

# **European Committee for Catholic Education**

**c e e c**

**Meeting of Bishops responsible for Catholic Schools  
with Members of the CEEC**

**~ Joint organisation CCEE & CEEC ~**

**Theme:**

***How can the Church best support the formation of teachers  
and the development of leaders for Catholic schools?***

**Rome, 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

**English edition**

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**MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE,  
Cardinal Angelo SODANO**

In his message addressed to the seminar, the Secretary of State underlined the importance of Catholic schools for the Church. In the present cultural context, the Church has to renew its presence, improve the quality of its schools in cooperation with the parents. The action of Catholic schools must be inspired by different saints, founders of religious congregations active in the field of education.

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**OPENING  
by Mgr Cesare NOSIGLIA, Bishop of Vicenza (Italy)**

Catholic education has three objectives:

1. In the cultural domain

If we wish to work on the quality of the education offer, we must firstly develop a formation offer in terms of culture and values, which are strongly rooted in the Western civilisation (ideal of the Christian humanism). The Catholic school offers an education in which the person of the child is central. The quality of the Catholic school doesn't only consist of a pedagogical competence but it comes from a testimony of values personally lived. Educating is the work of the Spirit: the educator can refer to and be inspired by Him.

2. In the social domain

The school, especially the nursery school, plays a very important role in social integration. But for all the Catholic schools, the network linking them together is important. A Catholic school must make bridges between civil society, region and family.

3. In the ecclesial domain

The service as an educator or a teacher in a Catholic school finds its inspiration in the faith in Christian values. They refer parents to the Church, the local Church and its Bishop. One of the missions of our times is to reinforce the link between the Catholic school and the parish. Furthermore, we must find new ways to make that the Catholic school remain a place where love and service to the other refer to Christ.

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Note: the message of the Secretary of State, the opening speech of Mgr NOSIGLIA and the Lecture of Mgr THIVIERGE have been summarised in the present English edition. For the lectures of Mgr MILLER and Mgr McKEOWN we have reproduced the full text.

## FIRST LECTURE

**Mgr Donal McKEOWN, Auxiliary Bishop in Diocese of Down & Connor (Northern Ireland)**

### *“The standpoint of a bishop on the changing landscape of education and teacher training in Europe”*

It is an honour for me as a relatively new Bishop and as the ‘baby’ in the Irish Episcopal Conference to be invited to speak to this distinguished gathering of people with great experience and wisdom. For most of my life as a priest I was merely a school teacher and latterly a Principal. I have no experience in the field of teacher education. Furthermore, as one coming from Northern Ireland – a place that has the reputation of being stuck in a medieval conflict – I am here more to learn than to teach. In these reflections, I have drawn on my own reading which has been limited to the experience in the Anglo-Saxon world. Thus anything I say is said with great humility – and I trust, that even if no-one else learns anything from what I say, at least I will be a little bit more like what one history professor at the Gregorian University hoped we would be at the end of his semester - aware of the abysmal depths of my ignorance! And at this stage in this conference, all I can hope to do is raise some issues that may help us to examine the current situation and trace possible next steps in finding ways forward.

#### ***Our various situations***

We are all conscious of the many challenges that face the Catholic school in its different incarnations across Europe. I come from the reality of Northern Ireland where over 90% of the Catholic children attend Catholic schools – and where the Catholic Church is the largest single provider of schools. But we also have Norway with its four very popular but scattered schools. We have the realities that exist in the countries of the former Communist bloc where the Catholic education sector is relatively small and new. There are also situations of countries where there are a healthy number of Catholic schools – but where the bulk of students, teachers and even principals are not Catholic. In other countries represented, there is traditionally little perceived need for Catholic schools as the role of their Catholic religion teacher is guaranteed in law. In such cases, preparation of Catholic teachers is mainly a question of theological and pedagogical training and leadership in Catholic schools is of minor on a national level.

#### **A: Challenges**

##### ***i. Secularism***

But wherever we are we are all too conscious of one loud voice in the cultural reality that would allow room for spirituality, but only in the realm of the private pastime and that would ban it from any role in the public sphere or education. This rampant secularist ideology has sought to discourage people of faith from bringing their beliefs into the areas of law, economics, morality, and culture. For this ideology, it should certainly be kept out of education! And Catholic schools are often ridiculed as outdated, separatist, elitist or narrow-minded. That is the context in which Pope Benedict XVI has asked the whole Church to have as its prayer intention for this month of October *“that Christians may not be discouraged by the attacks of secularised society, but with complete trust, may bear witness to their faith and hope”*.

##### ***ii. Identity***

The challenge of forming a new generation of committed Catholic teachers and school principals is not an isolated phenomenon. Parents and clergy are only too aware of the difficulty of handing on faith to their own children. Parish communities struggle with how to proclaim the Gospel in a way that can be heard over the clamour of commercial pressures. Even Catholic teacher training colleges – like one that we have in Belfast in Northern Ireland - have to struggle with a number of pressures such as

- Pressure to collaborate/associate/ amalgamate with other secular institutions in the interests of efficiency;
- Reality of students who attend the college, because they have to in order to get a job in a Catholic school;
- Students who like the idea of a Catholic school but whose theological awareness is very limited.

At least Catholic colleges have access to students and can explicitly seek to have an influence on their faith development. Other countries without any access to a Catholic centre of formation – or more importantly a centre of Catholic formation – face different problems.

### **iii. *Habitus***

Gerald Grace of the Centre for Research and development in Catholic Education at the University of London's Institute of Education has done some helpful research into the challenges facing those who would seek to form leaders and teachers for the next generation of Catholic schools.<sup>1</sup> He uses analytical tools from sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein to highlight some of the aspects of pre Vatican II Catholicism that made it so effective in replicating itself and handing on a sense of identity to children. In Bordieu's sense of the word, the Catholic community in different countries had its own particular *habitus* with a strong emphasis on the importance of the symbolic and the community. Bordieu refers to a *habitus* as a 'cultural consciousness' and it is clear that, from a sociological perspective, primary socialisation into this mental habit is more formative than subsequent socialisation experiences.<sup>2</sup> Parents, it seems, definitely are the best teachers. Grace's thesis – based on research - is simple. We should not be lulled into complacency because of the great commitment to Catholic education in the first generation of lay principals who have taken over from the priests and religious who, for so long, led Catholic education. Very many of the current generation of leaders grew up in an environment where the Catholic *habitus* was still strong and they were formed by the vision. That *habitus* no longer exists in Church or society and there is no cultural model that is in a position to replicate its formative effect. We can talk *to* prospective teachers and leaders – but what will form them?

## **B. However!**

### **i. *Vision***

However, despite all the negative realities, we are very blessed in having a set of documents from Congregation for Catholic Education which clearly set out a vision for the Catholic school, for the role of the Catholic teacher, the part played by religious teaching and the irreplaceable contribution of consecrated persons in the Catholic school. We also have the vision for the Church in the new millennium, enunciated by the late Pope John Paul II in 2001, as well as his call to the Church in Europe to proclaim and celebrate hope. We can place all these documents within the context of a clearly articulated Church philosophy of human dignity, the search for Truth and the reality of salvation and grace. All that gives us a clear sense of direction in an educational world that is groaning under the weight of 'initiative overload' but has no philosophical convictions about the dignity and destiny of the individual as a social being with a role to play in the story of salvation. As we say in English, if you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything!

### **ii. *Spirituality***

Many Catholic communities and schools are struggling, not just with the pressures that come from secularisation but also from those that come from aggressive secularism. Nevertheless the secularist *habitus* is also under serious pressure. On the one hand there is the needs of the market place which insists that everything is permitted as long as we are enjoying ourselves. On the other hand there is abundant evidence from so many sources, that a religion- and value-free society is not sustainable. Pope John Paul II was very clear about the fact that what Europe was seriously lacking was hope.<sup>3</sup> We are only too aware of the effects of the secularist ideology on social cohesion, birth rates, the incidence of suicide, crime figures etc. There is a widespread recognition that, in the area of multiple intelligences, emotional and especially spiritual intelligence is most highly rated.<sup>4</sup> In the area of business leadership there is a huge raft of material that has developed a sort of spirituality of management. Thus highly rated management gurus such as Peter Senge<sup>5</sup>, Stephen Covey<sup>6</sup> and M Scott Peck<sup>7</sup> have recognised the need for the rediscovery of spiritual language if business is to thrive and if people are to be motivated and supported. Thus Senge talks of discipline, personal mastery, shared vision, commitment to the truth, compassion, and a break with false mental models. He even uses the term metanoia for the process of repentance that is necessary if there is to be growth and development in an organisation!<sup>8</sup> In other authors we find the statement that "the heart of leadership is the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf Grace, Gerald, *Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets and Morality*, London, Routledge/Falmer, 2002

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.37

<sup>3</sup> Cf *Ecclesia in Europa*, 2003

<sup>4</sup> Spiritual intelligence is not seen as a religious spirit but as the ability to be in touch with one's own story, spirit – and to cope with failure, success, challenges etc

<sup>5</sup> Senge, P., *The Fifth Discipline. The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*, London, Century Business, 1992

<sup>6</sup> Covey, S., *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, London, Simon and Schuster, 1992

<sup>7</sup> Peck, M. S. *The Road Less Traveled*, London, Arrow, 1990

<sup>8</sup> Senge, P, *op. cit.*, p.13

hearts of leaders. You have to lead from somewhere deep in your heart"<sup>9</sup>. We also have ample evidence that, statistically speaking, people who believe in God and pray live longer and have lower levels of stress. There are many signs that Gospel language and values have deep roots and a powerful divine wisdom that a rationalist language and blindness is reluctant to acknowledge.

