

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

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In this article we first consider the nature of Religious Education and distinguish it from the related activities, evangelisation and catechesis, and from indoctrination. We then discuss the place of Religious Education in the curriculum both in a Catholic context and in schools in general. In the third section we consider the advantages and disadvantages of placing Religious Education in a national curriculum. Finally we compare the philosophy behind the national curriculum with that of the Religious Education curriculum for Catholic primary schools.

The Nature of Religious Education

In the last twenty years a considerable literature has developed on the nature of Religious Education as a discipline at tertiary level and as a subject in secondary and primary schools. Rummery (1975), Nichols (1978), Groome (1980), Crawford and Rossiter (1985), Warren (1986), Moran (1989), Malone and Ryan (1994).

Many theorists today argue that Religious Education, understood as a type of 'education', is distinguishable from more precisely 'religious' pursuits such as evangelisation, (1) and catechesis, (2). It is also different from indoctrination, which is illegitimate on both educational and religious grounds.

Michael Leahy (1990) has pointed out that "the concept of 'indoctrination' functions in educational theory as a conceptual tool for distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate forms of teaching". Drawing on the indoctrination theory of R.S. Laura (1981) Leahy argues that if it is 'genuinely to safeguard free access of students to truth', then the concept 'should be redefined as teaching a particular content without also teaching that content's dependence upon the subject's epistemological assumptions or 'epistemic primitives'. On this view, the danger of indoctrinating students is at least as great, if not greater, in the secular subjects where such dependence is invariably taken for granted, than in religious education where it is not.' A similar point is made by Brian Hill (1994:8) when considering the contribution of Thomas Kuhn's (1970) 'paradigms' thesis to the epistemological debate about religious education. Hill writes:

Since Kuhn we have become more aware of the need to alert students to the role of paradigmatic thinking in *all* their school subjects. The problem is not peculiar to RE. Indeed, the post-modern critique of knowledge is leading us to recognise that there are problems of subjective interpretation in every subject. Not only has it become necessary in RE to teach and test for the capacity to examine critically the underlying assumptions of religious paradigms rather than merely to reproduce the legitimating narratives of the various religious traditions, but the same may be said of all the academic fields represented in the school curriculum.

Leahy (1990:143) argues for the possibility of teaching religious education without indoctrination, because it can be done without violating the educational

‘norms’ of freedom and truth. He excludes evangelisation and catechesis from his definition of religious education because they violate a third norm, ‘the autonomy of the classroom’. Leahy defines religious education as ‘the critical initiation of students into the religious dimension of reality.’ Because evangelisation (promoting conversion) and catechesis (promoting maturity of faith among believers) are primarily religious in their motivation they do not include a critical dimension and Leahy argues, cannot therefore be regarded as educational.

A view similar to that of Leahy is found in the writings of Michael Warren (1981, 1986) which have done much to clarify the importance of context in specifying the appropriateness and efficacy of various modes of teaching religion. The fact that most school classrooms are, in Warren’s words, ‘zones of obligatory attendance’, makes them an inappropriate locus for evangelisation or catechesis both of which presume free participation. For Warren (1986:47) religious education:

examines religious questions, including Christian ones, not so much from the point of commitment, which is the perspective of catechesis, but from that of intellectual inquiry it seeks religious literacy that is, a broad understanding about how religious forms work, especially about how religious language works.

The development of Religious Education as a subject has now reached a point where such distinctions between evangelisation, catechesis and religious education are, recognised in official Church documents on education. Thus ‘The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic Schools (1998:n68) speaks of ‘a close connection, and at the same time a clear distinction, between religious instruction, (3) and catechesis, The distinction comes from the fact that, unlike religious instruction, catechesis presupposes that the hearer is receiving the Christian message as a salvific reality.’

The ‘Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools’ (1996) issued by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales explicitly makes such a distinction and says:

Religious Education in school leads children and young people into an exploration of the different aspects of religion and thoughtful reflection upon religious belief.

It also stresses the complementary nature of evangelisation, catechesis and religious education. Similar understandings are also to be found in the Religious Education statements for Catholic secondary (1990) and primary (1996) schools in New Zealand.

