it up under her chin, her eyes large, her smile wide. It was pale pink with puffed sleeves and the skirt was perfect for swirling. A Briar Rose dress. A real little girl dress.

The shop assistant hurried up to us. "Oh, you will look so pretty in that dress. Is it for a special occasion?"

"Yes," Imogen replied. "It's for my brother's funeral."

Thomas' death was not a sad time for Imogen. She was the only member of our family who didn't cry during those traumatic days. The photographs show her smile beaming out amidst the tears of her siblings and her parents.

Shortly after Thomas died, we gathered together our other children and explained that Thomas was now in heaven with God. Imogen replied, "Then why are you crying? It's good. Thomas is alive with God. Don't you want to go to heaven and be with God?" I remember wondering how Thomas' death could be good. It didn't feel good. Perhaps all that about heaven and going to God was just a pretence: something said to comfort bereaved parents.

There wasn't a lot we could do for our son. Unlike other newborn babies, he didn't need us. But we could give him a beautiful funeral. This would be the last event of his short life on earth and I was determined to make the most of it. Of course, it was very distressing farewelling a baby we'd only had with us for a day. We'd had such hopes for his future and now there was no future. But even though I couldn't prevent the constant flow of tears, I didn't want his funeral to pass in a blur of sorrow. I wanted to remember every moment. I wanted it to go on forever. However, like all events it came to an end and before we knew it, we were processing towards his open grave.

Father Francis carried Thomas' tiny coffin. He held it so reverently as if he were carrying something very precious. Afterwards, he confided to us what an honour it was carrying our son; he could feel a special presence; he was carrying a saint.

There were many families at Thomas' funeral. Children of all ages gathered around the grave. There were little girls everywhere, skipping among the tombstones like pretty butterflies, their pastel dresses swirling, their hair ribbons fluttering, their hair streaming out behind them in the breeze. Despite severe frowns from solemn parents, single flowers were gathered from graves until each little

girl had a beautiful posy. And surrounded by all her fellow butterflies Imogen was having a perfect day. There she was in her new pink dress with all her friends, enjoying the spring sunshine as if she were on a picnic.

Thomas' funeral *was* beautiful. So many friends and members of family shared this painful but special day with us. The charming old church was full; the music was hauntingly stirring; the homily was moving. But one of the most beautiful of all my memories is that of Imogen dancing between the graves as if she were celebrating the short life and death of her tiny brother.

Death is a normal part of life. It is extremely sorrowful, excruciatingly painful. However, it is not something dark, something to be hidden away. While we were mourning the loss of our son, it was so consoling to be reminded that there was still beauty in life: a glimmer of hope for the future.

A few years after Thomas' death, Imogen's goldfish died. She cried as if her heart were breaking. I was a bit bemused. "You didn't cry when your brother died," I remarked. "Why are you so sad now?"

"I didn't understand then, Mum. Even though Thomas was going to God it was still sad. I would have cried if I'd been older". She wouldn't have thought only of her new dress.

We have still got that dress. We call it *The Thomas Dress*. Imogen loved that pale pink creation. Charlotte in her turn wore it. Although she had only been two when Thomas died, she knew it was a very special dress. The dress is a little faded now. Sophie and Gemma-Rose will not get to wear it. But we will keep the dress. It connects a sister to a brother. I will always remember Imogen skipping along in it, a ray of sunshine falling on that day of grief.

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## Talking Point:

### The Question of Television

Submitted by Veronica Brandt

If you remember last term I asked about managing television viewing. At the time I was amazed at how our family had fallen out of watching TV. There was not enough time. With a new baby in the house this was not too surprising, but talking to people after Mass one day I realised how much this medium

is relied upon, and how much time is devoted to keeping up with it.

Putting this column together I have asked myself why I asked this question in the first place. Did I expect that the secret of the success of home education lay in the rejection of the medium of television? I guess that may have been close to it. It turns out that homeschoolers are a surprisingly normal part of the world and the responses to this term's talking point show that, yes, many homeschoolers watch TV.