However, as the current Holy Father has been keen to keep pointing out, relativism and an individualist spirituality provide no way forward for social cohesion and community. Spirituality can be marketed like any other product and the choice of spiritualities can be increased like in a supermarket. However, despite the grudging recognition in some quarters that spirituality mightn't be too bad a thing after all, we come from the perspective that, if repentance is a first step to the hearing of the Gospel, then a healthy spirituality is not about self-fulfilment but about self-transcendence. And that involves the grace of God and not just some training weekend and expensive manual. The 'spirituality of communion' that will 'build the civilisation of love', the 'schools of prayer' that each Christian community is called to be<sup>10</sup> – these will be created by the Lord in those who open themselves to the exodus journey that is the call to holiness. They will never be the fruit of self-indulgence.

### **iii. A new *Habitus*? Are we on the right track?**

We are all too aware that we are living in a rapidly changing environment. And constant analysis will usually lead only to paralysis. Indeed, because of the speed with which society is changing, the most up-to-date analysis is probably out of date by the time it is published. And ultimately people want food for the journey, not just books for the shelf!

In the late Holy Father's call for a spirituality of communion there is a call to go back to some of the core aspects of the Catholic *habitus*, our *Weltanschauung*. The 1977 document from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education on the Catholic School is clear that revelation is not just telling us something about God, but also about who we are as individuals and as societies, and about the meaning of the world. Thus the Catholic school "is a centre in which a specific concept of the world, of man, and of history is developed and conveyed."<sup>11</sup> Catholic education – and within that the Catholic school – is about moulding the heart and not just informing the head. In matters of faith, education really is what remains after you have forgotten all you were ever taught!

And what are the core elements of that Catholic world view? Thomas Groome, an Irishman working in Boston, USA, has tried to formulate a list of particular aspects of the Catholic vision of who we are, as distinct from that of other Christian traditions. He proposes the following list

- "a positive anthropology of the person;
- the sacramentality of life;
- its communal emphasis regarding human and Christian existence;
- its commitment to tradition as source of its Story and Vision; and
- an appreciation of rationality and learning."<sup>12</sup>

It is clear that all of these are linked. It is the positive anthropology and the Genesis 1-2 vision of creation that allow for the sacramentality of things and underpin the value of community, rationality and tradition. Of course it also remains true to the scriptural revelation of the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us.<sup>13</sup> This emphasis on the community – and on belonging to community – as the primary locus for God's self-revelation to us is thus both scripturally sound and sociologically well founded.

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<sup>9</sup> Bolman, L.G and Deal, T.E. *Leading with Soul*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1995, p.21

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 2001, paraxxxx

<sup>11</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, Vatican, 1977, para. 8

<sup>12</sup> Groome, T.H., *What makes a School Catholic?* in McLaughlin, T., O'Keefe, J., and O'Keefe, B. (eds), *The Contemporary Catholic School*, London, Falmer, 1996, p.108. This is treated at greater length in Groome's *What makes us Catholic*, New York, HarperSanFrancisco, 2002. Furthermore, there is also some interesting material to be found in Greeley, A., *The Catholic Imagination*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2000 and in Eamon Duffy's book *Faith of our Fathers*, London, Continuum, 2004

<sup>13</sup> It is also interesting to note that, while the Reformation sought to remove the sacraments and the role of the clergy as getting between God and us, Reformed worship tends to focus on the people gathering to worship, and do something for, God while the Catholic teaching has remained true to the idea that we are invited to enter into the mystery of what God has done for us.

#### ***iv. Learning***

Further evidence about the core role of the community as a source of learning is found in many places. Peter Senge is very clear that the learning organization is the only one that will survive because it alone provides a context for individual learning and growth. “Organizations learn only through individuals who learn”<sup>14</sup>

The work of Mary Douglas<sup>15</sup> may also help us as we seek ways forward. Douglas was Professor of Social Anthropology at London University in the years following the Second Vatican Council. As a committed Catholic, she was concerned about the rush to dump much of the fabric of Pre Vatican II Catholicism – fasting, repetitive prayer, clarity about right and wrong. From her professional observation of other societies she reached a clear conclusion. Societies that give a clear value to internal social structures (‘grid’) and outward boundaries (‘group’) give much meaning to symbolic gestures and vocabulary. Societies without such clear demarcations and hierarchy place much greater emphasis on personal feelings and individual choice. Douglas was clear that, in the latter class of society, there was no agreed vocabulary with which to speak of reality, or with which to communicate with or form the next generation. And her proposal for the Church in Western liberal democracies? Because we are not in a position to change the macro structures of our society, it is only by creating our own communities with identity, structures and boundaries that a context for shared language codes and meaning can be created, and that continuity can be established and social cohesion generated.

The research data that we have is quite clear that the community model of Catholic education has much in its favour. It is thus not surprising that statistical data from various sources suggest that Catholic schools produce outstanding results, both on the cognitive level and in terms of social outcomes.<sup>16</sup> It may well be that, precisely because of the shared language codes and the existence of social capital at various levels within the Catholic community, our schools produce such good results – and are in such big demand.

This all rings very true. We know from the experience of people of all ages - in places like World Youth Day, working as helpers in Lourdes or other places of pilgrimage or being involved in communities or movements of prayer and apostolic work – that belonging is a core part of believing for most people. And that while the Reformed theological tradition tends to say ‘believe and then you belong’, our Catholic tradition has always said, ‘Belong and in the context of that you will be able to believe.’ While not playing down the need for conversion, we do not underestimate the need for formation and growth in faith. Information helps but formation is key – and only that will lead to the possibility of transformation. Our personal and communal Exodus is a journey - a race, as St Paul so often likes to refer to it – and we are invited to enter into the mystery of God’s redeeming love in Jesus. And, to use the vocabulary of Gabriel Marcel, that mystery is not meant to elude or delude us, but to include us.

### **C. A new foundation**

#### ***i. A new *Habitus*? Our framework***

Indeed the wonderful documents on Catholic education over the last 40 years seem to me to be giving a cohesive vision that remains to be made better known, even within the world of Catholic education! Those of us who have spent many years at the blackboard have not always heard the dream that has energised Catholic schools and mission for centuries.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Senge, *op. cit.*, p. 139

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Douglas, M., *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of Pollution and Taboo*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1966 and *Natural Symbols. Explorations in Cosmology*, London, Barrie and Jenkins. 1973

<sup>16</sup> Bryk, A. , Lee and Holland , *The Catholic School and the Common Good*, London, Harvard University Press, 1993 and Greeley, A., What use are Catholic Schools in America? , in *Doctrine and Life*, February 1997, Dublin

<sup>17</sup> In giving reference to these documents I will simply refer to the year of publication and to the paragraph. Eg. 1977-26

1965=*Gravissimum Educationis* (1965)

1977=*The Catholic School* (1977)

1982=*Lay Catholics in Schools – Witnesses to faith* (1982)

1988=*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1988)

1997=*The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997)

2002=*Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools* (2002)

We are all aware that Christian education takes place in a much broader context than just in the school. After all, those who are not pupils at Catholic schools are entitled to be instructed in the faith. All the documents are very aware that the three-legged stool of family, community and school is the only one that provides much support. Thus the Catholic school cannot be separated from those factors outside school, which contribute to a rounded faith development of young people. The community (which includes “students, parents, teachers, non-teaching personnel and the school management”) *can create an environment for living, in which the values are mediated by authentic interpersonal relations between the various members of which it is composed. Its highest aim is the complete and comprehensive education of the person.*” (2002-41)

After all, the young people of today are not just the adults of tomorrow, but people who must learn today many of the things they will need tomorrow. Schools, the document continues, are *considered as microcosms in which oases are created where the bases are laid for living responsibly in the macrocosm of society.*(2002-43)

Unless our schools and their associated parish communities can bear witness to that reconciliation in Jesus, that atonement that at-*one*-ment, then we may clearly see the lean, efficient, effective secularist educational trees - but miss the beauty of the forest.

Because of this ecclesial identity of the Catholic school (1997-11), the pupils’, teachers’ and parents’ experience of such a school is essentially an ecclesial experience. The whole is incarnated in the specific. For many young people who are Catholic, and for others who do not belong to that community, what they see in school will make tangible what the Catholic community is. The experience that people have of a school is itself an education. The 1982 document says that the “educational community of a school is itself a school” (1982-22), for learning is a social experience rather than a solitary one. The research into the role of social capital in affecting learning outcomes simply reflects this reality. Thus, a school that is precious about itself communicates much about the insignificant value of relationships with others outside the invisible walls of the school community. A school that is clearly part of the Church and its mission gives a very different message about Christian and human solidarity.

Thus, a Catholic school needs to do more than just create a nice cosy atmosphere of being a Christian community. Unless, it is part of a wider community of all ages, unless it is part of a missionary Church, then it is not universal, Catholic. For this reason, “the school fulfils its vocation to be a genuine experience of Church only if it takes its stand within the organic pastoral work of the Christian community” (1997-12) That co-ordination and integration needs a lot of work if the school is to be a local example of a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all humankind” (*Lumen Gentium I*)

## ***ii. Content: Holistic education***

Our theology is based on Emmanuel, God with us, and the Vatican’s documents make it clear that this evangelisation is not directed just at the head, or at some separated spiritual side of people. The purpose of evangelisation is “the interior transformation and the renewal of humanity” (1988-66), “the promotion of total human formation” (1988-31). That is what is involved in renewing the face of the earth. That is what is involved in proclaiming that the Word became flesh and lived among us” (Jn 1:14) The Catholic educational experience thus involves an integration of *information* and *formation* - leading to fundamental *transformation*.

