



‘Legio Sanctae Familiae’ The Legion of the Holy Family

Under the Patronage of
The Sacred Heart of Jesus
The Immaculate Heart of Mary
The Most Chaste Heart of St Joseph



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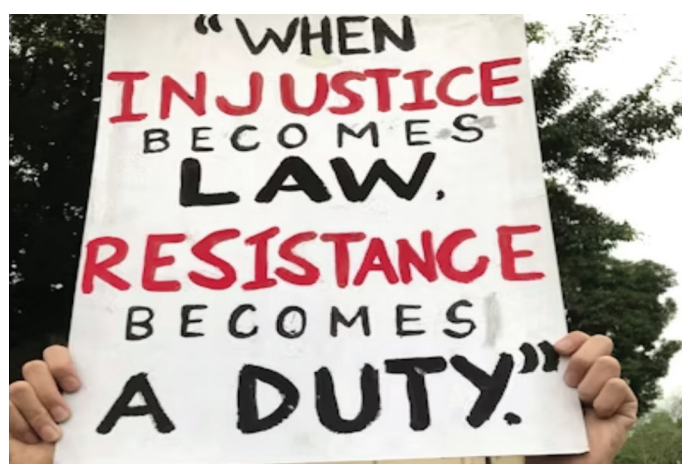
Pope Pius XI begins his examination of the role of the secular State in education by pointing out that in many cases the State has violated the rights of the family. He also tells us that the Catholic Church has always come to the defence of the family.

“History bears witness how, particularly in modern times, the State has violated and does violate rights conferred by God on the family. At the same time it shows magnificently how the Church has ever protected and defended these rights, a fact proved by the special confidence which parents have in Catholic schools. As We pointed out recently in Our letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State:

The family has instinctively understood this to be so, and from the earliest days of Christianity down to our own times, fathers and mothers, even those of little or no faith, have been sending or bringing their children in millions to places of education under the direction of the Church. (Pope Pius XI - letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State, May 30, 1929.) **(Divini Illius Magistri 38)**

Whilst this was true of Catholic schools back in 1929, it can no longer be said to be true of Catholic schools in 2024. In countries such as Ireland, where the secular State funds the Catholic schools from the exchequer, the State has encroached upon the rights of both the Catholic Church and Catholic parents. It does this by seeking to impose a curriculum into the Catholic schools it funds, which does not uphold the tenets of Catholicism and which actively contradicts infallible Catholic Church teaching, especially in the area of sexual morality. The State tends to pay lip service to the Catholic ethos of the school by saying that they can teach Catholicism provided they allow the contrary to be taught as well.

This is done despite the fact that the majority of citizens may be Catholic. The leaders of western secular States seem to have forgotten that they are



servants of the people and not their masters. The secular State does not own the money it administers, rather, it is duty bound to use the taxes gathered for the common good of the citizens. The primary good being the salvation of souls.

“It is paternal instinct, given by God, that thus turns with confidence to the Church, certain of finding in her the protection of family rights, thereby illustrating that harmony with which God has ordered all things. The Church is indeed conscious of her divine mission to all mankind, and of the obligation which all men have to practice the one true religion; and therefore she never tires of defending her right, and of reminding parents of their duty, to have all Catholic-born children baptised and brought up as Christians.

On the other hand so jealous is she of the family’s inviolable natural right to educate the children, that she never consents, save under peculiar circumstances and with special cautions, to baptise the children of infidels, or provide for their education against the will of the parents, till such time as the children can choose for themselves and freely embrace the Faith. (1917 Codex Iuris Canonici c. 750 and St Thomas Aquinas - Summa Theologia - 2, 2. Q. X., a. 12)” **(Divini Illius Magistri 39)**

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Whilst the teachings of the Catholic Church remain crystal clear on the rights and duties of the Church, the parents, and the secular State, it is a sad reality that many within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church have failed to defend those rights. This has resulted in the secular State, most notably in western democracies, severely infringing on the rights of both the Church and of the family with little or no opposition from those whose primary duty it is to defend our Catholic schools.

The bishops seek to co-operate with the secular State by a compromise which claims to allow both the Church and the State to have influence over the children in the care of Catholic schools. The bishops will produce educational programmes whilst at the same time refraining from direct opposition to the secular State programmes which contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church. This compromise has led to programmes being developed at the behest of Catholic bishops conferences which are seriously defective in content. It would seem that this is done so as to cause little or no offence to the secular powers.

Another common problem is the modernist view. Everything has to be progressive and up to date and the historical, highly successful methods of teaching catechism are frowned upon as being outdated. The result is that at least two generations of Irish Catholics have been left with a serious deficiency in their understanding of the Catholic faith which, unsurprisingly, has led to them abandoning the Catholic faith.

“We have therefore two facts of supreme importance. As We said in Our discourse cited above: The Church placing at the disposal of families her office of mistress and educator, and the families eager to profit by the offer, and entrusting their children to the Church in hundreds and thousands. These two facts recall and proclaim a striking truth of the greatest significance in the moral and social order. They declare that the mission of education regards before all, above all, primarily the Church and the family, and this by natural and divine law, and that therefore it cannot be slighted, cannot be evaded, cannot be supplanted. (Pope Pius XI - Discourse to the students of Mondragone College, May 14, 1929.) **(Divini Illius Magistri 40)**

Wonderful as it is for the Catholic Church to offer her help to parents, it comes with a proviso that the Catholic educators heed what was said earlier in this encyclical: “It is therefore as important to make no mistake in education, as it is to make no mistake in the pursuit of the last end, with which the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected.” **(Divini Illius Magistri 7)**



ALIVE-O LEGACY
Let the Children come to Me?