It seems to be a common thing for mothers especially to dislike the effect TV has on people. Perhaps this has to do with special hormones that help us respond to the emotional needs of our families, especially our children, that don't tolerate all the problems dished up on the small screen. Perhaps it's just because women like to be listened to and TVs tend to do all the talking.

Next term is the last term for 2007. Advent will be upon us by the time the next edition comes out. 'Tis the season to prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. Please, could you share some of your advent activities. There are so many out there. Does anyone have something that the family enjoyed? Also any tips for avoiding burn out over the 'silly season'?

I find it hard just to cover school work, housework, children and extras like music and dancing, without introducing TV into it! Lots of people tell me how wonderful EWTN is, and I believe them, but I don't have the energy or the time.

By and large we don't watch TV, except for Top Gear, (which usually has to be taped as we have guests for dinner on Mondays) and some sport, which the boys watch on a Friday night. The children are permitted a video on Saturday, but other nights getting dinner finished and cleared, the baby in bed, and stories read, brings us to (beyond) bedtime most nights.

I'd be delighted to have no TV, as I don't enjoy it, but I think it is foolish to cut the children off entirely from the modern norms. We had no television until I was 13, and I know what it is like to be unable to enter a conversation with one's peers because it is all about things of which you know nothing at all. It is quite odd enough now, as I simply have no idea what the current programmes are or what they are about, and nobody really

believes that, resulting in some funny conversations. I think TV has some merits in small doses, but it needs strict control and sometimes self-control, as it can be an easy way out.

Hope this is of use to you.

God bless you,

Sarah Fanning

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Like everything else in the mass-media, it can be used as a tool for both education and recreation. Monitoring is the key with youngsters. Teens are another kettle of fish all together—they seem to get hypnotised, as if they are sure that something important will come on any second now—a bit like Gamblers at the Poker Machines.

Anonymous

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Television is a bad master but can be a useful slave. We mostly use it to show videos or DVDs. My husband likes to watch the weather so it often goes on at 7:25 p.m. for the ABC weather. I allow our preschoolers and kindergarteners to watch some school programmes e.g. For the Juniors and Our Animals when I remember and it fits in. I go through phases of letting the preschoolers watch Play School while I start on Maths with the olders, but then I ban it for some time. Apart from the football, there are no regular shows we watch but every now and then we may turn on something—like Funniest Home Videos or The Inventors—especially if it's been a wet week or the kids have had a week long illness. Apart from this we mostly have a little kids' video each week or so and an older kids' one on another night.

Hope this helps,

Michele Vieira

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My wife and I enjoy a few shows during the week, but neither of us is terribly fussed if we miss them for whatever reason. The way I see it, so long as the show isn't immoral, watching things on TV is a legitimate pleasure, but just because a pleasure is legitimate, doesn't mean it's a necessity.

David Obeid

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## Review of the National Home Education Conference 2007

Submitted by Veronica Brandt

The National Home Education Conference 2007 visited Sydney on the first weekend in June. The schedule covered three days. Friday night saw an introductory talk by Eleanor Sparks, editor of the magazine Education Choices. Saturday was the big day featuring guest speaker John Taylor Gatto. Sunday was a slower paced day.

It was the first conference of its kind, travelling to 11 venues around Australia. Co-ordinating such an event was a mammoth achievement, especially when the organisers were all homeschooling as well.

John Taylor Gatto was a secondary school teacher in New York, but originated in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After many years teaching High School he was elected Teacher of the Year. In his acceptance speech he announced his resignation saying: "[school] kills the family by monopolizing the best times of childhood and by teaching disrespect for home and parents." His talk was given over three sessions: London Walkabout, Weapons of Mass Instruction and I cannot remember the title of the other session. Hopefully the DVD of the conference will be arriving soon and help me catch up on the parts I missed. [The DVD is included in the conference pack, soon to be available from their website: <http://www.nheconference.com.au>]

London Walkabout described the way children need genuine achievements to give them something to grow on. Working things out for ourselves is a great way to learn. Mr Gatto gave many examples of highly successful people with minimal formal education. Thomas Edison springs to mind—but there were more recent examples too.

Weapons of Mass Instruction gave a list of ways of subduing a class. He showed how classroom management can work against the students' best interests. It is very difficult to foster curiosity in a group of people subject to time constraints.

