
Traditional Catholic Schools



One day, Simeon will have to carry the torch of the Faith. Let's hope he's ready.

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TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS :

A CONDITION *SINE QUA NON* OF A CATHOLIC EDUCATION

FOR PARENTS

The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children. This means that the highest consideration (and often the greatest cause of worry) for Catholic spouses is to give their children a Catholic education.

Options for Education

There are usually five options for education: Public (State) School, Modern Catholic School, Conservative Protestant School, Home School and Traditional Catholic School. The table shows the general advantages and disadvantages of each, but the advantages of traditional Catholic schools require elaboration lest the reader is not convinced.

Advantages of Traditional Catholic Schools

Contact Time

Children who attend a traditional Catholic day school have at least 35 hours of direct or indirect contact time with their religion each week outside the home through both their teachers, which usually include priests, brothers and sisters, and their environment. If they do not attend a traditional Catholic school, the contact time would be the duration of Sunday Mass and perhaps a short catechism class - say two hours maximum per week.

The same applies to mothers and fathers. Their involvement with their school is time well spent for their own spiritual welfare.

Type of School	Advantages	Disadvantages
Public Schools	Free	Your children stand a very high chance of being intellectually and morally deformed if not by the method, then certainly by the content of education they receive. Most public schools indoctrinate their pupils with elements of the new secular religion, in which God is subordinate to man. Exposure to vice both in and out of the classroom can beggar belief.
Modern Catholic Schools	Free	The disadvantages are often the same as those of Public Schools. Added to them is the disregard or disrespect of the religion they were founded to teach.
Conservative Protestant Schools	The ethos is "Christian". At least these schools often believe in the Ten Commandments, rather than the Ten Suggestions!	The children will be put in an environment hostile to their holy Catholic Faith. They will be tested daily in their loyalty to the Faith and devotions of Tradition (Our Lady, scapular, Rosary, etc). The children must be well equipped to study Apologetics at home or in their parish.
Home School	Your children can be defended from the evils of the Public School.	Homeschooling leaves little free time or freedom for the mother. Parents usually cannot teach or explain every subject adequately. No home comes equipped with a playground of 30 kids - children often have limited opportunities to develop socially.
Traditional Catholic Schools	They are Catholic. Parents fulfill a great part of their duty towards their children. The moral and intellectual education they offer is usually 1st class.	They are not free and are often far away (sometimes abroad). They often require a lifestyle changing commitment (no trash culture even in the home). They require the children to appear "weird" in the eyes of the world. Parents have to make a bigger commitment of time to the school (work days, fundraisers, plays, feast days etc.).

Traditional Catholic Schools



Anna-Maria Hermann of Germany discovered a gift for teaching the little-ones at Veritas Academy.

Catholic Friends and Community

A traditional Catholic school associated with a parish or Mass Centre forms the nucleus of a Catholic community so that children and parents can support each other in the Faith. Both children and parents have Catholic friends close at hand. Experience has shown that wherever there is a well-run traditional Catholic school, there is a thriving Catholic community.

Vocations

In the Society of St. Pius X, the overwhelming majority of vocations now come from our schools. Considering the arguments presented above, how could it be otherwise? Father William Doyle S.J. (+1916) quotes fellow Jesuit, Fr. Leonard Lessius S.J. (+1623), in his treatise on vocations:

If a gardener were to plant a precious seed, requiring great care, in stony ground, covered with thorns ; if he exposed it to the rays of the sun and every change of climate to try would it grow in that unfavourable

spot, who would not look upon him as a fool? Those who advise people called to religious life to remain, for a while, in the world have even less sense. A vocation is a divine fruit for eternal life. It is planted in the human heart, a soil little suited to its nature, and requires great care and attention.

Where better than a traditional Catholic school to find that great care and attention in the frequent reception of the sacraments, religious instruction and the cultivation of virtue.

THE MAGISTERIUM OF THE CHURCH

In its pre-conciliar magisterium, the Church gives clear guidance on the type of school Catholic parents should find for their children. The magnificent encyclical of Pope Pius XI written in 1929, *Divini Illius Magistri* on the Catholic education of youth, is well worth reading for any parent. [N.B. It would seem prudent

Traditional Catholic Schools

to avoid the Second Vatican Council Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum Educationis*, because it is ambiguous at best and seems to be at odds with *Divini Illius Magistri* at worst].

Education Must Be Integrally Catholic

Catholic education must be integral. In every subject of study, the students need to see the connection between God and the natural order of things.

§80. The mere fact that a school gives some religious instruction, often extremely stunted, does not bring it into accord with the rights [and duties] of the Church and of the Christian family. To be this, it is necessary that all the teachers, syllabi and textbooks in every branch, be regulated by the Christian spirit, under the direction and maternal supervision of the Church; so that religion may be in very truth the foundation and crown of the **youth's entire training; and this is in every grade of school, not only the elementary, but the intermediate and the higher institutions of learning as well.**



Elisabeth van Kroonenburg of Leicester, U.K. reads to boys on a hot afternoon at the end of the day.

Against Naturalism And A False Notion Of Freedom

§60. Hence every form of pedagogic naturalism which in any way excludes or weakens supernatural Christian formation in the teaching of youth, is false. Every method of education founded, wholly or in part, on the denial or forgetfulness of original sin and of grace, and relying on the sole powers of human nature, is unsound. Such, generally speaking, are those modern systems bearing various names which appeal to a pretended self-government and unrestrained freedom on the part of the child, and which diminish or even suppress the teacher's authority and action, attributing to the child an exclusive primacy of initiative, and an activity independent of any higher law, natural or divine, in the work of his education.

Against Sex Education

§65. Far too common is the error of those who with dangerous assurance and under an ugly term propagate a so-called sex education, falsely imagining



"One day I want to be like him." Brighten looks up to his role model.

Traditional Catholic Schools

they can forearm youth against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural, such as a foolhardy initiation and precautionary instruction for all indiscriminately, even in public; and, worse still, by exposing them at an early age to the occasions, in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were, to harden them against such dangers.

Against Co-Education

§68. False also and harmful to Christian education is the so-called method of ‘co-education.’ This, too, by many of its supporters, is founded upon naturalism and the denial of original sin; but by all, upon a deplorable confusion of ideas that mistakes a leveling promiscuity and equality, for the legitimate association of the sexes. The Creator has ordained and disposed perfect union of the sexes only in matrimony, and, with varying degrees of contact, in the family and in society.

Against Non-Catholic Schools

§79. From this it follows that the so-called ‘neutral’ or ‘lay’ school, from which religion is excluded, is contrary to the fundamental principles of

education. Such a school, moreover, cannot exist in practice; it is bound to become irreligious.

Conclusion

It would be fair to say that the traditional teaching of the Church (which is not “time-conditioned” because it has the natural state of man with original sin as its object) leaves no room for doubt that, unless parents are able to overcome the difficulties of homeschooling, they must send their children to traditional Catholic schools if they are to fulfill their duties as parents.

Traditional Catholic schools require more commitment from parents, they are difficult to run for priests and religious; they require huge amounts of energy and are usually a black hole for money, but they are the condition *sine qua non* of the long term survival and flourishing of any parish. Without access to a traditional Catholic school, a parish or Mass Centre will grow with difficulty and even risks becoming stagnant and decreasing.

May God grant us priests, teachers and plenty of children for our schools. May Catholic parents receive the grace to love their children enough to make the sacrifices necessary for their Catholic education. May our heavenly Mother, our *Sedes Sapientiae*, hold our schools in her tender care. Ω



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