



REPORT
on the
EDUCATION
of
YOUNG PEOPLE
FOR LIFE

— CANA MOVEMENT —
MALTA

24371

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND
to the
REPORT

In presenting this Report, the CANA MOVEMENT wishes to make the adult community aware of the ever pressing need of preparing our young folk for life. Today this preparation is a dire necessity, for the socio-moral changes of our Islands are having their impact on our younger generations.

To meet this challenge the CANA MOVEMENT had appointed a STUDY GROUP to prepare a Report on this matter. The terms of reference of the Group were to:

Propose HOW, WHEN and WHERE this preparation for life should be given.

The STUDY GROUP had Chev. Salv. Gatt as its Chairman, and 12 members. Mr Vincent Ciancio acted as Secretary.

The Report cannot be considered comprehensive, but it should serve as a starting point for further study and action on this problem. It is hoped that parents, educators and youth leaders will follow it up with further work and eventually make it their own.

/OUR CONCERN

OUR CONCERN

The CANA MOVEMENT is concerned about this problem, because when engaged couples come to our marriage preparation courses we find that they lack an adequate preparation for life. This is apparent from the questions they bring up and from the counselling sessions. They have such a confused and negative approach toward sex, that their love is often frustrated. Their outlook towards life is narrow, their inter-personal relationship during marriage is affected.

Thus, when they come to the CANA MOVEMENT it is often already too late. The choice of the partner has already been made, they have already been officially engaged and marriage is often only a few months away. It is very difficult to give them the proper education on life, when they are already on the threshold of their wedding day.

The CANA MOVEMENT feels that:

Preparation for marriage, must start with a preparation course for life at the age of adolescence.

This should primarily be the work of parents, as the "first educators of their children", but the school, the youth movements and the Church can help.

Courses for school leavers should be more widely diffused

/and form a part

and form a part of the school curriculum.

SEXUALITY

This Report talks on the whole preparation for life and not just on sex education. This is intended to bring about a deeper understanding of the human values in man. Our aim is the understanding of love, sexuality and marriage, in a Christian context.

Today the work 'sex' has been replaced by the work 'Sexuality', for this has a much wider meaning, both in its theological and psychological aspects (i).

Sexuality has profound implications. It makes possible the deep satisfaction of life in which love is freely given and received; and presents young people with a better understanding of their human dignity. It will bring to young people an awareness of their creation as an image of God.

Sexuality should be presented as something precious and a gift of God to man. In our times sexuality is losing its inner meaning and is often limited to sexual intercourse, without showing its other meanings.

(i) The First Conference for Education Counsellors.
CMAC BULLETIN Vol. 8 No. 3 - 1969.

Knowledge on sexuality should not be a code of sexual ethics or just the flickering of the red light. We often notice that in our community this preparation consists of a systematic code of "do's" and "don'ts", which in due course easily wears off as experience has often shown us. This is true in those cases of young people who go abroad, where their newly acquired freedom makes them want to cast off the imposed code.

Another common pitfall is the presentation of sexuality as something enforced by the Church. Often one hears such phrases as "This is what the Church wants" or "This is what the Church says". Sexuality should not be presented as a code of moral teachings of the Church. This moralism tends to make young people feel that their faith is a moral strait jacket.

Sexuality should be presented in a wider dimension, not merely in a technical or moral way. Dr J. Dominion makes this comment:

"Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). The two to one communion which sexuality brings about has marked biological, psychological, social and spiritual ramifications. The significance attached to these various facets has varied from age to age with a changing emphasis depending on the current needs and appraisal. At the heart of this phenomenon lies the

/fact that men

fact that men and women were created in the image of God, reflecting the personal and relational aspect of the Trinity, and secondly that in the design of creation they co-operate with Him in the continuation of life which He set in motion. The personal and physical determinants are inseparable, and turning to the Old Testament we find due accord given to both"(i).

Thus, we hope that the first contribution of this Report will be to replace the word "sess" (sex) by the word "sesswalita" (sexuality). There is more to the question than "what's in a word!".

We should use the term preparation for life, instead of the rather restricted term 'sexual education' or 'sexual instruction'.

KNOWLEDGE

"Ours is an age dominated by the cult of knowledge" to quote again Dr Dominion. The pursuit of this knowledge is a natural impulse in man and it is apparent from early childhood, especially in our age. Children today want to know why and how for all they see around them. They feel happy, with adults (i.e. parents, teachers, etc.) who evade issues or who are not ready to reply to their natural questioning.

(i) Christian Marriage. Darton Longman & Todd. p. 42.

Today we need to arm young people with knowledge. This is a very important responsibility which adults, especially parents, are called to discharge. This is very much true where sexuality is concerned, but this fact is often being overlooked.

The Catholic Church has stressed the need for such knowledge and the pronouncements of Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI clearly indicate the Church's wishes (see Appendix II). The principles set out by the Popes are clear, but parents have not lived up to this responsibility. They have thrust it on the clergy, on nuns, teachers or else left their children to seek out their own answers.

Pope Pius XII's words show this very clearly: "Train the minds of your children. Do not give them wrong ideas or wrong reasons for things; whatever their questions may be do not answer them with evasions or untrue statements which their minds rarely accept, but take occasions from them lovingly and patiently train their minds". (i)

This knowledge should not consist solely of passing on information or be limited just to giving the physical facts. Such education often tends to back-fire. Neither should it be given just to serve as an armour or a kind of insurance against evil. Preparation for life is education and formation, for it

(i) The Pope Speaks to Mothers 1941. CTS London, S.168.

has to cover all the aspects of sexuality and to have as a basis the spiritual content.

The knowledge given should contain:

- An awareness of sexuality as a God-given gift;
- An understanding of love in a Christian context;
- The building of healthy and normal relationship between the sexes;
- A true regard of the human body and its dignity. "Glorify God in your body" - St Paul (I. Cor. 6.20.). The body should in St Paul's thought be "the living sacrifice" and "the spiritual worship"; and
- A true evaluation of the sexual role of a person from a spiritual, psychological and social aspect.