It involves integrating faith, culture and life (1988-31,34). It is about a process of individual and communal maturation, ‘life long learning’ in the context of faith, based on constant renewal through grace of our vision and of our ability to see, and that can take place only in the context of a community, of a pilgrim people. The Council document talks about the creation of community permeated with Gospel values. (1965- 8) That is how the face of the earth is to be renewed. Our schools have to model this, not just in our schools but far beyond them.

## ***iii. Education and culture***

Indeed, Pope John Paul II has consistently been very clear about this integrated vision for a Christianity that penetrates to the heart of our society. That has been made abundantly clear in his document *Ecclesia in Europa* (EiE) He is committed to the Church being actively involved in creating a Europe that is not just a market that knows about prices, but a community that has values, one that is aware of its past and that has retained a commitment to beauty and to truth. The role of education in the creation of this new European

humanism is vital. (Cf EiE 60) Christianity has to be incarnated in various ways in different cultures, imbuing each with a Gospel perspective, taking the best from each and enriching it with the vision of the Creator. Thus the 1988 document is clear that *One of the characteristics of a Catholic school is that it interpret and give order to human culture in the light of faith.* (1988-52)

In an educational world, which increasingly focuses on discreet subjects and accumulated qualifications, it is this integrated perspective on learning that is one of the great strengths of the Catholic vision of education. The complementary roles of school teaching, and community catechesis involve an integrated ecclesial approach to faith formation. I have already mentioned that two of the documents that we are looking at are clear that, as well as looking at an integration of faith and culture, and of faith and life, we are also looking an integration of faith and science/ reason. This is because the Church, in all that we do, are seeking to communicate “an organic presentation of Christian anthropology” (1988-56) and trying to overcome some of the problems of a fragmented and insufficient curriculum (cf 1988-55)

Thus, the Catholic school becomes not so much a school that give a good secular education to Catholics, but rather “a centre in which a specific concept of the world, of people and of history is developed and conveyed”(1977-8). The 1982 document also uses a phrase taken from Pope Paul VI and found in much of John Paul’s writings. The education in the Catholic school is not just directed to convincing people of the goodness of the Gospel.

*“The Catholic educator... must be committed to the task of forming men and women who will make the “civilisation of love” a reality”.* (1982-19)

The “spirituality of communion” that is referred to in *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (cf para 43-45) seems to echo that same vision.

#### ***iv. Possible ways forward.***

This is the vision of Catholic education – and the vision of God’s dream for us - that we seek to hand on. If it is clear that learning communities with a shared verbal and symbolic vocabulary are the only real context for deep learning, where does that leave us as we seek to prepare teachers and leaders who will maximise the potential for evangelisation and human growth that our schools provide?

Firstly, there is the *remote* preparation for all forms of teaching and leadership within our faith communities.

- a. In our Irish context, the plurality of Catholic schools - and their close link to the celebration of First Communion and Confirmation – have left us in a situation where many parents believe or feel that they have little role to play in the faith development of their children. The school can look after all that! We need to be learning from many of your countries just how growth in faith needs to take place within the context of the faith community. Otherwise the sacraments of initiation into the Church often become services of graduation out of the Church! And in that adventure of Christian formation we have all learned that it is often within the context of being together that we glimpse something of the glory of God and the challenge of his calling. The possibility of Transfiguration moments was not limited just to three apostles – for Jesus is in the midst when two or three are gathered in his name, whether on a mountain top or in a small room! The potential of encounters such as World Youth Day cannot be underestimated.
- b. But in my country we are aware that just employing large numbers of trained and dedicated lay catechists doesn’t simply solve the problem if the whole community of faith – and especially the parents – are not part of the enterprise. Otherwise we simply transfer the burden of excessive expectations from the schoolteachers to the non-school teachers!
- c. If we are to take seriously the *Lumen Gentium* vision of the Church as a pilgrim people, we have to work to build communities where there is growth for everyone on their faith journey. We have perhaps worked out of model of Church and school where faith meant joining the organisation, but not always growth, and where teachers believed that they had learned all they needed to know about their subject and were just passing it on. All teachers and leaders are now recognising that they are never teaching subjects. They are teaching people. Pupils rarely remember what teachers taught or even how they behaved. Pupils remember how teachers made them feel. The human heart aches to be healed and not just to be instructed.

- d. Furthermore, we have recognised the great gift that many new communities are to the Church. The faith of so many lay people is impressive and trail-blazing. But we need such movements to be producing leaders – and religious and priestly vocations - for the larger faith community and not just for the movements themselves.

As regards this remote preparation of teachers and leaders, it seems clear that the Church is asking us to focus on building committed communities of faith. That is the primary locus where faith formation and evangelisation takes place. From these communities people with all the gifts of the New Testament will come – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.(Eph 4:11). Without such communities of service and evangelical zeal, there is neither origin nor destination for such charisms.

Then there is the more *proximate* preparation of teachers and leaders. Here we face a number of challenges across the continent.

- a. Some of our prospective Catholic teachers are attending Catholic – or at least faith-based - centres of initial teacher training (ITT). That is a huge resource for us to have. There we have the potential to ensure that such colleges are centre of formation and not just of training. They can experience the faith-based community that they are invited to build for their pupils, and they can be overtly taught a bout the vision that they will be asked to share and communicate. It would be wise to maximise the use that could be made of these colleges through the projects such as the Erasmus scheme. The opportunity for Catholic students of various countries to spend at least some time together could be immensely helpful. And the opportunity to do teaching practice in a Catholic school in another country might be worth exploring.
- b. But we cannot just train all students in a protective Catholic ‘bubble’. They live in a world where they are exposed to all sorts of influences, and where they have to be trained to cope with diversity and pluralism. For a Catholic school that cannot cope with diversity and pluralism is severely limited in what it can do to preach the Gospel in modern Europe. However, we are faced with at least two situations.
  - Where there is the prospect of a considerable number of teachers wishing to work in Catholic schools, we should have to right to ensure that there is some Catholic input to the formation, and that those with some specific qualification in Catholic education should be given appropriate certification. Thus in NI, we have had a recently introduced ‘Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH). We have been able to introduce an optional model into that state qualification on headship in a Catholic school.
  - Where there is no such prospect, the local church may need to provide formal tuition to give potential Catholic teachers and leaders appropriate specific formation.

Whatever the reality, there is a need for high quality initial teacher training and ongoing professional development. This will not happen by accident.

- c. In NI, we have a small but well-known sector which promotes what it calls ‘integrated education’. These schools tend to work on the premise that, if only children knew each other, there would be no trouble in NI. Reconciliation is the key word and the implication is that Catholic schools are really a major contributory factor in our conflict. If only Catholic schools weren’t there, there would be very little trouble! Catholic schools resent this implication for various reasons:
  - Catholic schools have been particularly active in reaching out to other communities, because of and not despite their faith convictions. And though Catholic schools have worked with much greater levels of social deprivation, their academic outcomes have exceeded those of other sectors.
  - The N conflict is not primarily theological but political, centred on the question of whether NI is Irish or British. The question is not just how we create a reconciled society within NI, but whether NI is a viable political unit. The solution of that core political problem is not within the gift of the Churches or the education sector!
  - Some years ago, the Catholic Bishops of NI made it clear in a publication, *Building Peace, Shaping the Future*, that they were clear about the need to promote Catholic schools – open to all – and not just schools for ethnic Catholics. There is a clear commitment to bring pupils from various backgrounds together. There are different models for integrating pupil intake.

- Many so-called 'Integrated' schools tend to avoid crucial issues and in many cases they offer little more than a decent secular education for ethnic Catholics and Protestants, though preparing the children for the Catholic Sacraments of Initiation. This would be the case in the Republic of Ireland as well. A lowest-common-denominator form of integration, however, does little for anyone's faith or hope. The challenge for us is how to cherish plurality and diversity, rather than moving towards an essentially vision that does not cherish various identities. In the spirit of the NT, as Church we see diversity as a potential source of richness and creativity, rather than as only a nuisance. A human rights culture does give us the right to be different, as to contribute to the common good at the same time. Unity in diversity is healthy and a clear outworking of the principle of solidarity.

#### **D. Conclusion**

In many countries, these are not easy time for church or for people of any religious faith. However the experience of the prophets, Jesus, the New Testament Church and subsequent historical periods has never been easy! The reality of sin always creates obstacles for those who would proclaim faith in Jesus. But this is where we are called to minister. It is clear that the problem for many will not be the differences in religion, but rather religious indifference. However, we have

- A vision for the Church in the new millennium, and specifically for the Church in Europe;
- A vision Catholic education and its contribution to human development as well as to the salvation of the world;
- The potential for a considerable degree of solidarity across Europe.
- A clear theology of community as a key locus for evangelisation – a theology amply backed up by the empirical sciences.

A meeting such as this provides us with the opportunity to share our wisdom as to how we form teachers and school leaders who will continue to exploit the huge evangelising potential of our schools. That will involve investment in the formation of such people. If we can do that, subsequent generations in both Church and secular society will be grateful. If we fail to do so, we will have to answer for it before the one who is the only one whom we should really call Teacher, the Christ. (Mt 23:10)

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## SECOND LECTURE

Mgr Guy-Réal THIVIERGE, Secretary General of the IFCU

*“Teacher training in our universities and high schools in the new context of higher education in Europe”*

[[Summary – Full text available in French](#)]

### I. An overview of Catholic education in the world

Catholic private higher education is the most solidly implanted in East Asia, but it also has some recrudescence in Central and Eastern Europe and in the developing countries. The reason of this increase is double: the mass phenomenon in the request for education and the fact that the governments less and less feel up to cope with the fast increase in the costs of higher education.