In one part he traced the rise of public education as a way of keeping people under control. He started with Calvin who held that the majority of people were predestined for hell. He then decided that for these irredeemable people, no extra effort should be spent to elevate them. Rather let them be kept under control by many rules and regulations. The

next intellectual was Spinoza who held that about 80% of the population was incurably irrational. He proposed to keep them from causing trouble by a system to destroy individual imagination and replace it with a public imagination. Charles Darwin had similar ideas. You can imagine how his famous theory of the survival of the fittest could lead to the suppression of the unfit.

The other guest speaker had an altogether different accent. Alan Thomas is described as a well-known UK researcher, writer and speaker. He had studied many, many homeschooling families. He was especially interested in informal learning or natural learning. He showed how the individual attention received at home makes learning much more effective than regular schools. Simple questions that sprang up from everyday life could be answered on the spot, or form the basis of further research in a way that would be rather difficult to replicate in a class of dozens of pupils.

As well as the talks there were also workshops focussing on particular areas of home education. Most workshops were lead by experienced homeschooling parents, some accompanied by their children.

During the conference there were DVDs screening for the children. I missed another chance to watch Narnia. Don't worry, I'll be happy reading the books again (and again).

The other component of the conference was the trade fair. Representatives had set up tables in the foyer of the theatre. The second hand book stall was great. Adnil Press was great to see. They have a Catholic/Classical approach. A Montessori vendor was there, eagerly demonstrating her materials. A few puzzle shops had various games on display. The chaplain from Campion College was there along with a current student.

I came across a great book at the Real Homeschool Books table. Homeschooling with Gentleness: A Catholic Discovers Unschooling by Suzie Andres with preface by Ralph McInerny. With all the talk about natural learning, it was great to find a book that addressed the questions that would probably be specific to Catholics. She presents the problem in good old Thomistic fashion with the headings: First Objection: Fallen Human Nature and Second Objection: Our Duty to Teach the Faith. This book is also available from Fountain Resources.

A Christian friend bought another excellent book "I Saw the Angel in the Marble", a collection of essays

from the Elijah Company. It has a similar theme, but with an American protestant slant. I still found it a good read.

So, in conclusion, I found it a great conference. Perhaps I missed much by only attending one day, but I still found it secured my confidence in homeschooling. My first registration visit looms and I'm not so worried as I was.

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## How to Empty Your Odd Sock Bag

By Imogen and Charlotte Elvis

We always have bags of odd socks. Although we hope the missing partners will appear, they never do. Usually Mum ends up throwing the odd socks away. Our tights get holes very quickly and end up in the bin too. But that was before we discovered a use for all those socks and tights. We have emptied the odd sock bag by making dolls and clothes.

### How to make a tights doll

- 1 Take a pair of tights and cut a large rectangular tube from the foot without cutting off the toe.
- 2 Stuff and sew up the gap at the bottom.
- 3 Tie some wool tightly around where the neck should be to make a head.
- 4 Cut two rectangles of tights for each arm and leg.
- 5 Sew the rectangles together but leave a gap at the end which will be connected to the body.
- 6 Turn in the right way and stuff. Sew up the gap.
- 7 Sew the arms and legs onto the doll tightly.
- 8 Make some hair out of long lengths of wool and backstitch it on to the head.
- 9 Embroider a face.

### How to make sock clothes without much sewing

- 1 Dress: Cut a long tube from the top of a sock. Cut arm holes. Fringe or scallop the bottom or leave it plain.
- 2 Skirt: Cut a shorter tube from the top of a sock. Fringe or scallop the bottom or leave it plain.

3 Shirt: Cut a short tube from the top of a sock. Cut arm holes. Fringe or scallop the bottom or leave it plain.

4 Underpants: Cut a thin tube from part of sock. Sew the middle bottom of tube together.

5 Singlet: Cut a fairly long tube and cut large arm holes. Enlarge head hole.

6 Hat: Cut the toe or heel off the sock and fringe, scallop, or leave the edge plain. Perhaps decorate with buttons.

7 Scarf: Cut a thin tube. Cut the tube apart so you have a long strip. Fringe the edges.

8 Swimming costume: Cut tube down to legs on doll. Catch the middle bottom with a few stitches. Make arm holes. Cut neck hole lower.