Prof. A.P. Camilleri, at the 1st European Congress of Catholic Doctors, had said: "There should be a great difference between the instruction given in a biology class and the sex education imparted in a Catholic family atmosphere: the former gives detailed information about biological sex, with the vain hope that mere knowledge will solve all problems; whilst Catholic parents regard sex education as an integral part of religious and moral training. True education in these matters is not a mere outline of anatomical and physiological details: it is an attempt to present these details in a pattern of spiritual development" (i)

(i) Medical Officers Union - Malta. pp. 96-97.

This is in fact what the CANA MOVEMENT has always attempted to do in its pre-marriage courses and in its publication on the subject.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

When this knowledge is not communicated by the parents, young people seek it else where: from friends, books, actual experience, etc. This is very true for Malta today.

The situation in Britain is described by Michael Schofield, in his "The Sexual Behaviour of Young People" in these terms:(i) "This research has shown that by the age of thirteen two-thirds of the boys and three-quarters of the girls know, or think they know, about the facts of life. In fact most of them have obtained this information from their friends and much of it is inaccurate and obscene. Prejudices and misunderstandings about sex would be avoided if children first heard about it from their parents. But this research has shown that this does not happen very often.

Two-thirds of the boys and a quarter of the girls had learnt nothing about sex from their parents. Even those who had discussed sex with their parents had usually first heard about it from another source. The only exception to this was middle-class mothers who were more likely to advise their daughters. Teenagers also reported that parental advice about sex usually concentrated on moral problems, and was unspecific and vague. Furthermore, we found that the young people who were most likely to have a serious sex problem were also those who were least likely to go to their parents for help."

(i) Penguin Books - Middx. p. 225

/The following

The following facts were given in the book "Iż-Żwieġ fl-Imħabba", as a result of questions among 100 engaged couples (18-24 years). Though this cannot be conclusive, it is the only survey of its kind in Malta (i)

"Have your parents given you any information on sexuality?"

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
<u>Yes</u>	30	10
<u>No</u>	70	90

- If your parents did not instruct you on sexuality, from where did you obtain the facts?

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
<u>Books</u>	30	25
<u>Friends</u>	40	60
<u>Priest</u>	3	5
<u>Nun</u>	2	-
<u>Teacher</u>	5	-
<u>Others</u>	10	5
<u>No one</u>	10	5

Surely, this is not a very encouraging situation and if it is prolonged the effects of this void will be even stronger than presently.

With the ever-growing pressure from advertising, the cinema, television and the printed word it would be unfair to let young people find the answers fro themselves. The only relevant manner how they can cope with the world today, is for them to be

(i) Rev. Charles G. Vella. Cana. Malta. 2nd edition. p. 179.

equipped with the proper knowledge on sexuality coming from the right sources (i.e. primarily, the parents).

The traditional customs, taboos and codes as they still exist in Malta do not suffice. Jungmann bemoaned the lack of deep understanding of Christian revelation among Catholic people. The same can be said of a knowledge of Christian sexuality among Catholic people. "He claimed that although there is an adherence to doctrines and moral precepts, there is little appreciation of the dynamism, unity and joy which characterise Christian faith (read Sexuality). Conventional Christianity, he claimed, with its beliefs and devotional practices sustained by a dominated milieu, is no longer possible". (i)

PARENTS AND SCHOOL

This Report makes the role of parents very clear. It is the parents who shape the sexual development of the child from it very early days. Parents inspire the child in its behaviour and the future pattern of its sexuality, even the marital relationship is build from the experiences derived at childhood.

Today parents are becoming aware of this role, but they are confused as to know-how and the **how-far-to-go** process. This is why we believe, that the first approach should be made to educate the parents through the parishes, the school, youth movements, etc. The lecturers of the CANA MOVEMENT are often

(i) God Still Speaks. Gabriel Moran. Burns & Oates. London.1967.
p. 27

called upon to talk to parents on this matter and a book "X'JISTAQSUKOM ULIEDKOM" was written by Mr Emilio Camilleri.

Parents should be educated as to how, when and why they should prepare their children for life. This can be done through meetings for parents in the schools and in the parishes.

Father O'Leary's paper indicates the complementary role of the home and the school.

This Report shows what contribution our schools can give. This may still be unacceptable and too new for some, but it is a necessity in today's world.

The papal pronouncements and those of various hierarchies, in the past condemned group teaching on sexuality in the classroom. It is true that the chalk-to-talk in an arid classroom can often be so impersonal and even so general.

Does this mean that the school has no responsibility?

The school is called upon to fulfill a complementary role, as indicated in Appendix II. The school is concerned not only with the mind of the child, but also with his body and personality. There should be no dichotomy between the intellect and the body, but education should cater for the whole man.

This is an area where the ecclesiastical and the educational authorities can work hand-in-hand. The Church through the

/Spiritual Directors

Spiritual Directors and the teachers of religious education, can formulate together with the Department of Education ways and means how the schools can meet this need. The CANA MOVEMENT can help by providing counsellors and lecturers for the schools.

CONCLUSIONS

This rather protracted Introduction is meant to stress points already mentioned in the Report. It was our intention to keep the Report brief and to the point, while at the same time illustrating it with this introduction and with the Appendices.

The hope of the C, is that this Report will be studied by all those responsible for the education of our young people. This in a special manner includes the Church and the Government.

On behalf of the CANA MOVEMENT I wish to thank Chev. S. Gatt, Chairman, and his Committee for their wonderful and arduous job.

Our thanks are also extended to Mr Jim James, Secretary of the National Council of Catholic Youth (England); the "Catholic Marriage Advisory Council of Great Britain" and Mrs Pamela McDonald, formerly of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral (Valletta).