### II. The new typology of Catholic higher education

- Research University: Harvard, Notre-Dame, Columbia...
- Universities linked to a religion.
- Specialised institutions.

### III. Challenges for Catholic private higher education

- (1) Higher education must feel concern for the common good and the general interest, and not only for its own success or place on the market.
- (2) To guarantee quality.
- (3) To realise transparency in matters of programmes, results on the labour market, percentage of students abandoning their studies...
- (4) The status of the teacher. In many cases, the teacher is reduced to a provider of teaching. The transmission of the Christian inspiration makes a problem because of the very diverse religious commitment of the teachers. Moreover, the role of university research and the recruitment of teachers are brought into question again.
- (5) The transborder character and the increase of the mercantile character of higher education face universities with the challenge to guarantee their quality, their pertinence and their efficient management. The international development of programmes may not serve the interests of market and profit, but those of the students.
- (6) Profit making higher education makes us ask the question of the resistance again globalisation and the reference framework for higher education. To understand the nature and role of the university, its vision on the person and his values, its quality criteria, and at the same time, not to banish creativity. Are our educational and administrative university structures still able, first of all, to offer a resistance, because the phenomenon has the strength of a steamroller, and then, to give orientations which are really carrying sense for the development of the educational mission in the present world? How to accurately imagine the new private sector of higher education and integrate it into a coherent academic system in a country and in the world? How can we think globally and act locally?

#### IV. Some tendencies of teacher training in Catholic universities in Europe

- (1) Diversification of the teacher profession: more specialisation and mobility.
- (2) Tendency to develop competences and to define quality norms. The Bologna Treaty and its additional protocols play herein an important role. One of the more significant changes in this domain is the passing from a culture of bureaucratic responsibility to a culture of professional responsibility. That implies that vocational training may not be confined to the acquisition of knowledge, ability and skills. It's a wider formation; to become aware of one's own responsibility, including the responsibility as a citizen; and this rooted in a Christian vision in order to educate young people to values and the common good.
- (3) The teacher training programmes give great attention to ethical behaviour. Making young people responsible, developing ethical courage and invitation not only to teach but also to testify.
- (4) Future teachers are more and more encouraged to form in a spirit of research: not only to learn to understand things but also to research how to live together in truth. In this regard, the contact with the great intellectual Christian tradition and the Social Doctrine of the Church has an indispensable role to play. Efforts must be made to make Christianity exist as a civilisation and a culture, carrying a vision on man and history.
- (5) Continuous training of teachers is developed in partnership with schools. And the permanent evaluation of it increases the improvement.
- (6) Teacher training fosters interprofessional cooperation, focused on learning. This interprofessional and interdisciplinary competence will improve the relations between teachers and pupils.
- (7) A more experimental character of formation: there is a shift from a more general vocational training to a training based on inductive methods of learning, starting from specific problems.
- (8) Education at the service of human development is widely anchored in a double preoccupation: personal development and full growth of humanity. We must remark here that the excessive dependence of objectives and norms, often fixed by bodies outside the education world, risks to become paralysing for the professional action and the development of new ideas.
- (9) Self-evaluation is reinforced among teachers. But continuous training, as well personal as professional, is the consequence of an increasing responsabilisation of teachers.
- (10) It's the duty of education to bring to future generations not only the idea of beauty, truth, love, hope and integrity, but also the experience of these values.

#### Which are then the new orientations appearing in the world of higher education?

Four shifts are in process:

- (1) First shift: from a culture of accomplished duty to a culture of responsibility. The culture of accomplished duty was linked with a "*cahier des charges*" prepared by a third party, often the government. It was twinned with the search for the right measure, the results and the conformity to norms. After the Second Vatican Council (*Gravissimum Educationis*), Catholic higher education wants to play another role: it firstly wants to be responsible and at the service of society in general, of the Church and of each person, even those who are not believers (*Gravissimum*, 10).

- (2) Second shift: from a pedagogy of instruction to a pedagogy of respect of the human dignity. In the past, higher education was especially characterised by the presentation of dogmas and the teaching of the revealed truth, with an accent on philosophy and theology. Today, we remark that new sensibilities appear, particularly at the social level. Furthermore, education has enlarged its field of interest, among others in the psychological, pedagogical and didactical domains. The student is central. The educational project firstly tends to establish a quality relation with the students and to propose them more personalised learning methods. Predominance isn't given to the taught subject but to the person.
- (3) Third shift: from a culture of individualism to a culture of participation in the educational process. The seeking of truth, wisdom and knowledge make part of the formation of the individual within society. Education wants to form men and women fully responsible for themselves and for the others, and active in the search of the common good.
- (4) And fourth shift: from a culture of disillusionment to a culture of hope. Secularisation has led to counter-values: attraction for material goods, weakening of religious principles, dictatorship of relativism, individualism and weakening of the sense of responsibility towards the other. The challenge is thus to educate to a culture of participation, discovering and living together. Only like this we will open the way towards solidarity, justice and respect of the human dignity.

Mgr THIVIERGE ends by reminding a wish already expressed in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century in the Charter establishing the University of Glasgow: *“to raise to dignity those in the lowest places”*. Education and teaching are arts: *“arts sculpt matters, educators sculpt the soul”*.

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## THIRD LECTURE

Mgr Michael MILLER, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome

*“Teachers in Catholic Schools - Their Mission in the New Evangelization of Europe”*

### Introduction

A joint meeting of the Council of the Episcopal Conferences in Europe and the European Committee of Catholic Education provides a marvellous opportunity to recognize the essential role played by Catholic schools in the new evangelization of Europe and to foster the cooperation of all those involved in this apostolic work. The duty of educating the young is an ecclesial responsibility, one shared by all members of the Body of Christ: bishops, teachers, parents and concerned lay leaders.

Without making light of the challenges, even the serious difficulties, that characterize the present situation you have in your hands – to shape with a potter’s dexterity – an irreplaceable instrument for keeping the Gospel alive and fresh in Europe: your Catholic schools.

In this presentation, I shall first review some general principles on Catholic education, then make comments on the situation of schooling in Europe, and finally take up the specific role of the teacher in Catholic primary and secondary schools, with a special emphasis on how educators and bishops can work together in fostering the Church’s evangelizing mission.

### *Anniversary of “Gravissimum Educationis”*

This conference is fortuitously situated in the context of the fortieth anniversary of the promulgation of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Declaration on Christian Education *Gravissimum Educationis*, approved on 28 October 1965. The conciliar text was the fruit of laborious discussions and arguments and defined “some fundamental principles concerning Christian education, especially in regard to schools.”<sup>1</sup>

### *Catholic Schools and the New Evangelization*

In a special way, the duty of educating the young is an ecclesial responsibility: “The Church is bound as a mother to give to these children of hers an education by which their whole life can be imbued with the spirit of Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

Catholic schools participate in the Church’s evangelizing mission of bringing the Gospel to the ends of the earth. More particularly, they are places for the evangelization of the young (cf. Mt 28:18-19). As ecclesial institutions, they are “the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out.”<sup>3</sup> Like Catholic colleges and universities, Catholic schools proceed *ex corde Ecclesiae*, from the very heart of the Church. Europe’s Catholic schools, if they are to be genuinely Catholic, must be integrated into the organic pastoral programme of the parish, diocese and universal Church.<sup>4</sup> “Unfortunately, there are instances in which the Catholic school is not perceived as an integral part of organic pastoral work, at times it is considered alien, or very nearly so, to the community. It is urgent, therefore, to sensitize parochial and diocesan communities to the necessity of their devoting special care to education and schools.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, introduction.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 11; cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 9; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 33.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 44.

<sup>5</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 12.

## **I. Sharing Responsibility for Education**

### ***1. Subsidiarity: The role of Parents, State and the Church***

Addressing educators, the Council Fathers exhorted them “to persevere generously in the work they have undertaken, and to strive so to excel in inspiring their pupils with the spirit of Christ, in their mastery of the art of teaching, and in their zeal for learning that they may not only promote the internal renewal of the Church but also maintain and augment its beneficial presence in the world today and especially in the intellectual sphere.”<sup>6</sup>

While teachers in Catholic schools deserve such attention, the Church’s clear teaching, constantly reiterated in magisterial documents, is that parents are the first educators of their children. Parents have the original, primary and inalienable right to educate their offspring in conformity with the family’s moral and religious convictions.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the vast majority of parents share their educational responsibilities with other individuals and/or institutions, primarily teachers in the school. Like a good mother, the Church offers help to families by entrusting Catholic educators with the integral formation of their children.<sup>8</sup>

Parents – and not teachers in either State or Catholic schools – have the primary moral responsibility of educating children to adulthood. In keeping with a basic tenet of Catholic social doctrine, the principle of subsidiarity must always govern relations among families, the Church and the State. As Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1994 *Letter to Families*,

Subsidiarity thus complements paternal and maternal love and confirms its fundamental nature, inasmuch as all other participants in the process of education are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents, with their consent and, to a certain degree, with their authorization.<sup>9</sup>

For subsidiarity to be effective, families must enjoy true liberty in deciding how their children are to be educated. This means that “in principle, a State monopoly of education is not permissible, and that only a pluralism of school systems will respect the fundamental right and the freedom of individuals – although the exercise of this right may be conditioned by a multiplicity of factors, according to the social realities of each country.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Catholic Church upholds “the principle of a plurality of school systems in order to safeguard her objectives.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***2. Right to Government Financial Assistance***

A pressing problem for Catholic schools in many European countries is the lack of sufficient government financial assistance. The Roman magisterium has frequently addressed the rights of parents to such help in fulfilling their obligation to educate their children. At Vatican II, the Fathers declared that “the public power, which has the obligation to protect and defend the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their conscience the schools they want for their children.”<sup>12</sup>

The recently published *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2005) states laconically that “the refusal to provide public economic support to non-public schools that need assistance and that render a service to civil society is to be considered an injustice.”<sup>13</sup> This obligation of the State to provide public subsidies arises because of the enormous contribution which Catholic schools make to society by serving the

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<sup>6</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, conclusion.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 3, 6; John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 36; Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 12; Pontifical Council for the Family, *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (22 October 1983), 1-3; Code of Canon Law, canon 793; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2229; John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 16; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2005), n. 239.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 796; Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 8.

