



## ‘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



Tel: +353 (0)85-1208779

Web: [www.truedevotions.ie](http://www.truedevotions.ie)

E-mail: [john@truedevotions.ie](mailto:john@truedevotions.ie)

We are looking at the role of the secular State in the education of youth. In the previous article Pope Pius XI outlined the primary duty of the State as “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.” (Divini Illius Magistri 46)

Pope Pius XI then tells us:

“Over and above this, the State can exact and take measures to secure that all its citizens have the necessary knowledge of their civic and political duties, and a certain degree of physical, intellectual and moral culture, which, considering the conditions of our times, is really necessary for the common good.” (Divini Illius Magistri 47)

In our day, these principles have become inverted with many States giving priority to promoting government ideologies and propaganda into the Catholic schools. The religious element is either ignored or contradicted by the State parties.

Pope Pius XI addresses this very issue in the next paragraph of the encyclical.

“However it is clear that in all these ways of promoting education and instruction, both public and private, the State should respect the inherent rights of the Church and of the family concerning Christian education, and moreover have regard for distributive justice. Accordingly, unjust and unlawful is any monopoly, educational or scholastic, which, physically or morally, forces families to make use of government schools, contrary to the dictates of their Christian conscience, or contrary even to their legitimate preferences.” (Divini Illius Magistri 48)

In Ireland and other western democracies, the State pays lip service to the Catholic ethos of public schools



and then mandates programmes which are contrary to the Catholic faith to be taught in those Catholic schools. This is particularly evident in the area of human sexuality where Relationships and Sexuality Education programmes are made mandatory in Catholic schools even though their content contradicts infallible Catholic Church teaching on this matter.

The response of most of the Catholic bishops is to develop programmes of their own which they claim are fully compliant with the mandated State curriculum. However, this is a contradiction and only leads to a compromise of the Catholic faith. These compromises endanger the faith of the children that are subject to these programmes. In many cases, the programmes developed by the bishops will selectively use resources developed by the State in order to show their compliance. This unfortunately gives an endorsement to the State as being a trustworthy source of information even though the State publicly and deliberately contradicts infallible Catholic Church teaching.

Such action on the part of the bishops also undermines the encyclical *‘Divini Illius Magistri’*, because the bishops are co-operating with what Pope Pius XI has called policies on the part of the State that are “unjust and unlawful”. All such policies must be resisted.

“This does not prevent the State from making due provision for the right administration of public affairs and for the protection of its peace, within or without the realm. These are things which directly concern the public good and call for special aptitudes and special preparation. The State may therefore reserve to itself the establishment and direction of schools intended to prepare for certain civic duties and especially for military service, provided it be careful not to injure the rights of the Church or of the family in what pertains to them.

It is well to repeat this warning here; for in these days there is spreading a spirit of nationalism which is false and exaggerated, as well as dangerous to true peace and prosperity. Under its influence various excesses are committed in giving a military turn to the so-called physical training of boys (sometimes even of girls, contrary to the very instincts of human nature); or again in usurping unreasonably on Sunday, the time which should be devoted to religious duties and to family life at home.

It is not our intention however to condemn what is good in the spirit of discipline and legitimate bravery promoted by these methods; We condemn only what is excessive, as for example violence, which must not be confounded with courage nor with the noble sentiment of military valour in defence of country and public order; or again exaltation of athleticism which even in classic pagan times marked the decline and downfall of genuine physical training.” **(Divini Illius Magistri 49)**

Pope Pius XI was alert to some of the dangers facing education but some others were not prevalent in his time. Sundays have now become ordinary shopping days and a false anti-nationalist ideology has developed which seeks to create a one world government without borders or national identities. It would seem that this is also an attack on the Catholic identity of certain nations which are inherently opposed to such globalisation. Another danger of this globalist movement is that it tends to provoke the false, excessive Nationalism which Pope Pius XI warns against.

“In general also it belongs to civil society and the State to provide what may be called civic education, not only for its youth, but for all ages and classes. This consists in the practice of presenting publicly to groups of individuals information having an intellectual, imaginative and emotional appeal, calculated to draw their wills to what is upright and honest, and to urge its practice by a sort of moral compulsion, positively by disseminating such knowledge, and negatively by suppressing what is opposed to it. (P. L. Taparelli, Saggio teor. di Diritto Naturale, n. 922) This civic education, so wide and varied in itself as



to include almost every activity of the State intended for the public good, ought also to be regulated by the norms of rectitude, and therefore cannot conflict with the doctrines of the Church, which is the divinely appointed teacher of these norms.” **(Divini Illius Magistri 50)**

The problem that is now manifest in western democracies is that the secular State provides a civic education which includes the promotion of abortion, contraception, divorce, “same-sex marriage” and euthanasia all of which are contrary to the doctrines of the Catholic Church. That these are promoted in “Catholic” schools makes them all the more abhorrent, but there is very little resistance to these government policies because they have been nurtured and infiltrated into the public mind over many decades.