(Rev.) Charles G. Vella
Founder/Director

REPORT
ON THE EDUCATION OF
YOUNG PEOPLE for life

1. In May, 1967, a study group was appointed by the Cana Movement in order to report on the subject: Education for Life. The Chairman was Chev. S. Gatt.
2. The Cana Movement had already tackled the problems in different ways. Two reports dealing with young people had been published by the Movement: the first - on the School-Leaving Adolescent - was published in 1963 in collaboration with the Malta Research Agency and the second - Youth in Malta - was published following a seminar organised by the Cana Movement in May, 1966.
3. The following terms of reference were given to the study group by the Movement:- Education for life - with special emphasis on the sex education of youth.
4. The committee met on five different occasions, apart from many informal discussions and sub-committee meetings. Various aspects of the work of the committee were discussed, and opinions of experts from Malta and overseas were sought.
5. In order to deal with the subject extensively, it was decided at the first meeting of the study group, to consider

/the following aspects....

the following aspects of the problem:

- a) Youth and the family
- b) Youth and leisure time
- c) Sex education
- d) Vocational guidance

6. It was also felt that the attention of the study group should be focussed on sex education, as this concerned the most important problem facing young people today.

7. At the last meeting of the committee, agreement had already been reached on the tentative outline of the report. Dr Misael Cassar, medical adviser of the Cana Movement, had prepared a study on sex education of youth. This was made available to the group. The study was drawn up by Dr Cassar after he had attended a conference at Keele University, England, organised by the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council of Great Britain.

8. The committee examined this paper, and agreed that it reflected very well the principle on which they wished to expand. The committee, however, felt it should go beyond Dr Cassar's study by considering ways by which sex education of Youth in Malta could be implemented. With this proviso it was decided to accept Dr Cassar's report and to say that the study group agreed with it in all its aspects.

/THE BACKGROUND.....

THE BACKGROUND

9. Previous reports showed the changes which were taking place in the attitudes of young people and of adults. In Malta, young people are no longer immune to outside influences, with the consequence that the need for a new approach to the problem of sex education must be emphasised.

10. Adolescents today are taller and heavier than those of the previous generation. "Youth in Malta" attributed this to many factors, but especially to better social conditions. The report goes on to say that "reference to adolescence in terms of age has become meaningless in any practical sense, except that of administrative convenience. It is salutary to remember that treatment based on arbitrary groupings may lead to increased emotional instability and individual unhappiness - to delinquency and broken homes.

11. The problem of the gap existing between the generations cannot be overlooked. Parents occupy a very special position. The report showed that there existed a great need for better education of parents.

12. The report also has this to say on the problem of sex education of youth: "An atmosphere of sexual stimulation surrounds young people everywhere - at the cinema, in the newspapers, on television. The tendency of youth to conform

/makes the impact

makes the impact even greater, and the reluctance of most parents to teach their children about sex, as is their duty, gives rise to concern. Sex education is one of the responsibilities of parents which they most neglect. Sex is clad in taboo, half-truths and an aura of mystery. Unless parents realise that sex is a gift of God and that there is nothing shameful about it, young people will continue to learn only by receiving garbled knowledge from questionable sources, or by untutored and possibly regrettable experiments which have emerged from natural curiosity."

THE PARENTS

14. Considering that the duty of parents is the most essential factor in the education of our youth, the committee stressed that our problem lies specifically here:- How to reach the parents and prepare them for the task which experience shows is often ignored.

15. The committee feels that this can be done by the distribution of such literature on the subject as is available (it is understood that the Cana Movement has published four booklets), also by means of talks organised for parents in various parishes. At present these are of the 'chalk and talk' variety, and very little discussion follows.

/16. We cannot however.....

16. We cannot, however, expect parents to undertake this task quickly or easily. Our traditions in this respect have hardly encouraged parents to speak openly and plainly to their children. Gradually, with outside help and instruction, and by setting examples by their own attitude, parents can be encouraged to help in this matter, even when they feel acute embarrassment. Such aid to parents can be given in the first place by the Cana Movement itself, through counsellors who would be able to explain to the parents how this delicate task may be best accomplished.

PLANNING

17. We realise that if this education of parents is to be achieved, there should be a fullscale campaign all over the country at once. This may appear to be a difficult task, but with perseverance, hard work, and the best possible use of such resources as are available, this can be brought about.

18. Furthermore, the committee suggests a scheme which, if implemented with the requisite zeal, should overcome some of the difficulties with which we are at present confronted.

COUNSELLORS

19. It is the belief of the committee that in every village, town or district there should be counsellors whom parents may approach when they are worried about how to impart sex

/instruction to their

instruction to their children. Such counsellors could be recruited through liaison and discussions among the Cana Movement, the parish priests and the lay movements.

20. Once these men and women have been selected and their voluntary cooperation ascertained, the Cana Movement should organise a short course for them in the evenings, conducted by properly qualified people - doctors, psychiatrists, priests, social workers, etc. A course could perhaps extend over a period of three months, and men and women who complete the course satisfactorily would be awarded a certificate.

A CAMPAIGN

21. When the counsellors are qualified and available, the Cana Movement would initiate the education of parents and endeavour to make them aware of their sacrosanct duty to educate their children in sex matters. As previously stated, parents in difficulty would be able to turn to these counsellors for advice.

22. Only when parents are in very serious difficulty and feel completely inadequate to the task should another person undertake it for them.

/THE EDUCATION ON AUTHORITY.....

THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

23. We certainly exclude the Education Authority as the proper body to be responsible for this delicate venture. At the same time, the committee feels that the Education Authority can play a useful role..

24. Thus the lessons in nature study can be orientated to serve as a basis for the instruction which parents will later be called upon to impart to their children. In higher schools, lessons in biology, zoology and religion may also be directed to the same purpose. It is felt that it is not the task of the Government, in a country like Malta, to introduce sex education into the schools.

SHORT TERM MEASURES

25. The recommendations of the study group appear to be based upon a long term plan, but this is a matter which should be treated with urgency. Besides the long term problem there is also a short term one - that of school leavers who at the early age of fiteen have to look for a job. They could all too easily find the wrong kind of employment, and unless they are fully conversant with the facts of life, might well be exploited, cheated and embarrassed by unscrupulous people.

26. Something must be done immediately to protect these

/school leavers

school leavers. Here, a concerted effort by parents, Church and the Education Authority is very necessary. In cases where the parents of school leavers fail to do their duty, it is suggested that **adequate literature** should be handed out. In addition, talks by competent and qualified adults should be given in schools. Parish priests could also make fuller use of the examination taken before marriage by engaged couples.