<sup>9</sup> John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 14; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 16.

<sup>11</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 6; cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 793 § 2;

<sup>13</sup> Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2005), n. 241.

common good.<sup>14</sup> To be sure, many European countries fulfil this obligation in justice. Their governments give Catholic schools financial assistance, from 100 percent to a lesser amount. Even so, the particular Churches in Europe, which receive little or no help, must never fail to work to ensure that this fundamental right is enshrined in national legislation. As Pope John Paul wrote in *Ecclesia in Europa*, “There is a need to ensure the recognition of a genuine freedom of education and equal juridical standing between State schools and other schools.”<sup>15</sup>

To pursue vigorously the securing of some kind of government funding, as long as no unacceptable strings are attached, should be a priority for the Catholic faithful in their striving for social justice. Too often Catholics fail to appreciate that they have a *right* to subsidies for their schools because these institutions provide a service to society. In no way would such assistance compromise the legitimate lay character of the State. Rather, it guarantees the fundamental right of parents to select for their children a school of their choice. Moreover, all Catholic children, not just those whose families have the financial means, have a right to a Catholic education. Vatican documents stress that the Church’s preferential option for the poor means that she offers her educational ministry in the first place to “those who are poor in the goods of this world.”<sup>16</sup>

## **II. New Challenges for Education in Europe**

Now I would like to address the situation in which Europe finds itself today; that is, the context in which Catholic education must be carried out. The beginning of the third millennium brings new challenges in the sphere of education. These challenges are associated with the globalization of the marketplace and of culture, with bioethical innovations and environmental problems, and with the urgency to bring about justice and a new humanism. In addition, secularization, accompanied by what Benedict XVI has called the “dictatorship of relativism,”<sup>17</sup> is becoming ever more widespread in Europe and other Western countries, distancing education from addressing the fundamental questions of existence such as the search for God and the providential design of the created moral order.

In Europe, as elsewhere, these challenges arise within a particular historical and cultural context that varies from country to country. Even so, Europe as a whole seems to many to be showing signs of cultural fatigue, disorientation, demographic suicide, moral decadence and spiritual aridity.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, social tensions are being generated by a new poverty, by marginalization, and by the growing number of ethnic and religious minorities.

In recent years, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger dedicated a great deal of attention to Europe’s spiritual and moral roots in Christianity. He diagnosed a grave pathology of the West: that it no longer loves itself. As a therapeutic measure, he indicated that Europe must accept itself if it wishes to survive.<sup>19</sup>

In a discourse held at Subiaco on 1 April 2005, the same Cardinal Ratzinger, several days before he was elected pope, analysed the situation of contemporary Europe:

All this [progress] shows that the growth of our possibilities has not been matched by a comparable development of our moral energy. Moral strength has not grown together with the development of science; rather, it has diminished, because the technical mentality relegates morality to the subjective realm, while we have need, precisely, of a public morality, a morality that is able to respond to the threats that weigh down on the existence of us all. The real and gravest danger in these times lies, precisely, in this imbalance between technical possibilities and moral energy.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 797.

<sup>15</sup> John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 59.

<sup>16</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 9; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 15; Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 58; Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 69-72.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, Homily for Mass *Pro Eligendo Romano Pontifice* (18 April 2005): *Origins*, 34:45 (28 April 2005), 720.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 7-9.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, *Europa: I suoi fondamenti oggi e domani* (Milano: Edizioni San Paolo, 2004), 28.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, “L’Europa nella crisi delle culture,” *Docete*, 20 (2005), 478.

Schools inevitably mirror these ways of thinking in their ethos, curricula and especially in the attitude of their teachers. However, educational institutions also reflect hope for the future when they bear these challenges in mind and seek to meet them. Indeed, many European organizations are addressing these problems in various ways.

Reflection on the education of European youth is increasingly commonplace at the continental level. The 1997 Delors Report pointed out that education is a “treasure” for humanity in the twenty-first century.<sup>21</sup> According to the Report, education should contribute to the integral development of every individual: the spiritual, physical, intellectual, sensual and aesthetic. Such an education is the indispensable means which will allow Europe to fulfil its ideals of peace, freedom and social justice.<sup>22</sup> There is, then, an increasingly shared conviction, even among those who do not embrace the faith, that education can be “a winning card” in promoting the harmonious, organic and authentic development of all Europeans.

For its part, the European Commission, through a series of white papers, has developed a particular educational orientation which it believes will contribute to the continent’s progress. In one such paper, entitled *Education and Learning toward a Cognitive Society*, the authors indicate three factors which are having a great influence on European education: the globalization of the economy; the advent of an information society; and the rapid progress of science, especially technology. These factors have profoundly changed the nature of work in the so-called “learning society.” Such a society requires a new kind of education, they maintain, one in which education would form the person to be a lifelong learner so that he or she would be able to acquire continually new skills for the workplace.

Such responses to the challenges presented must be regarded, I believe, as partial and incomplete, insofar as they reduce education to mere instruction, to a sophisticated kind of job training. To be sure, useful knowledge is needed for those wishing to be active subjects of tomorrow’s learning society. But I question seriously whether these proposed views, and others similar to them, are sufficient for an education that adequately prepares young Europeans for the challenges of their future.

In the search for solutions the Church, with its vast network of schools, can offer a significant contribution, provided that her schools are genuinely faithful to their specifically *Catholic* mission and heritage. Europe’s Catholic schools must, therefore, take into account preparation for the new world of work, without abdicating the fundamental formative goal of transmitting moral and religious truths to their students. Indeed, the formation of youth requires that the acquisition of knowledge and the use of technology be situated in the wider framework of the integral truth about the human person. Catholic schools can meet the challenge of a runaway technology and a reductionist education, both of which compromise the demands of the spirit.

Educational programmes will be more effective only if they serve to uncover the full dignity of the human person and the greatness of human destiny.<sup>23</sup> This is the true and deeper challenge for European Catholic teachers at the dawn of the millennium.

### **III. Catholic Teachers and the New Evangelization of Europe**

In its Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, the Second Vatican Council defines the importance of the educator’s mission:

Splendid, therefore, and of the highest importance is the vocation of those who help parents in carrying out their duties and act in the name of the community by undertaking a teaching career. This vocation requires special qualities of mind and heart, most careful preparation and a constant readiness to accept new ideas and to adapt the old.<sup>24</sup>

For a Catholic, the educational profession cannot be reduced to a work geared simply toward “making a living.” It is a vocation and a ministry. Teachers proclaim Jesus Christ and give transparent Christian witness.

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<sup>21</sup> Jacques Delors, *Nell’educazione un tesoro* (Roma: Armando, 1997).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, Address to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (8 October 1988): *Insegnamenti*, 11/3 (1988), 1077.

<sup>24</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 5.

## 1. *Teaching as a Vocation*

Educators, whether consecrated or lay persons, live from the wellspring of Baptism and participation in ecclesial communion. Like all Christians, they share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ, but they are called to carry out their vocation to holiness precisely as teachers of the young.<sup>25</sup> Teachers thus live their Christian calling in a specific way and must be formed so as to appreciate that their educational apostolate is integral to their growth in holiness.

Why is the educator's vocation a blessed one? The reflection offered by *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* suggests at least one response: "Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of man's most excellent and creative activities, for the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings."<sup>26</sup>

Those responsible for forming the new generation of European Catholic educators are, therefore, to make every effort to imbue them with a profound sense of the dignity of teaching as a share in the Church's work of bringing the Gospel to all nations (cf. Mt 28:18-19). Bishops and pastors, as well as parents and professors in faculties of education should help educators to "become fully aware of the importance, the richness, and the responsibility of this vocation. They should fully respond to all of its demands, secure in the knowledge that their response is vital for the construction and ongoing renewal of the earthly city, and for the evangelization of the world."<sup>27</sup>

## 2. *Teaching as a Profession*

The supernatural vocation of a Catholic teacher is also lived as a profession. Training in the area of one's discipline as well as in pedagogy is necessary for the teacher to be a true professional. Educators should realize that poor teaching, resulting from insufficient preparation of classes or outdated pedagogical methods, seriously hinders their effectiveness in contributing to their students' integral formation.<sup>28</sup> The first requirement for educators is the acquisition of a solid professional formation in their subject matter and pedagogy.<sup>29</sup> Catholic teachers should be assiduous in complying with such requirements, though always with a critical eye, lest the educational philosophy specific to Catholic education be compromised. In short, they need a formation provided by those who themselves were formed in a Catholic worldview, one which understands the human person in light of the mystery of Christ.