9 Vest: Cut tube from sock. Cut arm holes. Cut down the centre front. Trim openings to make a V-neck. Decorate with buttons or leave plain.

10 Belt: Cut a thin strip of sock with the ends connected. Decorate if you choose.

Coloured socks are good for clothes but white socks are best for shirts underpants and singlets.

Perhaps you would like to use up all your odd socks by making dolls and clothes too.

children while they were out—just enjoying each other's company for the first time since they married. Guess what happened? They couldn't think of anything to talk about! The husband said, "Well, love, we can go one of two ways here. We can grow further and further apart or we can make an effort to grow closer." They decided to make a weekly date and grow close to one another.

This couple recognised the importance of spending time with your spouse to make a happy marriage. Later in our life when we had numerous little children and no chance of going out, a wise parishioner told me that when the children are little you put them to bed so you can get some time with your husband. When the children are older, this lady said you need to go to bed earlier so that you can get some private time with your husband. This is very true—as our older children stay up as late as we do, it can be very tricky managing to have some time to talk and enjoy each other's company as spouses.

A priest friend told me that the most important thing parents can give their children is a happy marriage. This means spending time together. I'm not meaning expensive dinners—although a nice night out is always fun. But a milkshake or a cappuccino and a walk in the park on a regular and frequent basis can go a long way to providing a happy marriage. Of course I do not believe these times need to have no conversations about the children—often it's the only uninterrupted time you have. However, it's good to also talk about hopes and dreams, projects that the family can work on, how to spend your free time in a fun way as a family etc.... We are not abandoning our children or being bad parents if we leave them to spend short amounts of time with our spouses. We are making an investment in our marriage.

It is very easy, especially when you are busy homeschooling and your husband is busy trying to provide for the family, often on a single income, to begin to live separate lives. We must love and cherish our spouses. We must work on our marriages if they are to survive. We also need to give our children, particularly our older children, positive and attractive models of marriage. Just as happy nuns are attractive for religious life, happy couples are attractive for the vocation of marriage.

Let us ask God for all the graces we need to live in the holy state of matrimony and pray for our brothers and sisters who are struggling in their vocation at this time.

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## Marriage and Home-Schooling

By Michele Vieira

Many years ago, when we were newly-weds ourselves, we attended the wedding of friends of ours. At the reception we were chatting with the parents of the groom. He told us a very interesting story.

This couple had been blessed with children and the first decade and more had been taken up busily caring for the needs of these children and working hard to provide a roof over their heads. The children grew older and the day finally came when the father and mother could go out to dinner, for their eldest daughter was now old enough to babysit. Of course this was looked forward to preceding the event. Finally the big night came. They decided to make this night different by not talking about the

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## Something More Than Just Married

By Sarah Fanning

“Don’t just get married—do something with your life!”

I think these are among the saddest words I have ever heard! It amazes me to discover how many of our young people (and I mean homeschooled, orthodox Catholic young people) regard marriage as the end of all fun. Marriage, if you talk to them, is a trap; and once you are trapped, that is it. You never enjoy yourself again.

I wish they knew the truth. I wish they understood the wonderful liberation that marriage brings. To have someone who cherishes *you* above all others; who seeks *your* company before any other’s; who supports *you*, is interested in *you*, talks to you, loves *you*.... How magical that is! Yet so many young people talk of making sure you have fun before you get married, because (the implication is) you won’t afterward. How has this sorry state of affairs come about?

Half in jest I told my children I’ll write them a Guide to Marriage. I’ll write for our sons, Shaun can write for our daughters. My part will be something like this:

Don’t worry if your wife cries a lot. That’s normal. But try to understand why; and that when she feels insecure and unsure of your affection, it is genuine, so be re-assuring.

Tell your wife you love her. Every time you see her is probably often enough. And think it too, because the way you think and speak becomes the way you are.