27. The committee does not regard these suggestions as providing the ultimate solution to the problems with which the youth of today are confronted, but it is felt that if these recommendations are followed, they would be an important step in the right direction. They highlight the problem so that it can better be appreciated by all, and point the way to methods whereby it can be solved.

By MISAEL CASSAR
Medical Adviser
of the CANA MOVEMENT

SEX EDUCATION
OF
YOUNG PEOPLE

BASIC PRINCIPLES

At the very outset we must make three basic principles clear:

1. Sex education is not base, vulgar or shameful;
2. Sex education is a developmental process;
3. The duty and obligation to give this education falls primarily and almost totally on parents.

SEX EDUCATION IS NOT BASE OR WRONG

This is readily evident when one considers that the church has never refrained from speaking plainly on these matters. Various passages in the Bible refer to sexual matters in no uncertain and circumvent terms. In our daily prayer we are constantly repeating "Blessed is the fruit of Thy Womb". It is common knowledge that when the Archangel Gabriel announced to Our Lady that she was about to give birth to a baby, she was at first taken aback. "How can it be", she said, "since I know not a man". This puts it completely out of any doubt that innocence is not ignorance. The archangel had first to explain to Mary that she was to become pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit, before she accepted the commitment. "Fiat mihi

/secundum verbum tuum".....

secundum verbum tuum". The various papal allocutions and hierarchical statements further confirm that sex education is both good and necessary.

SEX EDUCATION IS A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

One understands this thing readily if one bears in mind the difference between sex education and sex instruction. Sex education is not just the knowledge of a handful of anatomical features and physiological data, but it is the study of relationship between two people, between husband and wife and for that also between parents and children. This education, the infant, the child and the adolescent, gathers from his daily and constant observation of the relationship between his mother and his father, the relationship not just of a moment or of a couple of hours, but of a whole lifetime.

The attitude of parents towards sex is transmitted to their children. Ismond Rosen shows that independently of the biological factors, the social and psychological attitudes of the parents are of vital importance in assigning the sexual role of the child and this takes place any time between the second and the sixth year of life. H.B. Thompson draws attention to the influence of environment and social attitudes. These influences are also brought to bear upon the child through the aegis of the parents, parent substitutes and society as a whole.

/J. Dominion had

J. Dominion had this to say for the role of the mother and the father: "It is from her mother that the girl will receive the basic concepts of what it is like to be a woman in indentifying with her behaviour and attitude. If her mother accepts her role as a woman and mother with pleasure and joy this will be communicated to her daughter, but if she had experienced dissatisfaction and conflict, it is also very likely that she will pass this on to her overtly or unconsciously. Thus if her sexual relations have been meaningful, pleasurable and satisfying she will pass on to her daughter a similar orientation free from guilt and hostility towards men and vice versa. If the mother fails to convey to her daughter that sexual relationship is an experience to be looked forward to with joyous expectation, the young woman will be starting her own sexual life with a handicap which she may or may not be able to overcome. The father's attitude towards his wife, his remarks on women and his own male conduct will have a vital bearing on the daughter's orientation towards men. His attitude will also influence that of the boys in the family, who will take their cue from him and identify themselves with his behaviour and outlook. Such basic indentification are neither inevitable nor immutable, and they can be modified later on in life, but the presence of deeply ingrained unsatisfactory patterns in the early years makes changes later on in life difficult, and at times impossible".

SEX EDUCATION BELONGS PRIMARILY TO PARENTS

It is readily evident that the duty to give this education falls principally and primarily upon the parents. Here one should include also sex instruction, that is, the simple anatomical data together with the functions and purpose of the separate organs. The parents are the best suited to give this instruction and it behoves them directly from the very contract of marriage. The principal aims of marriage include the procreation and the education of children. Parents will be failing greatly if they relegated this education or part of it to anyone else. This does not diminish the school responsibility. The biology classes may provide a nucleus of instruction and its usefulness cannot be underestimated, but in no way can this substitute sexual education in the home. Instruction at school cannot introduce all the nuances of personal sexual relationship.

In support of this we may quote some famous papal pronouncements. Pius XI, as far back as 1929, in his encyclical "Christian education of youth", ruled that the education of the child whether religious, moral, physical or social is primarily the responsibility of the parents. He put it down very admirably that it is the vocation of parents "to lead children from the unconscious purity of infancy to the triumphant purity of adolescence". He condemned as an error the belief that sexual education consists merely in the teaching of

/physiological facts.....

physiological facts. He emphasised the wholeness of man, soul united to body, and the need for the minds of children to be imbued with teaching that comes from God and is filled with divine grace.

Pius XII, speaking to mothers in 1941, tells them:

"Train the minds of your children. Do not give them wrong ideas or wrong reasons for things; whatever their questions may be, do not answer them with evasions or untrue statements which their minds rarely accept, but take occasions from them lovingly and partially to train their minds". The Pope goes on to say that parents must watch for the moment in which certain unspoken questions have occurred to their minds and are troubling their senses. "It will then be your duty to your daughters (for the mother), the father's duty to your sons, carefully and delicately to unveil the truth as far as it appears necessary, to give a prudent, true and christian answer to those questions and set their minds at rest. If imparted by the lips of christian parents, at the proper time, in the proper measure, and with the proper precautions, the revelation of the mysterious and marvellous laws of life will be received by them with reverence and gratitude and will enlighten their minds with far less danger than if they learned them haphazardly from some disturbing encounter, from secret conversations, through information received from over-sophisticated companions or from

/clandestine reading.....

clandestine reading, the more dangerous and pernicious, as secrecy inflames the imaginations and troubles the senses".

The Vatican Council Two has also outlined the parents duty in this respect in the Declaration on Christian Education.