What has emerged in recent years then, is an understanding that a religious education approach of the type described above is not only a correct way to proceed, in that it respects the freedom of the child or young person, but also that it is the most effective way to proceed in the peculiar context of the classroom, even in expressly religious or confessional schools. It is recognised that, on the one hand the classroom has its own contribution to make to religious literacy and that if it is to achieve this its ‘autonomy’ must be respected, and on the other hand, there is more to a school than classroom teaching. Which is to recognise that worship, retreats, camps and other

extra-classroom activities, afford more suitable occasions for evangelisation and catechesis where these are regarded as part of the overall purpose of the school.

In our view the greatest benefit of this process of exploring the nature of religious education and of drawing the distinctions and ‘simplifying the theory’ Crawford and Rossiter (1985:32-44) has been a clarification of the role of the teacher qua teacher.

The Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools (1996) in Aotearoa New Zealand states that:

It is important to appreciate the role of the teacher in the Religious Education approach. All teachers in Catholic schools have a ‘witness’ role. However, Teachers delivering the Religious Education Curriculum have the particular task of teaching knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the classroom. Teachers can help children understand what Catholics believe, but they also realise that faith is a gift from God that is freely given and freely received.

Such an understanding by the teacher, and other ‘stakeholders’, helps remove a burden of unrealistic expectations while at the same time assisting the teacher to focus on what they can best do in the classroom - to contribute to the religious education of the pupils which in turn may contribute to their faith development. For what is taught is not always what is learnt. For an interesting illustration of this see the accounts in ‘Convent Girls’ Tolerton (1994) by prominent New Zealand women of their education in Catholic schools in the 1920s -70s.

Catholic schools today are not, and maybe never were, full of totally receptive Catholic pupils seeking to advance in maturity of faith. The recent English Curriculum Directory (1996) recognises this reality when it refers to the difficulties faced by schools which:

cater for children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds, not only in social terms but also in terms of the level of practice and understanding of the faith. Among the pupils may be included Christian children and young people who are not Catholics, and, in some circumstances, children and young people from other faiths or even of no particular religious background.

The equivalent New Zealand Curriculum Statement (1996:15) also acknowledges this situation and quotes a recent Australian book Malone and Ryan (1994:79) on how the religious education approach addresses it:

Religious Education is education in, for, and about religion. For children who are actively part of the Catholic community - Religious Education will educate them in or within their religion. For children who are not yet active or part of a community - Religious Education will prepare them for the time they will commit themselves to religion. For children who will never make a commitment to religion - Religious Education will teach them about religion so that they will understand how it affects the lives of committed believers.

The Place Of Religious Education In The Curriculum

Religious Education is central to the curriculum of a Catholic school. (Later we maintain that there are good grounds for arguing that it should be part of the curriculum of any school.) Evangelisation and catechesis are functions of the Church which extend far beyond schools. But as we have noted, while evangelisation and catechesis are legitimately part of a Catholic school's overall purpose, it is religious education that is peculiarly suited to the educational role of the school. Thus Pope John Paul II (1979:n69) writing about the Catholic school states that:

it would no longer deserve the title if, no matter how good its reputation for teaching in other areas, there were just grounds for a reproach of negligence or deviation in religious education properly so called.

We are currently engaged in producing materials for a Catholic Religious Education programme, and the argument thus far has been intentionally from a Catholic perspective drawing largely on Catholic sources.

However, given the above understanding of Religious Education we believe that an argument can be made for the inclusion of the subject in the curriculum of any school, not simply confessional schools. Such an argument for Religious Education on educational grounds has been ably made by Brenda Watson (1987) in her book 'Education and Belief'. Writing in the English context where religious education is a compulsory subject in state schools Watson counters common objections to religious education and then argues strongly the need for religious education for all children on the grounds that religion is an important aspect of life and makes a fascinating study, and that Religious Education can; make a positive contribution to world peace, help students search for their own convictions and protect students from indoctrination.

The National Curriculum Framework

We have dealt with the nature and status of religious education and the argument for its place in the curriculum. Before considering the particular advantages and disadvantages of having religious education as part of a national curriculum let us briefly consider some of the general advantages of a national curriculum.

In the New Zealand Curriculum Framework (1993:4) "curriculum" is defined as follows:

The New Zealand Curriculum comprises a set of national curriculum statements which define the learning principles and achievement aims and objectives which New Zealand schools are required to follow. The school curriculum consists of the ways in which a school puts into practice the policy set out in the national curriculum statements. It takes account of local needs, priorities, and resources, and is designed in consultation with the school's community.

