

Deenihan, Thomas, 1999, *An analysis of religious education in post-primary schools in the dioceses of Cork and Ross- with specific reference to the introduction of religious education as an examination subject.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation examines current practice in religious education and in so doing it differentiates between religious education and catechetics. The role, origin and importance of catechetics in the Church is examined, as is the integral role of catechetics within the school curriculum. Difficulties for the teacher of religion are discussed, many of which derive from society as a whole, but so are the opportunities, among which are a recent Supreme Court ruling which allows payment, by the State, to school chaplains.

In that light, the proposed syllabus by the Department of Education and Science is examined. Is such a syllabus religious education or catechetics? The difficulties that such a syllabus poses for the Church and school authorities are also examined.

The research survey is a survey of post-primary teachers of religion in all school types in the Dioceses of Cork and Ross. The survey, an adaptation of the Weafer and Hanley survey of 1989, examines the teaching of religion in the diocese, particularly in areas of qualification, support and status. It also examines teacher reaction to religious education as an examination subject. Conclusions are drawn and the future of religious education is briefly considered.

The literature reviewed and the information cited is correct as at June 19th. 1999. As the date for the implementation of the syllabus draws nearer, some changes in policy may occur.