The main principles are the following:

(a) - As they advance in years, they should be given positive and prudent sexual education

(b) - parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it

(c) - it is through the family that they (i.e. children) are gradually introduced into civic partnership with their fellow men, and into the People of God

-While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole

- Finally, the office of educating belongs by a unique title to the Church

(c) - The Church is keenly aware of her very grave obligation to give zealous attention to the moral and religious education of all her children

(d) - Above all, let them perform their services as partners of the parents. Together with them, they (i.e. teachers,

/especially those in

especially those in Catholic Schools) should pay due regard in every educational activity to sexual differences and to the special role which divine Providence allots to each sex in family life and in society

ROLE OF SCHOOL TEACHER AND YOUTH LEADER

We have seen that the duty for sex instruction falls principally upon the parents. But the Pope continues to tell us that where these fail, where they lack the courage or the aptitude to do it, the duty then falls upon the teachers, the doctor, the priest, the confessor and upon everyone who has the charge of children and youth. It is essential for the child to feel that his educators are as much concerned with his mind as with his body - not simply as physical training but in the expression of being a girl or a boy.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN SEX EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION

The following are some fundamental principles on sex education and instruction:

1. Parents have a personal obligation to teach their children about sex.
2. Children should be taught sex within the context of love and not as a thing apart. It is more important that they should have proper attitudes about sex than that they always have precisely correct factual information. Perhaps it is

/due to lack of

due to lack of understanding that parents shun sex instruction of their children. Without uttering a word, a couple can exert the potent force of example to teach a boy or girl how a husband and wife should act in their everyday relationship. They will learn only from their parents that sexual adjustment in marriage is really the result of deep spiritual and psychological communion.

3. Sex education must be intimately related to our belief in God and the natural law. God is the author of all life. The marital act is the means chosen by God for the creation of human life. By God's law, the exercise of the sexual act is reserved only for persons in the married state.

4. Sex instruction should be intimate. In this way the dignity of sex is respected and modesty preserved. The reaction to sex instruction differs from child to child, and in this way one can temper the approach according to the child's needs. Here one may mention the Joint Pastoral Letter of the Hierarchy of England and Wales on the Catholic attitude to sex education in 1944, by which collective teaching on sex in the schoolroom has been condemned.

Although at a certain stage of adolescent awareness, group discussions, properly conducted by sympathetic leaders, can be invaluable.

/5. The knowledge about.....

5. The knowledge about sex should be acquired gradually throughout life. This is another reason why parents are best suited for the job. From the very first stages of infancy, an individual starts showing interest in the sex organs, an infant starts touching them trying to gather all anatomical information about them and a toddler starts playing with them. Happy and proud of what he possesses, the child passes through the stage of exhibitionism. Noting that his sister is different, a young boy gets interested. It is to be noted that conscience and the sense of values, of good or bad is not yet developed until a certain age. It is an error to imbue a sense of guilt, where no guilt can be adduced or felt. The way one answers questions about the facts of life, the talk about dating and "going steady", the control of the choice of reading matter, of movies, and T.V. programmes, all have their say in developing a positive or negative attitude towards sex in young people.

YOUTH LEADERS AND SEX EDUCATION

Vis a vis sex education two things become incumbent upon youth leaders.

1. First and foremost to teach parents that it is their duty to educate their children in sex, and to imbue in them a sense of responsibility towards this problem in its true perspective.

/2. To play their part

2. To play their part as far as it behoves them in their dealings with youth and to inspire a healthy attitude towards sex.

HEALTHY ATTITUDE TOWARDS SEX

A healthy and positive attitude towards sex should be created. Sex should be looked at as good in itself and as an expression of deep, complete and total love. The accent should be on love and not on sin and don'ts.

Sexual intercourse should be considered as a truthful, total and permanent commitment towards marriage; as a total giving of self to the other partner; as an expression of love between two people, which is a continuation of the love of God.

DIFFICULTIES OF YOUTH

One can say, without much risk of erring, that most difficulties of youth concern sex, sexual intercourse and its off-shoots. The questions which teenagers and young people put forward very often dwindle down to the following:

1. Petting between sexes: how far can one go with the opposite sex without committing mortal sin;
2. Difficulties about pregnancy and abortion;
3. Health as affected by sex indulgence and venereal disease;
4. Difficulties about relationships with parents.

/YOUTH COUNSELLORS AND.....

YOUTH COUNSELLORS AND THEIR REQUISITES

A youth counsellor must be ready and prepared to answer and to deal with all the problems put to him. A youth counsellor and leader is not born one. He must study and train himself to become one. He must understand that there are certain fundamental principles which he must follow and some prerequisites required of him.

1. Youth will look up to him as an authority on the subject. However he is considered not as an authority that dogmatizes, sets down rules and castigates. Rather, he should prove to be a confident, flesh and blood, ready to understand, help and sympathise.
2. There must be a declaration of interest. From the outset, the counsellor should state what he is, his state in life, and his intention in dealing with their problems and his outlook on life.
3. A youth leader must be disposable. He is readily available when required and not inopportune when he is not wanted.
5. He must keep a calm exterior. Whatever he is asked or whatever problem he is presented with, he must never in the least appear shocked, embarrassed or amused. Every problem

/should be dealt

should be dealt with in a matter-of-fact way. Some young people, by way of assessing their counsellor, try to shock him by some questions they may be putting or by their demeanour. If he remains calm and composed and goes into the problem with keenness but without any overenthusiasm, he is sure to win their confidence.

5. He should bear in mind the different outlook and the different physical and emotional set-up of young people at this age. Since an emotional element is intrinsically intertwined with every sex problem of youth, the psychological and physical set-up of boys and girls at this age should be studied. As a general rule, it may be stated that the emotional part, that is, the appetite to love, in boys follows and comes after the physical sexual appetite. This is different in girls. The girl is first stirred emotionally and the physical appetite comes at a later stage. For this reason girls show an earlier and a more responsible attitude towards motherhood and parenthood.

6. While dealing with sex problems, an advice or a lead may be required or requested. The lead or suggestion should come naturally, rather implied than explicit. In delivering judgement, if ever one should, about sex relationship with a partner, the counsellor should distinguish whether this sex

/relationship is being....

relationship is being done as a sign of affection and love, simply for mutual stimulation or as a sign of intended marriage. Consideration of these different intents may result in a different line of approach.

7. An entertaining counsellor is always much better received and appreciated than a morose and moping one. Discussion must be as friendly and as natural as possible.