Éanna Johnson PhD
2019

The Alive-O programme was introduced into Irish Catholic schools by the Irish bishops in 1996. Éanna Johnson has shown that it has been disastrous for the Catholic faith of the children who were subjected to it. The bishops do not accept responsibility.

If the education being offered in Catholic schools is seriously deficient, it will be disastrous for the societies that are affected by it.

“From such priority of rights on the part of the Church and of the family in the field of education, most important advantages, as we have seen, accrue to the whole of society. Moreover in accordance with the divinely established order of things, no damage can follow from it to the true and just rights of the State in regard to the education of its citizens.” **(Divini Illius Magistri 41)**

This statement only holds true, as noted above, when the Catholic schools are teaching the Catholic faith correctly and are preventing what is contrary to the Catholic faith from being taught in the Catholic schools. Otherwise, the Catholic schools, as in Ireland, become a part of the problem. It is these deficiencies in Catholic educational establishments that have led to the growth of the home school movement. Parents who are alert to what has happened, realise that they now need to protect their children from the Catholic schools.

Pope Pius XI will now examine the rights and duties of the secular civil State, but it is important to note just how much has changed since he wrote this encyclical in 1929. Nonetheless, the points that he makes are more valid than ever given that western democracies have usurped the role of education to their own materialistic ends.

“These rights have been conferred upon civil society by the Author of nature Himself, not by title of fatherhood, as in the case of the Church and of the family, but in virtue of the authority which it possesses to promote the common temporal welfare, which is precisely the purpose of its existence. Consequently education cannot pertain to civil society in the same

way in which it pertains to the Church and to the family, but in a different way corresponding to its own particular end and object.” (Divini Illius Magistri 42)

This is a very important point. The State’s role in education differs from that of both the Catholic Church and of parents. The State’s role is to facilitate the Catholic education of children. However, when secular States become hostile to the teachings of the Catholic Church, they will always encroach on education seeking to impose their secular ideologies on the youngest members of society in order to further propagate their errors. Pope Pius XI outlines this as follows.

“Now this end and object, the common welfare in the temporal order, consists in that peace and security in which families and individual citizens have the free exercise of their rights, and at the same time enjoy the greatest spiritual and temporal prosperity possible in this life, by the mutual union and co-ordination of the work of all. The function therefore of the civil authority residing in the State is twofold, to protect and to foster, but by no means to absorb the family and the individual, or to substitute itself for them.

Accordingly in the matter of education, it is the right, or to speak more correctly, it is the duty of the State to protect in its legislation, the prior rights, already described, of the family as regards the Christian education of its offspring, and consequently also to respect the supernatural rights of the Church in this same realm of Christian education.” (Divini Illius Magistri 43-44)

The State’s role may increase in individual cases where the parents, for whatever reason, are failing in their duties to their children.

“It also belongs to the State to protect the rights of the child itself when the parents are found wanting either physically or morally in this respect, whether by default, incapacity or misconduct, since, as has been shown, their right to educate is not an absolute and despotic one, but dependent on the natural and divine law, and therefore subject alike to the authority and jurisdiction of the Church, and to the vigilance and administrative care of the State in view of the common good.

Besides, the family is not a perfect society, that is, it has not in itself all the means necessary for its full development. In such cases, exceptional no doubt, the State does not put itself in the place of the family, but merely supplies deficiencies, and provides suitable means, always in conformity with the natural rights of the child and the supernatural rights of the Church.” (Divini Illius Magistri 45)



One of the greatest difficulties in modern societies is the rise of births outside of wedlock and even outside of legal civil partnerships. The children so born, are very vulnerable, because they have no stable family structure. We have seen that the marital family itself is not a perfect society and needs to be assisted by the civil authority in carrying out its duties. How much greater is the dependency of those children who have been abandoned by one of their parents? Thus, in a society where the State seeks to indoctrinate children contrary to Catholic Church teaching, these children and the parent who is rearing them, are very vulnerable to this State indoctrination. The rising numbers of children born out of wedlock (currently 43% of all births in Ireland) clearly shows the current failure of the Catholic schools in the matter of religious and civil education.

“In general then it is the right and duty of the State to protect, according to the rules of right reason and faith, the moral and religious education of youth, by removing public impediments that stand in the way. In the first place it pertains to the State, in view of the common good, to promote in various ways the education and instruction of youth. It should begin by encouraging and assisting, of its own accord, the initiative and activity of the Church and the family, whose successes in this field have been clearly demonstrated by history and experience. It should moreover supplement their work whenever this falls short of what is necessary, even by means of its own schools and institutions. For the State more than any other society is provided with the means put at its disposal for the needs of all, and it is only right that it use these means to the advantage of those who have contributed them.(Pope Pius XI - Discourse to the students of Mondragone College, May 14,1929.) (Divini Illius Magistri 46)

The civil State’s primary role is to provide the means that are required for Catholics to establish a Catholic school system and the State is free to establish schools of its own, provided these do not damage the common good. This principle has been lost in modern times.