Realise what it is like for her to be at home all day with only babies or toddlers for company. Be sympathetic and be punctual. If you say you’ll be there at six, don’t be surprised if she is an emotional mess if you arrive home at ten past six instead.

Ring her every day.

Pray together. Share your anxieties and concerns as well as your joys.

Be considerate. She’s exhausted and sleep-deprived; whenever you can, in the precious spare time you have from working all day to provide for her, take

the children. Do the washing up. Do the shopping. Hang the washing for her at the weekends. Help with the children and the housework. Cosset her; she’s hanging on by a thread, so offer a lifeline.

Let her talk. It’s something women do, tell you every detail of every event. Try to reciprocate, even if it’s an alien idea. Try to add something about how you feel, not just a mechanical account of what you did.

Remember, your children are not your rivals. If it seems your wife always has her arms full of babies and never of husband, it is not permanent. Your children are living embodiments of your love for your wife. Be patient and be tolerant. Be loving. Even if she’s so tired that she can scarcely keep her eyes open, she does still love you.

Share as much of your lives as you can. You’re in this together.

Have fun. Go out together as a family, BUT ALSO GO OUT TOGETHER AS A COUPLE, even if it means shanghai-ing a reluctant (but of course reliable) friend or relative as a babysitter. THIS IS VITAL. Children are wonderful, a great gift, but they will grow up and move away and develop lives of their own. Your wife is there till death do you part. Don’t forget it is she whom you married. (And grandmothers can put up with babies screaming for a couple of hours if needs be. When it’s not your own baby it’s not half as stressful.)

Money, pleasant as it is, is not everything, and God ALWAYS provides. I promise this is true, hard as it is to believe; I speak from experience. So, don’t say you can’t afford another child. You can never, ever afford ANY children. But children give you so much, so much precious love and joy that you will never receive in any other way. Children are a marvelous, wonderful gift. Be grateful and joyous. If you need a breather, sure, space them a bit; God never said married couples had to have as many children as physically possible in the shortest space of time available; indeed, He may not even give you any. But never reject them.

Remember that as spouses, through the sacrament of marriage, instituted by God to give grace, you each work to the sanctification of the other. What a wise and unexpected gift that is.

Love your wife, love your children, be kind and generous. Make her laugh. Have fun. God bless you.

Perhaps they'll read it; but at least it is an attempt to share with them the truth about marriage! How could anyone do MORE than 'just get married'?!!

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## The Angelic Salutation, God's Word and Man's Translations

By Matthew Murphy

*"Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee..."* [1] said the angel Gabriel to our Blessed Mother.

...or was it *"Peace be with you! The Lord is with you..."* as the Good News Bible [2] would have it? Well, the Douay-Rheims translation that I quoted first tells us that Mary *"...thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be."* The Good News Bible says she *"...wondered what his words meant."*—no mention that there was something special about the greeting.

And what then is the meaning of this special greeting? The archangel explains, *"Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God."* Does your Bible have the word 'grace' in both places? The Church's official Latin Bible, the New Vulgate, uses the same word (*gratia*).

Introductory articles in the Good News Bible say it is *"professedly interpretive"* yet also claim that *"the meaning of the original text is given in equivalent English form."* One is left wondering whatever happened to the meaning of "full of grace" and the meaning of 'salutation' (or 'greeting').

Elsewhere, a different New Testament turns *"...for the kingdom of heaven."* in Matt 19:12 into *"...in order to serve God better."*

If 'greeting' could be abstracted into 'words'—and—"Hail full of grace" turned into a very ordinary "Peace be with you"—and—"the Kingdom of Heaven" is allowed to disappear, then I suppose a newspaper headline like "Stolen car slams into house" could be transformed into "Vehicle makes contact with structure".

Evidently we need to be wary about translations that claim to be giving us Sacred Scripture in modern English.

Although the Annunciation brings us a great mystery of faith, there is nothing particularly obscure about the text on a linguistic level. "Full of grace" is a

literal translation of the Latin Vulgate's "*gratia plena*" [3].

Some translations (including the Jerusalem Bible) use 'favour' rather than 'grace' which makes sense on an ordinary literary level but—I would ask—which word has come to be used for **God's** favouring? Do you talk about being in the state of favour? Grace is obviously the right word.