8. A counsellor must be always prepared for feed-back. In his dealings with youth he is always apt to learn something new and must consider his venture as a two-way traffic affair.

SOME YOUTH SERVICES

While at Keele University, I have had the occasion to hear how counsellors are asked by some principals of certain schools to deliver talks to school-leavers and other classes. Very often it is found convenient to start a discussion by the prior showing of a chosen film. Youth clubs sometimes ask for the services of youth counsellors. At other times the counsellors themselves see to it that they are invited. It is not only with youth that contact is made but sometimes talks and discussions with groups or parents are also held. Family discussion groups have been organised in certain centres and have proved very beneficial.

/CONCLUSION.....

CONCLUSION

In this age of transition from the time of the complete reticence and secrecy of our parents about everything that concerned sex to the present period when sex is published in bright, vivid and alluring colours, the sexual education of youth poses a problem. There is no way of dodging it. We must take up the cudgels. Parents, teachers, doctors, priests and youth leaders in general should come forward and tackle the problem with keenness and hope.

APPENDIX II

By Rev. MAURICE O'LEARY
Chairman of the
CATHOLIC MARRIAGE
ADVISORY COUNCIL of
GREAT BRITAIN

FAMILY LIFE
EDUCATION
COMPLEMENTARY
ROLES of
HOME and SCHOOL

A consideration of the role of the school in family life education today must include a consideration of the role of the home. To fail to do this is to be unrealistic. The converse is equally true. It is unrealistic to consider the role of the home in isolation from that of the school. The roles of home and school are complementary. If we overemphasize home at the expense of school, or if we overemphasize school at the expense of home, we run into danger. Many difficulties felt in the past have resulted from overemphasis one way or the other.

Parents and teachers have to find ways of helping their children which are practicable today. Times change. Ways which are practicable now would not have been so twenty years ago. And what might have been completely adequate then is not necessarily so today.

~~If we seek guidance from the Church two documents can help us, both of them dating from a previous generation.~~

The Encyclical on Christian Education, of Pius XI of 1929, and the Joint Pastoral of the Bishops of England and Wales of 1944.

/Both documents.....

Both documents emphasize the right and obligation of parents to instruct and to guide their children, and by implication, the right of the children to receive from their parents such instruction and such guidance. Both urge that everything possible must be done to help parents to fulfil their duty. Both recognise that it is not sufficient merely to say a thing ought to be done. It is necessary to take steps to see that it is done. Both reject as inadequate for the child a merely naturalistic presentation of physiological facts as not being worthy of the term "education". Both say that this would be particularly inadequate if it were to be done indiscriminately to groups in schools, without any consideration of the varying knowledge already possessed, of the different attitudes, the different stages of development of individual children. Both recognise the need for added help for the children, besides that which they have a right to receive from their parents. Both recognise that in some cases primary help, in default of that which should have come from the parents, may have to come from others.

All this is as valid today as it was in 1929 and in 1944. Both of these statements condemned some methods of sex education which they criticized as being inadequate. There is always a danger that negative statements and condemnations get more attention than positive incitements to do something. It can be easier to avoid action than to take action. This is what has too

/often happened in....

often happened in the whole area of Education for Life. By overadverting to condemnations one can only too easily move to a stage of almost justifying inaction with nothing being done. There seems to have been a fear in the minds of some Catholic teachers that somewhere, sometime, the Pope or the Bishops have forbidden that sex should be mentioned in any way in Catholic schools. If such a thing were true it would have been regrettable. Fortunately it is not true. But I think we should face the fact that some of us in the past may have avoided a difficult task by taking refuge in this idea that there was such a prohibition.

INFORMATION IS NOT ENOUGH

Let me stress, with the utmost emphasis, that the giving to the child of the information he needs (knowledge of the 'facts of life') is a very small part of the whole question of sex education. If anyone considers that it is the whole question, and that this conference is going to be devoted entirely to that issue, I am sorry. If at the end of the conference anyone still considers that this is all that sex education means, I will be sorrier still.

Information needed by the child should ideally be given by the parents, both before and after the child goes to school. But the parents should also make the far more important

/contributionof

contribution of helping the child to form positive Christian attitudes to love and sex. This contribution needs to be made by a father and mother who are husband and wife, who love each other, who show affection and respect for each other; so that within the home the children see and recognise the love of a man for a woman and of a woman for a man in Christian marriage. The whole home should be informed by the love which comes from this man and this woman, the love which they have for each other and love which they have for their children. If this contribution is missing, if children are deprived of this, then indeed they are deprived and this is the greatest of deprivations. This is the most important contribution parents can make to their children in education for life.

Information is necessary. But it is something that cannot be measured against this other far more important contribution.

PARENTS' ROLE NOT EXCLUSIVE

The parents' role is not an exclusive one. This applies both to the information which the child needs, and to the more important contribution of love given and received. If this love were only to be experienced within the home, if there were in this area a harsh contrast between the home and the school, this would be something not only to be regretted - it would be horrifying. It may be obvious, but it is still worth saying,

/that an essential

that an essential part of the education for life which must be given in the school is an education in relationships, and this depends mostly upon the teachers. As teachers you know how necessary it is to be able to relate to your students, both as individuals and as a group. Great positive help can be given through the relationships of trust and confidence and affectionate respect which are developed within the school between the children and the teachers. But it is difficult for a good relationship to develop if there is not one of Christian love and respect between the teachers themselves. The relationship between head and staff, of staff with each other, is a dynamic one which inevitably affects the whole community.

THE IDEAL SITUATION

Let us consider the ideal situation. What is the role of the school when the parents are able to do and are doing, that which is expected from them - that which the children have a right to expect from them? The school has its role, its distinctive role, but a role that is complementary and parallel to that of the parents. Complementary and parallel - the school does not "take over where the parents left off". The parents have to go on. The school begins to make its contribution and carries on making it in parallel with the work

/being done by the

being done by the parents. This is the ideal. The school's role is not only in the area of knowledge - to clarify knowledge already given, to build upon that knowledge, to develop it, to add new knowledge - but also to develop the attitudes already formed in the home, and to develop those attitudes within the very different community of the school. The school is a different and a larger community. But if it is a truly Christian school it is, like the truly Christian home, a community of love.