The first identifiable advantage of a national framework is that it provides a structure to work within. The clearly defined strands of learning, the achievement aims and objectives indicate the specific content to be taught and assessed. This means that all students will have access to all that is included in the curriculum. This does away with the problem of teachers having control over what is taught and

choosing to teach only what interests them or what they consider important knowledge. Through the consultation done during the drafting of the curriculum statement teachers as the "professionals" have had a significant input into what is to be taught.

Within the national curriculum, the framework is set, the terms and structure used are familiar to all teachers, and regardless of what sort of school it is whether it be large or small, rural or city, rich or poor, the curriculum delivered to the students will be the same throughout the country. There will be a variation in the way the curriculum is shaped as it will be affected by the resources within the community to support it. But each school sets its own priorities to meet the needs of its own community. This could be seen as another advantage for a national curriculum in that although there are clearly specified content areas to be taught there is enough flexibility within the framework for schools to be able to develop programmes which can address any local need within their community.

Another advantage is that being a national curriculum students and teachers are not disadvantaged when they move from one school to another. They can expect that, apart from local variations, the curriculum will be the same throughout the country. This is an important consideration especially for families who move to get work, which is a common occurrence in the present environment.

The principles on which the national curriculum is based recognise the importance of equity of access to programmes for all students. This addresses a long standing problem which has been part of curriculum history in New Zealand. This problem has included equity of access especially for girls and Maori students. With a National Curriculum clearly stating:

the need to recognise respect and respond to the educational needs, interests and values of all students, both male and female, students of all ethnic groups, students with different abilities and disabilities and students of different social and religious backgrounds NZCF (1993:7)

schools will be challenged to practise this principle regardless of personal or local bias.

Generally speaking teachers approve of the National Curriculum now they have had the opportunity to become familiar with it. Their greatest objection has been to the pace of its implementation Renwick and Gray (1995:85).

Another difficulty was the larger emphasis it places on assessment. Many of the anxieties about this have diminished as teachers have become familiar with the purposes of assessment to promote learning and have developed policies and practices to implement it. Ministry of Education (1994).

The biggest disadvantage with a National Curriculum as seen by teachers is that it fails to recognise learning done beyond the specified aims and objectives. It also curbs the teachers' opportunity to teach "spontaneously" in some respects. This can also be seen as an advantage as it was often this type of teaching that resulted in

students learning only what the teacher was familiar with and not what was in the curriculum.

Religious Education And The National Curriculum Framework

During the last two years we have been employed in the development of the Religious Education curriculum for Catholic primary schools. Religious Education is recognised as the eighth essential learning area on the National Framework for all Catholic Integrated schools. The Curriculum Statement, already referred to, for this essential area, was published in March 1996.

The decision to develop a Religious Education curriculum within a national framework was not made easily. The need for the existing Religious Education curriculum to be reformed coincided with the major curriculum reforms in all the other essential areas. Data had been gathered from all areas of the Catholic community throughout New Zealand in 1991 which led the agency responsible for curriculum development in the Catholic community to believe it was time the present curriculum was reformed. This agency, known as The National Centre for Religious Studies, (4) organises, co-ordinates and carries out the work with the assistance of a national Working Party which carries out this task.

Two major issues emerged during the early decision making stages. The first being the need to examine and address the needs of the children in the present context from a Catholic perspective. The second being to select the approach to be taken for a new curriculum which was compatible with the current school environment. The context was looked at under the headings of social, educational, church and cultural. The conclusions reached after this research was completed led the group to recognise the need to develop a curriculum which would promote children's knowledge, skills attitudes and values in Catholic Religious Education. This seemed to be very compatible with the purpose of the National Curriculum. Consultation with teachers and educationalists supported the idea of developing the Religious Education curriculum in the structure and format of the other Ministry statements.

Apart from a major difference concerning philosophy, which we will address later, the Religious Education curriculum development has followed the Ministry of Education model very closely. A draft statement was prepared and circulated for consultation in 1994. The final draft was prepared and refined in the light of comments made by members of the Catholic education community including teachers and theologians. This resulted in healthy debate between the theologians and teachers. The debate seen as specialist versus pedagogist has generally been part of curriculum development in New Zealand.