If a clear text like this can be so distorted, what would the translators do to a passage that is obscure? An article I came across on the internet promoting the Douay-Rheims translation makes this interesting observation:

*"In their translation, the Douay-Rheims translators took great pains to translate exactly. Contrary to the procedure of the modern Bible translators, when a passage seemed strange and unintelligible they left it alone, even if obscure, and "let the chips fall as they may." The modern Bible translators, on the other hand, will often look at an obscure passage, decide what they think it means, then translate in words that bring out that meaning. The result is that the English is usually (not always!) easier to understand, but it is not necessarily what the Bible says; rather, it is their interpretation and understanding of what the Bible says. Moreover, the Holy Ghost may have hidden several additional meanings in the passage. Those meanings may well be completely translated out!"* [4]

Another point about the older-style English of the Douay-Rheims is that it retains the distinction in the second person between the singular "thou/thee/thy" and the plural "ye/you/your". So what? You can tell from the context? Well...maybe not...The book *Jesus, Peter and the Keys* [5] gives an example in which this distinction is crucial: Luke 22:31-32. In these verses, Our Lord says to Peter, *"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you [plural], that he may sift you as wheat."* Then in the next verse *"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren."*

The authors of [5] comment, *"In Luke 22:31, whom does Satan desire to sift as wheat? All twelve of the apostles. The Lord speaks to Simon Peter, but addresses the rest also... In Luke 22:32, of the twelve Apostles, whom does the Lord Jesus Christ uniquely pick to lead the rest? Simon Peter."*

So must we read the bible in old-fashioned English? Admittedly, there can be genuine difficulties for the modern reader. Michael Covington [6], referring to the (protestant) King James Version of the Bible, points out that the English is so old that 'let' [7] could mean 'hinder,' and prevent could mean

‘precede.’ Confusing indeed! (I don’t know whether this would apply to the current Douay-Rheims translation.) The original KJV was archaic in 1611 since it was close to the wording of a 1384 translation. After “certain revisions” the KJV became the Revised Standard Version (RSV).

The RSV (Catholic Edition) has a lot to be said for it. It is a relatively literal translation and is quite readable. The scripture quotes in the Catechism of the Catholic Church are “adapted” from the RSV and New RSV. The RSVCE does not, however, universally use ‘thou’ etc for the singular. It seems to retain the traditional singular form only when referring to God, thus maintaining a “sense of the sacred.” The RSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Edition uses the modern ‘you’. [8]

Also, the RSVCE, after using the traditional “*Hail, full of grace*”, then has, “*for you have found favor with God.*” On rare occasions too, (E.g. Matt 19:5-6) it drops a word and then admits in a footnote that it was there in the Greek.

Confused? Pray about it. If you say a Hail Mary, you’ll probably be using the time-honoured words of the Douay-Rheims—“*a scrupulously faithful translation into English of the Latin Vulgate Bible which St. Jerome (342-420) translated into Latin from the original languages.*” [4]

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[1] Quoted from *The Holy Bible*: Douay AD 1609, Rheims AD 1582; as revised and annotated, containing Bishop Challoner’s notes ... Luke 1:28 and following.

[2] Good News Bible Catholic Study Edition 1979

[3] In the Greek text, Our Lady is called ‘kekharitomene’ (a perfective passive participle) which could be translated “graced one” if the noun it’s based on (kharis, **kharitos**) is rendered as grace. Moreover this noun is used in the archangel’s explanation—“for thou hast found ‘**kharin**’ with God.”

[4] *Why Should You Read Only the Douay-Rheims Translation of the Bible?* [www.marianland.com/bible20.html](http://www.marianland.com/bible20.html)

[5] Scott Butler, Norman Dahlgren and Rev. Mr David Hess: “*Jesus, Peter & the Keys—A Scriptural Handbook on the Papacy*” Queenship Publishing, 1996, Para. 135

[6] Michael A. Covington: “*Notes on the Original Greek Text of the New Testament*” 28/9/2003 [www.covingtoninnovations.com/nttext.pdf](http://www.covingtoninnovations.com/nttext.pdf)

[7] This comes from a different Old English word from the current let=allow. Thank God one of the homonyms has fallen into disuse!