Secondly, all Catholic educators, regardless of the grade level or subject area they teach, require a solid, organic and comprehensive formation in the Catholic faith. It is especially important that the religious and moral formation of teachers be ongoing. In every dimension of ecclesial life permanent formation is encouraged as a way to maintain the vigour of evangelization. This is especially true in the face of the growing complexity of contemporary society. No Catholic who works in a school can ignore this present-day need for ongoing *aggiornamento*. "To do so would be to remain locked up in outdated knowledge, criteria, and attitudes. To reject a formation that is permanent and that involves the whole person – human, professional, and religious – is to isolate oneself from that very world that has to be brought closer to the Gospel."<sup>30</sup>

Generally speaking, Catholic teachers are aware of the need for good professional formation. Nevertheless, attention limited only to the professional level is insufficient for a Catholic teacher whose educational work is the path of personal sanctification and the exercise of an apostolic mission. There is also a need for religious formation that must be kept up to date, on the same level as, and in harmony with, professional formation in specific disciplines and pedagogy. Catholic educators, whether lay or Religious, need to recognize the value of this kind of religious formation and ensure that they pursue it.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 32.

<sup>26</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 37.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 61-62.

### 3. *Teaching as Witness*

A decisive indicator of a school's authentic catholicity is the transparent Christian witness of its teachers and administrators. "The nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behaviour."<sup>32</sup> With them, as individuals and as a community, lies the primary responsibility for creating a Christian school climate.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, it depends chiefly on the teachers whether a school achieves its purpose.<sup>34</sup> Catholic teachers are called to be among the foremost of Europe's "credible evangelizers, whose lives, in communion with the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, radiate the beauty of the Gospel."<sup>35</sup>

More than a master who teaches, a Catholic educator is a person who gives testimony by his or her life. Shortly after his election, Pope Benedict XVI spoke about the kind of witness required of all teachers of the faith, including those in Catholic schools:

The central figure in the work of educating . . . is specifically the form of witness. . . . The witness never refers to himself but to something, or rather, to Someone greater than he, whom he has encountered and whose dependable goodness he has sampled. Thus, every educator and witness finds an unequalled model in Jesus Christ, the Father's great witness, who said nothing about himself but spoke as the Father had taught him (cf. Jn 8:28).<sup>36</sup>

In order that their witness be transparent, those involved in Catholic schools, with very few exceptions, should be practising Catholics committed to the Church and living her sacramental life. While some situations might entail compelling reasons for members of another faith tradition to be hired, as much as possible all teachers should be practising Catholics. Despite the difficulties sometimes involved, those responsible for hiring teachers must see to it that these criteria are met by recruiting educators who can understand and accept Church teaching and the Gospel's moral demands, and who can contribute to fostering the school's Catholic identity and apostolic goals.

When such a policy is ignored, it is inevitable that children will absorb, even if they are not explicitly taught, a soft indifferentism which sustains neither their practice of the faith nor their ability to imbue society with Christian values. Directors, teachers, pastors, school board members, parents and bishops share in the serious duty of hiring teachers who meet the standards of doctrine and integrity of life essential to a flourishing Catholic school.

Europe needs teachers with a clear and precise understanding of the specific nature of Catholic education. The careful hiring of men and women who enthusiastically live their Catholic faith is, I would maintain, the primary way to foster a truly Catholic education.

The reason for such concern about teachers is straightforward. Catholic education is strengthened by its "martyrs" or "witnesses." If students in Catholic schools are to have a genuine experience of the Church, the example of their teachers is crucial. Children will pick up far more by example than by masterful pedagogical techniques, especially in the practice of Christian virtues.

The prophetic words of Pope Paul VI ring as true today as they did more than thirty years ago: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."<sup>37</sup> What educators do and how they act are more significant than what they say – inside and outside the classroom. This is how the Church evangelizes. "The more completely an educator can give concrete witness to the model of the ideal person [Christ] that is being presented to the students, the more this ideal will be believed and imitated."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 43.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 26; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 8.

<sup>35</sup> John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 49.

<sup>36</sup> Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants in the Ecclesial Diocesan Convention of Rome (6 June 2005): *L'Osservatore Romano*, English-language edition (15 June 2005), 7.

<sup>37</sup> Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41.

<sup>38</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 32.

Hypocrisy turns off today's students. While their demands are high, perhaps sometimes even unreasonably so, if teachers fail to model fidelity to the truth and virtuous behaviour, then even the best of curricula cannot successfully embody a Catholic school's distinctive ethos. For example, if teachers and administrators demonstrate the individualistic and competitive ethic that now marks so much public education, they will fail to inspire students with the values of solidarity and community, despite their oral protests to the contrary. The same can be said about a failure to give clear witness to the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage or the inviolability of human life.

Catholic educators are expected to be models for their students by bearing transparent witness to their fascination with Christ and the beauty of the Gospel. If boys and girls are to experience the splendour of the Church, the Christian example of teachers and others responsible for their formation is indispensable, and no effort should be spared in guaranteeing the presence of such witness in every European Catholic school.

#### **4. Teaching as Proclaiming Christ**

Now I would like to treat two further tasks proper to Catholic teachers as agents of the new evangelization: the proclamation of Christ in the school and the fostering of a specifically Catholic worldview (*Weltanschauung*).

As evangelizers, Catholic teachers must recognize Christ as "the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school"<sup>39</sup> and the principles of his Gospel as its guiding educational norms. A Catholic school must be founded on Jesus Christ the Redeemer who, through his Incarnation, is united with each student. Christ is not an afterthought or an add-on to Catholic educational philosophy; he is its centre and fulcrum, the light enlightening every boy and girl who comes into the Catholic school (cf. Jn 1:9).

In its document *The Catholic School*, the Congregation for Catholic Education affirmed:  
The Catholic school is committed thus to the development of the whole man, since in Christ, the perfect man, all human values find their fulfilment and unity. Herein lies the specifically Catholic character of the school. Its duty to cultivate human values in their own legitimate right in accordance with its particular mission to serve all men has its origin in the figure of Christ. He is the one who ennobles man, gives meaning to human life, and is the model which the Catholic school offers to its pupils.<sup>40</sup>

The Gospel of Christ and his very person are to inspire and guide the Catholic school in every dimension of its life and activity: its philosophy of education, its curriculum, its community life, its selection of teachers and even its physical environment. As John Paul II said to the Catholic teachers of Europe, "I encourage the faithful involved in the field of primary and secondary education to persevere in their mission and to bring the light of Christ the Saviour to bear upon their specific educational, scientific and academic activities."<sup>41</sup>

Christ is *the* Teacher in Catholic schools. Nevertheless, this conviction, in its very simplicity, can sometimes be overlooked. Catholic schools have the task of being the living and provocative memory of Christ in Europe. All too many schools fall into the trap of a secular academic success culture, putting their Christological focus and its accompanying understanding of the human person in second place. Christ is "fitted in" rather than the school's vital principle.

The Gospel of Christ and his very person are, therefore, to inspire and guide the Catholic school in its every dimension: its philosophy of education, its curriculum, community life, its selection of teachers, and even its physical environment:

In a Catholic school, everyone should be aware of the living presence of Jesus the 'Master' who, today as always, is with us in our journey through life as the one genuine 'Teacher,' the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection. The inspiration of Jesus must be translated from the ideal into the real. The Gospel spirit should be evident in a Christian way of thought and life which permeates all facets of the educational climate.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 34.

<sup>40</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 35.

<sup>41</sup> John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 59.

<sup>42</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 25.

As John Paul II succinctly stated, “Catholic education is above all a question of communicating Christ, of helping to form Christ in the lives of others.”<sup>43</sup>

## **5. Teaching the Catholic Vision of Life**

The Gospel should permeate not just the class period of a catechism or religious education, or the school’s pastoral activities, but its entire curriculum. The new evangelization of Europe requires an integral education which responds to all the needs of the human person:

The integral formation of the human person, which is the purpose of education, includes the development of all the human faculties of the students, together with preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, becoming aware of the transcendental and religious education. Every school, and every educator in the school, ought to be striving ‘to form strong and responsible individuals, who are capable of making free and correct choices,’ thus preparing young people ‘to open themselves more and more to reality, and to form in themselves a clear idea of the meaning of life’ (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 31).<sup>44</sup>

This is why the Church establishes schools: because they are a privileged place which fosters the formation of the whole person in the “spirit of Catholicism.” Instruction should be authentically Catholic in content and methodology across the curriculum. In all they teach, therefore, Europe’s Catholic educators must be inspired and guided by the Gospel. They would betray their calling if they failed to take as their touchstone the person of Christ and his teaching.

Because of the Gospel’s guiding role in a Catholic school, one might be tempted to think that its distinctiveness lies in the quality of its religion teachers and their programmes of instruction and pastoral activities. Nothing is further from the truth. Rather, a Catholic school must embody its genuine catholicity even apart from such programmes and projects. It is Catholic because its teachers undertake to educate the whole child, addressing the requirements of his or her natural and supernatural perfection. It is Catholic because its teachers provide an education in the intellectual and moral virtues. It is Catholic because its teachers prepare their students for a fully human life at the service of others and for the life of the world to come. Catholicism is a comprehensive way of life which is to be lived, cherished and taught in the schools. If a Catholic school is to deliver on its promise of providing students with an integral education it fosters a passion for truth, and the integration of faith, culture and life.