The process itself made history in that it was the first time a state structure had been used as a model for a Catholic Religious Education curriculum in New Zealand.

The curriculum includes six Learning Strands with four Cross Strand Themes and four Learning Modules. There is a set of Achievement Aims for each strand and a focus for each of the eight years of primary school. The difficulty of how to divide up a body of knowledge that is so inter-related highlighted the issue of dividing

knowledge into subject areas. Much time was spent in deciding where some subjects which relate to several others would best be placed. This raised the issue of subject centred learning versus a holistic integrated approach which is popular in Primary schools. It was decided to encourage teachers to use an integrated approach when teaching but to ensure that the learning outcomes that are specified as Religious Education outcomes are not lost in the "integration". This issue needs to be constantly monitored in primary schools in all essential learning areas where an integrated child centred approach has been popular.

In relation to the Essential Skills which are specified in the framework it was decided all of these generic skills could be developed within the Religious Education curriculum. They would be used in a Religious Education context and as such could be given different emphases. The Attitudes and Values that are to be developed in a Catholic school are those recorded in the gospel. These attitudes can be fostered as the knowledge of the person on whom they are based grows. This is an educationally sound outcome for a Religious Education curriculum. In this way both the educational and the spiritual outcomes for children are compatible and sit comfortably within a National Curriculum.

A major practical difference between this Religious Education curriculum development and the National Curriculum is that is that a programme to deliver the curriculum is presently being prepared for schools. In this way it differs from the Ministry curriculum developments which expect teachers to develop their own class programme using the curriculum statements as their base.

From this experience of developing a curriculum within a national framework we have realised first hand the advantages of having a framework to work within. Every aspect of the framework was able to be adapted. At a practical level the format and structure is one that teachers are working with every day in other areas. It places Religious Education in a professionally parallel position along side the other essential learning areas. It clearly defines the achievement objectives and learning outcomes. It offers a variety of ways of suggested assessment which will enable accurate assessment of the learning that has taken place. The place of assessment in the teaching of religion has been the cause of some debate. Writers such as MacDonald (1990) and Hill (1994) have argued convincingly for the legitimacy, even the necessity, of suitable assessment as part of the religious education approach described in the first part of this article. The Religious Education Curriculum Statement (1996:21) states that:

All the principles of good assessment practices apply in Religious Education. These practices require assessment to be an integral part of the teaching and learning process, recognising the individual differences in children and their attainment of specified learning outcomes.

Another advantage of using the national curriculum structure is that it places Religious Education alongside the other Essential Learning Areas when Boards of Trustees are allocating funds for in-servicing and resourcing. This area would always have a priority because of its significant position within the Special Catholic Character of a school but, it does ensure that boards recognise their responsibility to provide adequate funding in this area.

The Philosophy Behind The National Curriculum

Curriculum history has shown that within the definition of the term "curriculum" is embedded a particular ideology or set of beliefs about education and the world which is directly related to the context in which it is being defined. This history also shows that in times of economic downturn as in the 1980s discussions on curriculum focus on specifying clear objectives to allow outcomes to be measured and tested nationally Smith and Lovat (1990:1).

The meaning of the term curriculum changes, depending on the context in which it is used. It is worth noting that any definition of curriculum makes assumptions about the nature of reality, truth and knowledge and also conveys views of reality, truth and knowledge in its practice Smith and Lovat (1990:7).

Any discussion on a national curriculum raises the questions of who decides what should be included, politicians, teachers, subject specialists, parents or students? In the case of the New Zealand Curriculum it seems to have been a compromise between all groups. For our analysis at this point we draw on the work of Herbert Kliebard. In his book 'The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958' Kliebard (1987:27-29) identifies four groups or forces that were in contention for the course of the American curriculum. What eventually emerged according to Kliebard was a compromise between the views of these groups. They were: The 'humanists' - guardians of the ancient Western cultural tradition, the 'developmentalists' - seeking a curriculum along the lines of the natural development of the child, the 'social efficiency educators' - interested in creating a efficient, smoothly running society, and the 'social meliorists' who saw the schools as a major force for social change and social justice.