[8] There might also be a difference between the Protestant and Catholic RSV texts in this respect. According to Covington, “*The RSV uses thee and thou in prayers (for compatibility with Anglican church services) but not elsewhere. This is entirely unauthentic; the Greek does not use special pronouns for prayers, and neither do other translations.*”

# AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BISHOPS AND PRIESTS OF AUSTRALIA

Dear Fathers in God,

## THE SINGING CFC

Mere print cannot do justice to THE SINGING CATECHISM – **it needs to be heard.**

The CFC, *Catholic Family Catechism*, with its 50 Questions and Answers (50 Q&As) on the Creed, Sacraments, Commandments and Prayer, contain the core of our holy faith.

**Please listen to it** on <[www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au)>. The Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc is inviting parents, priests and other teachers to “burn” their own CDs (our copyright allows it) or to order them from PO Box 697, Merrylands, 2160, or phone 02 9637 9406, @ \$8 (or \$9 posted).

## SINGING ↔ REMEMBERING ↔ KNOWING

SINGING, REMEMBERING, KNOWING mutually support each other, and thereby help the young disciples to have that mind which was also in Christ Jesus, thus: -

- Singing helps remembering – and remembering is needed for singing;
- remembering is also needed for knowing – and knowing with understanding helps remembering.

## WORDS

The Singing CFC contain **vital Catholic words** in which the faith is expressed:

Use our words and think our thoughts; think our thoughts and do our deeds –

But if you don't, you won't. So we should teach the vital Catholic words.

## PRINT-OUT

The printout of the 50 Q&As is also on the website as *Handouts* n. 13 and fits on the two sides of an A4 sheet. It has italics for the “add-on” lines – omit them for the younger beginners.

## FLESHING OUT THE SKELETON

The 50 Q&As are a skeleton which is fleshed out further in the 128 pages of the *Catholic Family Catechism Disciples' Edition* @ \$5 (or \$6 posted). Each double-page spread has one Q&A, with explanations, diagrams, pictures, Bible verses, plus further Bible references, and cross-references to topics and pictures. It also has How to Teach and How to Learn, an index, and simple apologetics for the use of Q&As for those diffident about such catechisms.

## FLEXIBILITY and FIDELITY

**It can complement any programme** of lessons already in use – or be used for revision – or for **remedial catch-up** – or as a **stand-alone**. It faithfully fulfils the requirements of Pope John Paul II that a family catechism be “**clear, brief and easily assimilated by all**”, and it includes six of his seven categories for memorisation, (omitting only the liturgical texts).

Its 50 Questions & Answers in **rhythmic prose; its sense lines** for ease of understanding and learning by heart; and now its simple **Gregorian chant**, are a positive contribution to the new evangelisation and catechesis for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Could you kindly bring the Singing CFC and the 128-page text to the attention of your people?

Yours sincerely and obediently in Our Lord,

James Tierney

Rev. Father

This article has been reprinted from the current spring edition of *Bush Boys Explorers*. This magazine can be downloaded from [www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au)

## Learning by Heart

By Sue Elvis

In the book *Bush Boys*, Greg gives his cousins a copy of his ABC of Camping which he insists they must learn if they want to come camping with him. The ABC of Camping's full name is the Australian Bush Catechism. What is a catechism? A catechism is a summary of the most important facts a person needs to know on a particular subject. Catechisms are usually written to teach children the Catholic faith. But in the Bush Boys books, Fr Tierney has written a catechism to teach children all the basic information needed to safely enjoy a bush adventure. Now the catechism doesn't contain everything you will ever need to know. It is more like a skeleton of knowledge. If you know the answers to the catechism questions you will remember other facts to do with the subject. In every edition of *Bush Boys Explorers* you will read about one or more questions and answers from the ABC of camping. You can also find the complete catechism in the appendix of *Bush Boys on the Move*.