### **5.1 Passion for Truth**

In an age of information overload, Europe’s teachers must be especially attentive to strike the delicate balance between human experience and understanding in their instruction. They do far more than convey information to passive students. Catholic educators aspire to teach love for wisdom, habituating their students to desire learning so much that he or she will delight in becoming a self-learner.

Intrinsically related to the search for wisdom is another idea frequently repeated in Vatican teaching: the confidence expressed that the human mind, however limited its powers, can come to a knowledge of truth. This conviction about the nature of truth is too important for Catholic teachers to be confused about. Unlike skeptics and relativists, Catholic educators share a specific belief about truth: that to a limited but real extent it can be attained and communicated to others. They are to cultivate in themselves and develop in others a passion for truth which defeats moral and cultural relativism. They are to educate “in the truth.”

Education is about truth both in its natural and supernatural dimensions: “The school considers human knowledge as a truth to be discovered. In the measure in which subjects are taught by someone who knowingly and without restraint seeks the truth, they are to that extent Christian. Discovery and awareness of truth leads man to the discovery of Truth itself.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> John Paul II, Message to the National Catholic Educational Association of the United States (16 April 1979): *Insegnamenti*, 2 (1979), 919-920.

<sup>44</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 17; cf. 3; cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 8, 26; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 99.

<sup>45</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 41.

## 5.2 Integration of Faith, Culture and Life

A second way which communicates a Catholic worldview to children is teaching them to transform culture in light of the Gospel. Teachers prepare students to relate the Catholic faith to their particular culture and to live that faith in practice. In its 1997 document, the Congregation for Catholic Education commented:

From the nature of the Catholic school also stems one of the most significant elements of its educational project: the synthesis between culture and faith. The endeavour to interweave reason and faith, which has become the heart of individual subjects, makes for unity, articulation and coordination, bringing forth within what is learned in a school a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and of history.<sup>46</sup>

European Catholic teachers form students within their own culture, teaching them an appreciation of its positive elements and fostering a more profound inculturation of the Gospel in their particular situation. Faith and culture are intimately related, and students should be led, in ways suitable to the level of their intellectual development, to grasp the importance of this relationship. “We must always remember that, while faith is not to be identified with any one culture and is independent of all cultures, it must inspire every culture.”<sup>47</sup> At the same time, Catholic educators in Europe should teach that “the Church, as the bearer of the Gospel, helped to spread and consolidate those values which have made European culture universal.” With this in mind, teachers have a special responsibility to pass on “this precious patrimony and of helping Europe to build herself by revitalizing her original Christian roots.”<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, young Catholics, in a way appropriate to their age, must also learn to make judgements based on religious and moral truths. They should learn to be critical and evaluative. It is the Catholic faith which provides young people with the essential principles for critique and evaluation.<sup>49</sup> Catholic teachers also seek to ensure that their schools are places where “faith, culture and life are brought into harmony.”<sup>50</sup> Central to their educational role is their mission of fostering holiness among their pupils, of saint making. Mindful of redemption in Christ, Catholic educators aim at forming in their pupils those particular virtues that will enable them to live a new life in Christ and help them to play their part in serving society and the Church. The Gospel image of going in search of the “treasure” hidden in the field can be applied to the mission of today’s Catholic educator in Europe. It belongs to teachers to accompany students in discovering the hidden “treasure” of Christian culture, forming them “by means of a systematic and critical assimilation of culture.”<sup>51</sup>

## IV. Ecclesial Communion and Europe’s Catholic Schools

For some years now Catholic educators in Europe have emphasised the school as a *community* of learners. This communal dimension is rooted both in man’s social nature and in the Church as a “the home and the school of communion.”<sup>52</sup> That the Catholic school is an educational community “is one of the most enriching developments for the contemporary school.”<sup>53</sup> The Congregation for Catholic Education has summed up this new perspective as follows:

The declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* notes an important advance in the way a Catholic school is thought of: the transition from the school as an institution to the school as a community. This community dimension is, perhaps, one result of the new awareness of the Church’s nature as developed by the Council. In the Council texts, the community dimension is primarily a theological concept rather than a sociological category.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 14.

<sup>47</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 53.

<sup>48</sup> John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 25.

<sup>49</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 20.

<sup>50</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education of a Catholic School*, 34; cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 44.

<sup>51</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 26.

<sup>52</sup> John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 43.

<sup>53</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 22.

<sup>54</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 31; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 18.

Recent Vatican statements highlight that the school is a community of persons and, even more to the point, “a genuine community of faith.”<sup>55</sup>

The Holy See describes the school’s community dimension in three areas: the teamwork among all those involved; the interaction of students with teachers; and the cooperation between educators and bishops.

### ***1. Teamwork***

School teachers “should try to create a community school climate that reproduces, as far as possible, the warm and intimate atmosphere of family life. Those responsible for these schools will, therefore, do everything they can to promote a common spirit of trust and spontaneity.”<sup>56</sup> This means that educators, as an essential aspect of their evangelizing mission, should develop a real willingness to collaborate among themselves. Teachers, both Religious and lay, together with parents and school board members, are to work as a team for the school’s common good.<sup>57</sup> Their communion, rooted in Christ and the Church, fosters appreciation of the various charisms and vocations which build up a genuine school community and strengthen scholastic solidarity.<sup>42</sup> All stakeholders should guide the school to make choices that further “overcoming individualistic self-promotion, solidarity instead of competition, assisting the weak instead of marginalization, responsible participation instead of indifference.”<sup>43</sup>

The Holy See is, moreover, mindful of ensuring the appropriate involvement of parents in Catholic schools:

Close cooperation with the family is especially important when treating sensitive issues such as religious, moral, or sexual education, orientation toward a profession, or a choice of one’s vocation in life. It is not a question of convenience, but a partnership based on faith.<sup>44</sup>

Now, more than in the past, teachers and administrators must often encourage parental participation in the school’s mission and life. Such a partnership is directed not just to dealing with academic problems but to planning and evaluating the effectiveness of the school’s Catholic identity.

Religious continue to play an indispensable role in Europe’s Catholic schools. Consecrated women and men have a specific duty “to bring to bear on the world of education their radical witness to the values of the Kingdom. . . . [They are] able to be especially effective in educational activities and to offer a specific contribution to the work of other educators.”<sup>45</sup>

As “experts in communion” because of their experience in community life, Religious foster those “human and spiritual bonds that promote the mutual exchange of gifts” with all others involved in the school.<sup>46</sup> In the words of a recent Vatican document:

Consecrated persons are thus leaven that is able to create relations of increasingly deep communion, that are themselves educational. They promote solidarity, mutual enhancement and joint responsibility in the educational plan, and, above all, they give an explicit Christian testimony.<sup>47</sup>

However, European schools can no longer depend, at least in most countries, on Religious to administer and staff them. The future of Catholic schools will be largely determined by lay women and men committed to the educational apostolate, which “receives from the bishops in some manner the ‘mandate’ of an apostolic undertaking.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 41.

<sup>56</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 40.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 78.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 16.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>44</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 42: cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 34.

<sup>45</sup> John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata*, 96.

<sup>46</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 17.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>48</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 71.

As we have seen, teaching is more than a profession. It must be appreciated and lived as “a supernatural Christian vocation”<sup>49</sup> if it is to take its place among properly ecclesial activities. Sometimes teachers undertake this apostolate consciously embracing, to the extent appropriate to their state of life, the charisma of a particular Religious institute, with all that involves by way of a specific spirituality and approach to pedagogy. While it is highly commendable that Religious seek to hand on elements of their charisma to certain members of the laity, what is primary in all strategic planning for the future is safeguarding and promoting the Catholic ethos of Europe’s schools. After all, an institution is first of all Catholic, before it can be moulded according to the particular charisma of a Religious institute.

In light of Vatican II’s teaching that “lay people have their own proper competence in the building up of the Church,”<sup>50</sup> I believe that men and women, precisely as members of the lay faithful, have their own charisma of teaching, independent of the charisma of a particular Religious congregation. In the not too distant future, individual Religious communities might die out, or they might flourish once again – we do not know. What will definitely survive, however, is the Church herself; and she must have schools that are recognizably Catholic to carry out the new evangelization of Europe.

## **2. Teachers and Students**

A Catholic philosophy of education always pays special attention to the quality of interpersonal relations in the school community between teachers and students. Such concern safeguards the priority of the student as a person whose intellectual development is harmonized with spiritual, religious, emotional and social growth.<sup>51</sup> Because, as Saint John Bosco said, “education is a thing of the heart,”<sup>52</sup> authentic formation of young people requires personalized accompanying by a teacher. “During childhood and adolescence a student needs to experience personal relations with outstanding educators, and what is taught has greater influence on the student’s formation when placed in a context of personal involvement, genuine reciprocity, coherence of attitudes, lifestyle and day to day behaviour.”<sup>53</sup> Direct and personal contact between teachers and students is a hallmark of Europe’s Catholic schools. A learning atmosphere which encourages the befriending of students is far removed from the caricature of the remote disciplinarian cherished by the media. In measured terms the Congregation’s document *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* describes the nature of the student-teacher relationship:

A personal relationship is always a dialogue rather than a monologue, and the teacher must be convinced that the enrichment in the relationship is mutual. But the mission must never be lost sight of: the educator can never forget that students need a companion and guide during their period of growth; they need help from others in order to overcome doubts and disorientation. Also, rapport with the students ought to be a prudent combination of familiarity and distance; and this must be adapted to the need of each individual student. Familiarity will make a personal relationship easier, but a certain distance is also needed.<sup>54</sup>

Catholic schools, then, safeguard the priority of the person, both student and teacher. They foster proper friendship between them, since “an authentic formative process can only be initiated through a personal relationship.”<sup>55</sup>

## **3. Educators and Bishops**

The fruitfulness of European Catholic education also depends in large measure on the quality of the collaboration between bishops and Catholic educators. They are to help one another in carrying out the task to which they are mutually committed. Personal relationships marked by mutual trust, close cooperation and continuing dialogue are required if a genuine spirit of ecclesial communion is to characterize the interaction of bishops with the teachers and staff of Catholic schools.