“All that we have said so far regarding the activity of the State in educational matters, rests on the solid and immovable foundation of the Catholic doctrine of The Christian Constitution of States set forth in such masterly fashion by Our Predecessor Leo XIII, notably in the Encyclicals *Immortale Dei* and *Sapientiae Christianae*. He writes as follows:

God has divided the government of the human race between two authorities, ecclesiastical and civil, establishing one over things divine, the other over things human. Both are supreme, each in its own domain; each has its own fixed boundaries which limit its activities. These boundaries are determined by the peculiar nature and the proximate end of each, and describe as it were a sphere within which, with exclusive right, each may develop its influence.

As however the same subjects are under the two authorities, it may happen that the same matter, though from a different point of view, may come under the competence and jurisdiction of each of them. It follows that divine Providence, whence both authorities have their origin, must have traced with due order the proper line of action for each. The powers that are, are ordained of God. (*Immortale Dei* Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII- 1885 - On the Christian constitution of States)” **(Divini Illius Magistri 51)**

## Legio Sanctae Familiae - The Legion of The Holy Family

Here we see that Pope Pius XI does not deny that there is a role for the secular State in education. He is pointing out that State's authority is not absolute, that it is limited to the realm of the natural common good, and that it must not encroach on the higher goods which pertain to the supernatural life of man.

“Now the education of youth is precisely one of those matters that belong both to the Church and to the State, “though in different ways,” as explained above. Therefore, continues Leo XIII, between the two powers there must reign a well-ordered harmony.

Not without reason may this mutual agreement be compared to the union of body and soul in man. Its nature and extent can only be determined by considering, as we have said, the nature of each of the two powers, and in particular the excellence and nobility of the respective ends. To one is committed directly and specifically the charge of what is helpful in worldly matters; while the other is to concern itself with the things that pertain to heaven and eternity.

Everything therefore in human affairs that is in any way sacred, or has reference to the salvation of souls and the worship of God, whether by its nature or by its end, is subject to the jurisdiction and discipline of the Church. Whatever else is comprised in the civil and political order, rightly comes under the authority of the State; for Christ commanded us to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. ((Immortale Dei Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII- 1885 - On the Christian constitution of States)”) **(Divini Illius Magistri 52)**

These points are largely disregarded in “modern” western democracies and it would seem that a false understanding has developed which leads to a compromise on the part of the Catholic Church authorities in these States. Pope Pius XI now points out this problem and issues a challenge to those who oppose these principles.

“Whoever refuses to admit these principles, and hence to apply them to education, must necessarily deny that Christ has founded His Church for the eternal salvation of mankind, and maintain instead that civil society and the State are not subject to God and to His law, natural and divine. Such a doctrine is manifestly impious, contrary to right reason, and, especially in this matter of education, extremely harmful to the proper training of youth, and disastrous as well for civil society as for the well-being of all mankind. On the other hand from the application of these principles, there inevitably result immense advantages for the right formation of citizens. This is abundantly proved by the history of every age. Tertullian in his Apologeticus could throw down a challenge to the enemies of the Church in the early



**New mobile phone app helps healthcare workers provide comprehensive abortion care**



days of Christianity, just as St. Augustine did in his; and we today can repeat with him:

Let those who declare the teaching of Christ to be opposed to the welfare of the State, furnish us with an army of soldiers such as Christ says soldiers ought to be; let them give us subjects, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, kings, judges, taxpayers and tax gatherers who live up to the teachings of Christ; and then let them dare assert that Christian doctrine is harmful to the State. Rather let them not hesitate one moment to acclaim that doctrine, rightly observed, the greatest safeguard of the State.” (St Augustine - Letter 138 - Addressed to Marcellinus) **(Divini Illius Magistri 53)**

We live in an age where principles no longer matter to most men. The authority of Jesus Christ is essentially denied and the civil society of most western democracies is heading for collapse, just as Pope Pius XI said it would. Today the challenge issued by Tertullian, St Augustine, and repeated by Pope Pius XI in ‘*Divini Illius Magistri*’, is simply ignored. Those who command power in western democracies are following the dictates of a ruling class who treat of mankind as of a species of animal to be husbanded and controlled as a form of livestock. The inherent dignity of man, created in the image and likeness of God, is denied. Man is portrayed as being a danger to the planet and the ‘herd’ needs to be culled as it has grown too populous. Very few episcopal voices have sounded the alarm and the rate of apostasy from the Catholic faith in once Catholic nations is astounding for the speed at which it has occurred. The lack of resistance to those who oppose what were once considered normal moral principles, is also astonishing. The commandment not to kill, has been subverted to the extent that abortion is now the leading cause of death in the world.

The corruption of education amongst youth in recent decades is also a leading cause of the transformation of societies from seeking the common good, to promoting that which is inherently evil as being good for society. This problem will have to be tackled with a major programme of reform for the Catholic schools to bring these schools back to first moral principles.