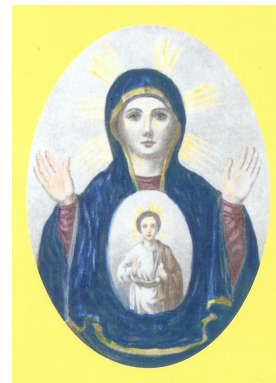
Have you ever tried to memorise all the questions and answers in the ABC of Camping? Father Tierney heard about a group of boys who did just that. He thought that if it was possible to learn 50 camping questions and answers perhaps children could memorise 50 questions and answers on the Catholic faith. Fr Tierney set to work and produced the *Catholic Family Catechism Disciples' Edition with 50 questions and answers*. The questions provide a summary of the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Fr Tierney carefully constructed the answers so they are easy for children to both understand and remember. Why is it so important to know the questions and answers by heart? If you succeed in doing this you will have "permanent possession of the doctrines of the faith".

Perhaps you like learning things by heart. It can be very satisfying to be able to recite a poem and to be able to recall the words whenever you want to enjoy the poem all over again. Perhaps in the same way you will gain a sense of achievement from learning the questions and answers from Father's *Family Catholic Catechism* book.

How do you go about learning things by heart? First you need to have some understanding of what you are learning. Fr Tierney also suggests you help memorisation "by much accurate repetition, by chanting them, by writing them down and drawing (your) own pictures, by reading them aloud, by using cassettes and computers, by testing each other and...by being given rewards."

As you can see, Fr Tierney suggested chanting the catechism questions and answers. A recording, of a family chanting the catechism, is now available on the Cardinal Newman website. Perhaps you'd like to visit the website to have a listen. You can even download your own copy of the singing catechism. Then you can chant along. Soon you will be able to chant without the aid of the recording. The questions and answers will have been committed to memory and will have become a part of you.

Visit [www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au) to download your copy of the catechism chants. Using this and your *Catholic Family Catechism Disciples Edition* set yourself the challenge of memorising the 50 questions and answers



## Catechetical Articles

Father Tierney's new issues of his single sheet handouts will appear on the website [www.cardinalnewman.com.au/Downloads.htm](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au/Downloads.htm)

The list of handouts is reproduced in the adjacent box for ease of reference.

On request, they will be posted as quality masterprints to those who wish to multiply them for apostolic purposes.

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 their website.

For a complete list of resources see the Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc. website at the address given above.

A Catechism Above Catechisms	Handout No. 1
Australian Bush Catechism of Camping	Handout No. 2
Between You And Me	Handout No. 3
Pastoral Councils Help Foster Pastoral Action	Handout No. 4
How To Write A Story	Handout No. 5
The Great 'O' Antiphons for Advent II	Handout No. 6
Authentic Liturgy	Handout No. 7
St. Joseph The Worker	Handout No. 8
How To Write A Strong Letter	Handout No. 9
Bishops & Priests - Teachers of Faith	Handout No. 10
The 3Cs	Handout No. 11
Classroom Catechist	Handout No. 12
Catholic Family Catechism in 50 Q&A	Handout No. 13
Catholic Family Catechism in 50 Q&A Mini-Ed	Handout No. 14
Anointing Of The Sick	Handout No. 15
The Noble Art of Reading Aloud	Handout No. 16
Pythagoras Theorem	Handout No. 18
What Am I Giving Up For Lent?	Handout No. 20
My Way Of Life	Handout No. 21
Bush Boys On The Move	Handout No. 22
Benediction Hymns	Handout No. 24
Bibles and Commentaries	Handout No. 26
God and the Soul	Handout No. 27
The Best People are Home-made	Handout No. 28
Complimentary and Complementary	Handout No. 31
'Sex-ed' Violates Subsidiarity	Handout No. 33
Compendium of the Catechism	Handout No. 35
Dies Irae	Handout No. 37
Paper Called A4	Handout No. 38
Introduction to Vatican II for High School	Handout No. 40
Early Easter 2008	Handout No. 41

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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 preferred deadline for contributions from readers is the **end of the second week of each term**, especially for items which are not submitted by email.

### Availability of KIT

KIT is available on the website of the Cardinal Newman Faith Resources Inc. for reading or downloading.

[www.cardinalnewman.com.au/Downloads.htm](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au/Downloads.htm)

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, at:

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