The answer to the question 'How, when, and where can the school's contribution be made?' is to be found not in the allocation of a special place in the time-table to sex education, not in the inclusion of a section on "personal relationships" in the religious syllabus, not in the detailing of selected members of staff to deal with adhoc difficulties of students. The school as a community makes its contribution through every form of school activity, through every teacher and through every subject taught. Some subjects certainly provide more obviously appropriate occasions for the developing of understanding in sexual matters, some teachers may be especially able to help with adhoc difficulties. But all this is only a part, a necessary part but still only a part, of the school's total contribution.

/Ideally,

Ideally, the school should be able to assume that the child has the elementary knowledge appropriate to his age. The question that so often bothers people, the question of any sort of formal initiation in sexual knowledge in the school, should never arise. This is the ideal situation - that the school should be able to assume that any child coming to school, the primary school or the secondary school, has the knowledge of sexual matters appropriate to his age.

THE SITUATION IN PRACTICE : THE PARENTS' NEED

So much for the ideal! In practice we know that most parents need help in order to fulfil their obligations, not least in methods of giving factual knowledge. That they should be given this help was the plea of the Pope and the Bishops: Are we doing what we can do to help parents to fulfil their role?

The school is ideally placed to give parents this help. This is central to all that we will be discussing at this conference. We think this can be done by regular and systematic meetings of parents arranged by the school. Many teachers may say with regret that many parents will not take advantage of the help we may offer. But many have had a more reassuring experience and have been astonished at how many parents do respond.

/At these regular

At these regular and systematic meetings, talks are given and discussions are promoted. Preferably this should be done by people who are themselves parents, who have had some sort of training for this, and not by "experts". One of our main aims, one of the desperate needs, is to give back confidence to parents. It is important that they should be able to talk with, discuss with, people who are not so very different from themselves. It is unwise to bring in somebody who is a reputed expert on sex education. Far better to have people who are obviously first and foremost parents. It is unwise to look immediately for a doctor, as though sex were something medical with almost a hint of pathological.

At such meetings the policy which the school has adopted, a policy of incorporating the sexual education of the children into the general educational policy of the school, can be explained and the cooperation of the parents can be enlisted, or more wisely taken for granted. Recommended literature for parents and for children should be available. There is a lot of literature now, and much of it is good. For many parents this will be at least a partial answer and will help them to get over some of their difficulties. For many of them the difficulties are comparatively simple ones. Some may have complex emotional difficulties; but for many the difficulties will be practical ones of vocabulary and presentation, and literature can be a great help to them.

VISITING SPEAKERS IN SCHOOLS

It would be a pity if schools were to think that they could fulfil completely their obligations towards children by bringing in people from the outside - visiting speakers, visiting lecturers, who will give a course - sometimes merely of a couple of hours - for the school leavers. Visiting speakers have a very useful role to play, but it is essentially a minor and complementary role, crowning the efforts of parents and of the teachers. They provide a valuable opportunity for the young people to talk - and to talk in terms of situations. In some schools there may be a fear of "outsiders" coming in, but the more usual danger is the opposite - that schools may think "If we do this we have fulfilled our obligation". Only a very small part of the obligation could possibly be fulfilled by people who are strangers coming into the school on these occasions, valuable and important as their contribution can be. When they do come, this should be part of the normal routine of schools; their visits should be systematic, and not highlighted special occasions.

The visiting speakers' best contribution is through talks and discussions which are concerned with attitudes rather than with information. If the teachers have a right to assume that the appropriate information has been given by parents, if the teachers have an obligation to make valid this assumption, the

/visiting speakers

visiting speakers should certainly not be expected to come in to give this information. They should be able to assume that the relevant knowledge and information has been already acquired by the children. It sometimes might be necessary for them to do some recapitulation, just to make sure that everybody is understanding the same thing at a particular time. They should never be thought of as coming to give information which the children have never had before. Talks and discussions are the ways in which the visitors' contribution can be made. Obviously they have to be carefully selected and trained for this work.

There would not seem to be any place for visiting speakers in primary schools - as far as the children are concerned. There is of course a place for them at parents meetings arranged by the school. It would be interesting to hear any differing views on this point.

A CAUSE OF PARENTAL INACTION

Last year I was working in Kenya and several times took part in discussions on family life education. On each occasion there were mixed groups of Africans and Europeans. On each occasion there was a difference of opinion between the Africans and the Europeans. The Europeans took for granted that in the African communities there was far less difficulty in the family

/life education

life education of children and the sex education of children than in the European communities. The Africans rejected this as a European myth. It was probably generally true one or two generations ago, but it was possible to point to the time when it certainly ceased to be true. That time was when education became general. Once the children started going to school, the parents thought that their responsibilities in this particular matter, as in so many other matters, were now being looked after; and being looked after far better, because people who were experts were now teaching their children. I couldn't help wondering whether in our own communities, where universal education has been the rule for much longer, the same sort of thing has happened; whether the 'problem' of sex education became aggravated once parents assumed that other people would be able to undertake responsibilities which had until then been more obviously theirs.

SUMMARY

These are the main points that I have tried to make.

1. Parents have obligations, and the children have a right with regard to their parents - the parents to give, and the children to receive education for life, including sex education.

/2. Parents often have

2. Parents often have difficulties. It is necessary to help the parents, and this is the main message from those two documents I mentioned - the great need for helping parents.

3. Ideally the schools should not be concerned with primary information, with what was called "sexual initiation". The school must work to help the parents, through systematic parent meetings, to encourage them to do this. Sometimes the schools may have, through its teachers, to supply the defects of the parents.

4. The schools should help the parents with literature.

5. The schools should recognise that its role, though not the provision of primary information, must necessarily include the developing of attitudes - attitudes which should have been formed and which should go on being formed in the home.

6. The school needs to examine how its general contribution can be made through the whole sweep of its educational objectives - in every form of school activity and in every subject.

