

30th July 2013 - Commemoration of SS Abdon and Sennen, Martyrs

Thought for the Day

'It must not be concluded that the parental right in education is absolute and despotic; it is closely subordinated to man's last end and subject to the natural and divine law. Leo XIII explains this in his memorable Encyclical on the principal duties of the Christian citizen, where he thus summarises the rights and duties of parents: "Parents have by nature the right to instruct the children they have begotten; but they also have the duty to ensure that the child's education and training shall conform to the purpose for which God gave them offspring. They must therefore energetically resist any invasion of their rights in this sphere, and absolutely insist on having it in their power to bring up their children in a Christian manner, in accordance with their duty; above all they must be able to keep them away from schools in which there is a danger of their being infected by irreligion."

It is moreover, to be noticed that the parents' duty in regard to the education of their children is not restricted to the religious and moral sphere, but extends also to physical and civic training, especially so far as these are related to religion and morals...

... The function of the civil authority is therefore twofold; to protect and to promote; but not to absorb the family or the individual nor take their place.

Pius XI, Divini illius magistri – The Christian Education of Youth.

Petition

An *Apropos* reader has drawn our attention to a petition concerning legislation currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament and which derives in great part from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our reader writes:

I would urge you to please consider signing the following petition against the surveillance of children in Scotland under the guise of 'child protection' in The Children and Young People Bill . If passed this bill will enable the unprecedented intrusion of the State into the home. This [petition] is from the Scottish homeschooling body Schoolhouse:

*Known as GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child), it is already being used, and in some cases abused, by professionals within universal services and other agencies who have been routinely gathering, storing, assessing and sharing sensitive personal data on every child and every associated adult **without express informed consent** and in the absence of any enabling statutory framework.*

*Disguised as a child protection measure but nothing of the kind, GIRFEC has spawned a series of 'wellbeing' indicators known as SHANARRI which represent a universal prescription for a state approved childhood. **It has essentially shifted the threshold for intervention in family life on child 'protection' grounds from "at risk of significant harm" to "at risk of not meeting state dictated 'wellbeing' outcomes"**. Every parent in Scotland is now routinely assessed on his/her "parental capacity to provide wellbeing", based on government defined criteria which, according to its own 'National Risk Framework to Support the Assessment of Children and Young People'*

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/11/7143/9>) places every child under five, and most older children and young people, in the 'vulnerable' category (thus liable to 'early intervention').

*The Bill further seeks to impose a 'named person' on every child in Scotland (whose function, it is specifically stated, may not be undertaken by the child or young person's parent), which is a gross intrusion into family life and completely unwarranted on a universal basis. **The fact that every child will be subject to this intrusion by a stranger without opt-out, regardless of his or her wishes (or those of his or her parents in the case of a young child) renders it a disproportionate measure in that most children have no need of state 'intervention', compulsory or otherwise, in their family lives.***

<http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/members-of-the-scottish-parliament-reject-girfec-surveillance-and-named-person-for-every-child-in-scotland>

Our reader is right to bring this to our attention. In *Apropos* No.10, 1991 we published 'The Convention on the Rights of the Child – A Critique' by Francois Desjars. In that article which is now posted on our website, the author warned that the ambiguous expression, '*the social, spiritual and moral well-being*' of the child, evokes '*more an agreeable subjective feeling than a truly objective standard. One can easily imagine what will result, especially morally, from a liberal interpretation of "well-being" of the child: it is that interpretation which has every chance of prevailing.*'

As can be seen from this Government publication

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00394308.pdf>) the child's well-being includes its sexual health (p.17) and one can well understand what that means in the context of existing amoral government policies regarding contraception and abortion. On page 18 we have the ominous question asked, '*Do those around the child or young person respect and value diversity?*' And if the parents do not value diversity (a code to include tolerance of the LGTB lifestyle) then what will the named person do then? We already know that parents' wishes regarding amoral sex-education are already being overridden in some schools. We heard not too long ago about an adolescent girl who voiced her desire not to attend such classes. Her teacher

queried, 'Is this is not just what your parents want? What do you want to do? You know you have the right to choose for yourself.'

All such attitudes derive in essence from the Convention and were predicted by Francois Desjars in his critique.

Is the Benedictine reform well and truly over?

We refer our readers to this article by Sandro Magister which indicates that initial traditionalist worries regarding the current Pontiff might not have been exaggerated. We recall seeing a headline that Pope Francis was welcoming to all. So far that seems to be the popular opinion. His alleged comments regarding a traditionalist group who had offered Rosaries for him, and now this, suggests that traditionalists are perhaps not welcome at all – That may not be the Holy Father's intention but it sure doesn't feel welcoming.

<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/1350567?eng=y>