If we apply Kliebard's categories to the recent New Zealand situation it appears that it is the 'social efficiency' group who have had the greatest influence. In response to the economic and political environment in which it was and is being developed, it could be stated that the national curriculum has a "social efficiency" theory as a base. One of the beliefs of this theory is that education must be cost effective and therefore subject to the economy. One of its aims is to produce good employees and it links education to the future and focuses on what could be seen as a vocation based curriculum. Thus in the Introduction to 'Education for the 21st Century' a discussion document issued in 1993 states:

We live in a global community and a global marketplace. If we seek to improve our economic standing relative to that of our competitors, our commitment to education and training must be greater than that of other countries. We must adapt more quickly to change than our competitors, and the skills of our workforce must improve faster than the skills of other workforces. *We must invest in people, our greatest economic resource.* (Emphasis added)

An example of this theory in practice is seen in the restructuring of the administration systems of schools and the streamlining of systems as a means of saving money.

The devolution of power from centralised systems to schools, which includes the control of large sums of government money, is a major shift from the past systems where decisions were made about schools by people who often did not know the reality of the local situation and those in the schools were left powerless. This new power brings new responsibilities. Schools are closely monitored regarding the spending of their operational grants and careful tracking is done to ensure that they are having satisfactory learning outcomes for students.

The matter of education being directly tied into the state of the economy is a cause for concern. It could be argued that education is so crucial to a country's well being both present and future that it should be isolated from economic policies. This is a theory which cannot work in practice as education is a very costly enterprise which like any other service has to be funded. An alternative is to remove it as a public service and to privatise it and expect each person or family to provide for their own educational needs. In a democracy this would not be seen to be a fair way of operating given that some people would have very little to spend on their children's education and others would have plenty. However there have been some signs that this could be the long term hidden agenda behind the policy makers in New Zealand at the moment.

The National Curriculum Statement (1993:28) summarises the social and economic context within New Zealand at present. This includes factors such as unemployment, technological developments and the change in New Zealand's trading partners. These factors have certainly influenced the content of the curriculum as well as the administrative re-structuring of education and have been criticised Peters (1993) for having 'neo-liberal' ideological origins. Other criticism stemmed from the idea that schools are not businesses and should not be expected to operate as such. The debate includes the argument that the social efficiency theory depersonalises people into "inputs and outputs". Schools maintain they cannot be the leveller when students come from such a wide range of backgrounds and environments over which they have no control.

The many social and health problems concerning young people in the country have also had an impact on the content of the curriculum. These problems include the increase in violent crime and suicide, the high level of teenage pregnancies and a marked increase in drug and alcohol abuse. With these problems in mind the national curriculum can be seen to have a "Social Meliorist" theory base also. This means that through the curriculum, the school is to be used as a force for social change. It aims to address the causes and the effects of these problems and hopes to act as a deterrent by increasing students' knowledge, skills and shaping attitudes which will enable them to make better choices and have more options for employment and hence better 'life chances'.

In both the Social Efficiency model and the Social Meliorist model education is seen as both the problem and the solution. Porter (1990:26) discusses this idea stating:

If more education could contribute to a stronger economy and social reforms, a weaker economy and unresolved social issues must reflect a poor education system. Therefore

education is being reconstructed as the solution again. It views students as human capital, teachers as trainers, and schooling as an investment for a competitive future.

This presents a very narrow view of the purpose of education which raises a bigger question - what **is** the purpose of education? Is it to equip and prepare people for life? Is it for the good of the individual or the good of society? Does it need to consider the context in which it exists? Every generation asks and answers these questions. The national curriculum could be seen as one current answer. Catholic schools are part of a community and a tradition which in some respects provide quite different answers.

The Philosophy Behind The Religious Education Curriculum

A clear statement of the Catholic philosophy of education is found in a recent C.E.S. (1997:7) publication from England:

Education is, primarily, about “human flourishing”, it is concerned with the development of the whole person. It is essential that children learn basic skills in school. This is not primarily because employers require them, but rather because they are crucial to the development of the individual made in God’s image. Impoverished language skills mean a limited ability to communicate with others, to build effective relationships, to reason, to express joy, suffering, concern and love. Literacy and numeracy contribute substantially to a person’s growing independence, freedom, and maturity. The development of skills, and, even the acquisition of knowledge are a means to a end. For a Christian, the aim of education is, literally to draw out of young people their God-given potential, to enable them to fulfil their unique role in creation within the human community. Childhood and adolescence are stages in human life in their own right, with their own specific vocation, and education enables children and young people of all abilities and backgrounds to live these stages to the full.