7. The school can get help in its role through those who have been carefully selected and trained, outside speakers coming in, to give courses which are not informational courses, but rather discussion courses with the students - not only school leavers,

/and not merely

and not merely the last week or so at school, but much earlier - perhaps twice, better even three times, in the school career.

We will be hearing experience on all these aspects. Then there will also be a discussion on something of vital importance, the role of the Headteacher and of the staff implementing a policy and developing it in the school.

APPENDIX III

DISCUSSION METHODS
IN
EDUCATION WORK

HOW PEOPLE LEARN

Telling people things is not education. Education is concerned with more than information.

Socrates' method has been confirmed by modern psychological investigations - get people involved by getting them talking and thinking.

One method with a group is to lecture and ask for questions afterwards. On occasions this has real value. But there is minimal active involvement. Only one faculty, hearing, is actively used, unless Visual Aids are employed to overcome this limitation.

This method is useful for an educated group who are trained listeners. Questions follow easily because they want to talk, and are glad when the speaker stops and allows this. With other groups questions do not come easily. This is often the experience with engaged couples, few of whom may be trained listeners.

DISCUSSION AND EDUCATION

Discussion means talking and listening to people. We learn

/most effectively

most effectively through our relationships. Talking and listening are basic human ways of relating to others. Mere book-knowledge remains to an extent unreal if it has never been humanized through discussion of it with others.

Education is a process not an event. It goes on all the time. Information, ideas, other people's views are taken in, reflected upon, evaluated, and then made one's own. One often sees a truth, as well as a joke, some days after first hearing it. Some teachers think that if something is said to a class they should know it from then on. If they do not it is their fault. They "haven't listened", or "were not interested". This could be true of instruction, which sometimes is all that is needed. But instruction is not education.

For adults particularly, whose minds since adolescence have been progressively capable of dealing with abstract ideas, educational growth comes through exchanging and testing knowledge and ideas in discussion.

WHAT DISCUSSION MEANS

It means 'taking to bits' - investigation - and then search, and perhaps discovery, which is a stimulus to further work. For the individual the greatest value in discussion is the help he gets in the growing process which knowing and understanding is.

DISCUSSION METHODS FOR GROUPS

Groups must be large enough for variety and small enough for real relationships between participants. It becomes difficult with more than 20 - groups should then divide. All should be able to see and hear each other. A circle enables this, rows do not.

Everything counts, the place, the chairs, comfortable temperature, ventilation. But a large group can divide into smaller groups in a hall, even though an observer might think it impossible to hear.

LEADERSHIP

Useful discussion group work depends totally on good leadership. This method does not mean leaving the group to its own devices ("What do we want to talk about?") It is a way of teaching, and for adults a better way than lectures. The leader must have a clear target. He must keep the group to a topic. His task and skill is to get the tangential remark and the red herrings out of the way. He keeps them to the point, on the trail which leads to discovery. The discovery may be that the group find they know less than they had realised about the topic. If this uncovering of ignorance leads to action and remedy it is of great value.

/The leader must

The leader must put the right sort of question. Not vague "What do you think in general?" questions, but "What do you think about this particular aspect...". He leads the group through the facts, and the evaluation of the facts, on to judgement. This is teaching - helping people to think, to dig to depth, to see further than before. This reveals our unrecognised ignorance, superficial judgements, unquestioned assumptions, which may have governed our way of acting.

There is also the great benefit for the group of learning to articulate their thoughts, to express clearly the thoughts in their minds.

SOME FURTHER POINTS ABOUT DISCUSSION WORK

The leader (or leaders if they are a married pair) should select 3 or 4 aspects of the subject, speak on one aspect for ten minutes, then get the group to discuss the points made for the next ~~ten~~ minutes. And so on. They do not ask what the group thinks in general, but about these particular points.

Leaders should not be too quick to give answers to questions. Sometimes leaders can fail badly here, even to the extent of not really listening to the questions. Use questions to further discussion. Let the group itself work on the answer.

Some groups are articulate from the start. Others have to be helped to talk. Try to bring them all in. Don't have an

/exclusive discussion

exclusive discussion with one person who seems ready to speak. But do not try to force people who are not yet ready, through shyness or lack of this kind of experience.

Do not be afraid of disagreement. It is a great help for people to be able to differ and yet see each other's point of view. This can be especially useful for engaged couples. People inexperienced in discussion work may shy away from disagreements; but life is neither complete agreement nor endless rows.

VALUE OF DISCUSSION METHOD

Its main value is the high degree of involvement for those taking part. There is stimulus to learn, and the challenge of views different from their own. It can be used anywhere, with Parent Groups on Sex Education, with Engaged Couples, with Students, in Youth Clubs.

It is not to be seen as an exclusive method. A course may well include both the lecture type of session, when special expertise on a subject is made available to the group (e.g. housing) and the discussion sessions where the aim is more to educate than merely to inform.

BOOKS
for Young People
and Educators

1. Girls Growing Up - (For Girls & Parents)
Geoffrey Chapman (5s.)
2. My Dear Daughter Booklets
 1. For Young Girls (2s.)
 2. For Girls (2/6)Catholic Printing Press
3. Sex Education for Boys:-
 1. For Your Boy (For Parents & Teachers) (4s.)
 2. For Boys Growing Up (11-13 years) (2/6)
 3. For Older Boys (15 years) (3s.)Aidan Pickering - Catholic Marriage Advisory Council
4. How Your Body Works
L.S. Michaelis. Longman. (6s.)
5. Christopher Recordings on Sex Education (25s.)
An LP record in 4 parts:-
 1. How Babies are Born.
 2. Menstruation.
 3. Problems of Growing Boys.
 4. The Marriage Union.
6. The Human Body
C. Bibby & I. Morison
Puffin Picture Book 102 (3/6)
7. Modern Catholic Sex Instruction
Joseph M. Reuss. Helicon Press (18s.)
8. Sex and the People We are
Molly Walsh. Darton, Longman & Todd (6s.)
9. The Sexual Education of Children
Andre Berge. Sheed & Ward (9s.)
10. Preparing for Marriage
John Marshall. Darton, Longman & Todd (6/6)
11. A Catholic View of Sex & Marriage
John Marshall. Gill & Son (4/6)