It is not only Catholics of course who share such a philosophy of education which, while it contains some elements of Kliebard’s ‘social meliorist’ position, is primarily representative of his ‘humanist’ position. In this case it is a Christian humanism Pope Paul VI (1967:n20). In a joint statement entitled ‘The Purpose of Education - A Christian Perspective’, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops of New Zealand (1992) wrote:

We would not dispute the fact that education must help to prepare young people for their work, but we deplore the tendency for education to be viewed as merely an instrument in the service of industry. Education is pre-eminently a personal good which enriches the possessor, while also being a social good which brings advantages to the whole society A purely secular education, by expressly excluding the spiritual dimension of reality, excludes the ultimate safeguard against reducing persons to merely market values.

It is this philosophy of education, often given expression in school charters, that informs the whole enterprise of Catholic schooling. In a major study published as ‘Catholic Schools and the Common Good’ Anthony Bryk and his colleagues at the University of Chicago researched the ‘Catholic difference’ in high schools in the United States. They found that a key component in the qualitative difference of the Catholic schools was an ‘inspirational ideology’ Bryk (1993:301) which celebrated; the primacy of the spiritual and moral life as realised in Catholic religious culture, the

dignity of the person, the importance of community, social and moral commitments to caring, social justice and conceptions of the common or public good.

In this context it is worth emphasising the steps taken to inculturate the curriculum. This is in keeping with the Church's teaching on the inculturation of the gospel *Redemptoris Missio* (n.52, 54) and with the principles of the National Curriculum New Zealand Curriculum Framework (1993:7). The inclusion of Maori signs, symbols, sayings and concepts are evident throughout the publication. Its purpose is two fold in that it seeks to show the respect due to Maori as the *Tangata Whenua* and also provides opportunities through teaching and learning experiences for all children to understand key concepts of Maori culture and spirituality in a religious education setting. This part of the development was done in consultation with the Maori community and has required extensive in-servicing for teachers. The need to acknowledge the impact of culture was recognised by John Codd (1981:52) when he stated:

the social and cultural factors that impinge on the classroom from the wider community outside the school gates have historically been especially strong in New Zealand.

The Religious Education Curriculum Statement also acknowledges the growing multi-cultural nature of New Zealand society, including Catholic schools. It calls on teachers to cater for this, where appropriate, by incorporating life experiences from children of various cultures into the Learning Experiences. (National Centre For Religious Studies, 1996, p.14)

Conclusion

The nature of Religious Education, its relationship to evangelisation and catechesis, and its role within the overall purpose of Catholic primary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand today is clearly defined. A consideration of the National Curriculum has led us to the view that it has more advantages than disadvantages to recommend it. Although tightly structured it has enough flexibility within it to respond to individual children's and school needs. It has been designed to respond to the learning and social needs of today's students in the present environment. We doubt the validity of some of the ideological stances that have helped to shape the National Curriculum. On the other hand we are confident that the 'inspirational ideology' of Catholic schools is sufficiently robust to preclude any compromise of core values. Hence on balance, we endorse the placing of the Religious Education Curriculum within the national structure. In the words of the Religious Education Curriculum Statement (1996:3):

The Curriculum is truly Catholic in its presentation in its elements of a living Tradition, appropriate for children in primary schools. It is truly contemporary in its best use of current educational practice, and in its integration with the other essential learning areas of the curriculum.

Notes

1. In Catholic usage 'evangelisation' is usually preferred to the term 'evangelism' often used by other Christian Churches or communities to refer

to the same activity - introducing people to the 'good news of Jesus Christ' or to put it another way, attempts by believers to convert non-believers to Christ.

2. In Catholic usage catechesis is seen as a 'dialogue among believers'. It is intended to help people towards maturity of faith. It thus pre-supposes that those engaged in it stand 'within the household of faith'.
3. In Vatican documents on education the term 'religious instruction' is sometimes used to mean the classroom teaching of religion, which we have referred to in this article as 'religious education'.
4. It is somewhat ironic, and indicative of the confusion of terminology that besets the field, that the agency responsible for producing religious education curricula for Catholic schools is entitled the National Centre for *Religious Studies*. The teacher responsible for religious education in Catholic schools is likewise called the Director of *Religious Studies*.

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