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<sup>49</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 37.

<sup>50</sup> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 25

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 61.

<sup>52</sup> Cited in Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 62.

<sup>53</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 18.

<sup>54</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 33.

<sup>55</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 62.

First, mutual trust. This trust goes beyond the quality of the personal relationships of those involved. These might – or might not – be marked by warmth and friendship. That depends on the concrete situation. The more profound foundation for mutual trust is shared adherence to the person of Jesus Christ and fidelity to the Church’s teaching in all that concerns her educational apostolate. Trust is fostered by listening to one another, by respecting the different gifts in ecclesial life which each possesses and by recognizing each another’s specific responsibilities. With trust comes dialogue. Both bishops and educators, whether singly or in associations, should avail themselves of open, sincere and regular dialogue about matters of common interest in their joint efforts on behalf of Catholic schools.

Second, educators and ecclesial authorities should cooperate closely in fostering a school’s catholicity. A spirituality of communion should be the guiding principle of their relations. If this spiritual path is not followed, all external structures of cooperation serve very little purpose; they would be mere mechanisms without a soul.<sup>56</sup>

Catholic educators recognize that the bishop’s pastoral leadership is pivotal in supporting the establishment and ensuring the catholicity of the schools in his pastoral care. Indeed, “only the bishop can set the tone, ensure the priority and effectively present the importance of the cause to the Catholic people.”<sup>57</sup> His responsibility for Catholic schools derives from his *munus docendi*, the office of teaching, received at episcopal ordination.<sup>58</sup> As the Code of Canon Law states, “Pastors of souls have the duty of making all possible arrangements so that all the faithful may avail themselves of a Catholic education.”<sup>59</sup>

With regard to Catholic schools, episcopal responsibility is twofold. First, the bishop must integrate schools into his diocese’s pastoral programme; and, second, he is to oversee the teachers within them. As John Paul II straightforwardly affirmed, “Bishops need to support and enhance the work of Catholic schools.”<sup>60</sup>

The bishop must see to it that the education in his schools is based on the principles of Catholic doctrine. This vigilance includes even schools established or directed by members of Religious institutes.<sup>61</sup> The bishop’s particular responsibilities include ensuring that teachers are sound in their doctrine and outstanding in their integrity of life.<sup>62</sup> It is he who must judge whether children in the Catholic schools in his diocese are receiving the fullness of the Church’s faith in their catechetical and religious formation.<sup>63</sup>

It is important that the bishop be involved in Catholic schools not only by occasionally exercising his right of veto – whether over texts, curricula or teachers – but also by taking an active role in fostering the specifically Catholic ethos of schools under his jurisdiction. In an *ad limina* address to a group of bishops in June 2004, Pope John Paul II summed up this point, telling them that “the Church’s presence in elementary and secondary education must . . . be the object of your special attention as shepherds of the People of God.”<sup>64</sup> In particular, pastors should set in place “specific programmes of formation” which will enable the laity to take on responsibilities for teaching in Catholic schools.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 43.

<sup>57</sup> John Paul II, *Ad limina* Address to American Bishops (28 October 1983), 7: *Insegnamenti*, 6/2 (1983), 891.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 375.

<sup>59</sup> Canon 794.

<sup>60</sup> John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis*, 52.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 803 § 2.

<sup>63</sup> Pope Benedict XVI emphasized the gravity of this responsibility of ensuring the fullness of Catholic teaching in talking to the Austrian bishops: “It is true that we bishops must act prudently. However, this prudence must not prevent us from presenting the Word of God in its full clarity, even those things that people are less willing to hear or that never fail to arouse protests and derision. . . Perhaps those responsible for preaching fear that here and there people might drift away if they spoke too clearly. Yet experience generally shows that it is precisely the opposite that happens. Be under no illusion. An incomplete Catholic teaching is a contradiction in itself and cannot be fruitful in the long term” (*Ad Limina* Address to the Bishops’ Conference of Austria [5 November 2005]; *L’Osservatore Romano*, English-language edition, 46 [16 November 2005], 3).

<sup>64</sup> John Paul II, *Ad Limina* Address to American Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Portland in Oregon, Seattle and Anchorage (24 June 2004), 3: *Origins*, 34:14 (16 September 2004), 221.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis*, 51.

## Conclusion

The question addressed by Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle to his spiritual family reminds us of the spirit which must animate Europe's new evangelization and the mission of teachers within it: "You are charged, by your state, to instruct poor children: do you have love for them?"<sup>66</sup> This query recalls for the Catholic educator what is fundamental: love for those being educated, above all the poorest. In addition, we add to "the poor" the new poor who walk the paths of an opulent Europe – those who are frequently bewildered, yet are drawn to the love shown them by Catholic teachers.<sup>67</sup> In the service rendered by the Catholic educator, whether bishop, teacher or parent, such love is primary. It is essential not only to love young people but also to help them see that they are loved. Education, as affirmed by Saint John Bosco, is a matter of the heart.

May the Church's educational apostolate in Europe may always be an expression of communion and charity! As Pope John Paul II said to a Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education, "Only he who loves educates; only he who loves can speak the truth which is Love."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle, *Meditations*, 133-3.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 15.

<sup>68</sup> John Paul II, Address to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education, *Insegnamenti*, 18/2, 1118; cf. Benedict XVI, at the recent ecclesial convention for the diocese of Rome, the Holy Father emphasized that "for an authentic educational endeavour, communicating a correct theory or doctrine does not suffice. Something far greater and more human is needed: the daily experienced closeness that is proper to love" (6 June 2005): *L'Osservatore Romano*, English-language edition (15 June 2005), 7.

## FIRST INTERVENTION OF FATHER JAMES HANVEY SJ, OBSERVER

I. Mgr MILLER underlined the mission of leadership: it concerns our general values in the local situation.

- We must make the distinction between management (how do we organise Catholic education?) and leadership: where are we going as school community? Which vision inspires us? We all are very concerned by leadership: to guarantee and transmit values. Management can give a structure to promote these values and not weaken them.
- We also must distinguish formal leadership (who is in the office? The headteacher, etc.) and informal leadership: in each group of teachers, there are people who have special gifts. Let's recognise and support these informal leaders; they promote values in the school.

II. Father HANVEY gives a short summary of the work in groups

(1) There is a consensus on the fact that educators are (or must be) sensitive to the cultural situation.

Example in a post-communist world.

Example in a secularised world.

(2) Not only the professional competences are important, but also the theological formation. By "theological formation" Father HANVEY means: to be able to understand the Scriptures and to translate them in concrete situations.

(3) It's the responsibility of bishops to encourage such a formation of teachers.

(4) Which qualities does a headteacher have to acquire?

- professional competence
- to be able to motivate
- to be able to gather people in a vision
- to be able to express his/her conviction and to testify
- to be able to compose and support a team having gifts to distinguish the talents of the different individuals, and this not to let leadership prevail above them, but to detach leadership and encourage it for the others.
- Capacity to generate change
- To be able to make a distinction between a technical change, with more personnel, more finances, more machines, and the profound change: the perception of values and the way of working
- To be able to lead a school to adapt itself to the new needs
- To be able to gather a team around itself. The capacity to delegate is very important: the sense of subsidiarity
- Capacity to take decisions with confidence and to achieve a consensus.

Father HANVEY still adds:

- (1) One of the critic tasks of a leader is to be able to interpret what happens: "This is what happens!" and to be able to delegate to the others, and to put them in the centre, too.
- (2) To be able to tell the truth to the community in order to help the organisation to understand and designate itself.
- (3) What was not mentioned in the workshops is the capacity to use failures, too. A leader must allow his organisation to take risks and to learn through its mistakes.

As far as structures and processes are concerned:

- (1) there is a need for evaluation processes
- (2) to support a good management team
- (3) to have a good diocesan team
- (4) annual or biennial recognition of the Catholic school
- (5) to search for more finances for the schools

Father HANVEY asks three questions for the next workshops:

1. If we realise programmes and cursus on leadership formation, what should be the contents of these ones?
2. What could the CEEC do in order to make these programmes possible?
3. Are there some domains in which a country, an organisation or other, could help? What can we share?

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## THREE EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

### I. MR PAUL MALARTRE, SECRETARY GENERAL OF FRENCH CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Mr MALARTRE presents an example prepared by Mr André BLANDIN, Deputy Secretary General, responsible for the pedagogical and formation questions: *The Formation of Teachers and School Executives in French Catholic Education*.

In the next few years, the French Catholic schools will have to face a double challenge concerning the recruitment and the formation of their teachers, headteachers and other school executives:

- at the quantitative level: massive retirement of teachers recruited in the years 1960-70;
- at the qualitative level: cultural and economic mutations, increasing fear for fundamentalisms, risk of burst of society into a violent communitarism, lots of facts which shove the landmarks of Catholic Education.

To try to meet the challenges the school is faced with, Catholic Education must re-invent the way to make efficient its “proper character”, i.e. the link between “*Teaching, educating and revealing a sense of the person rooted in the Gospel*”, such as mentioned in the letter to the French Catholics written by the French Bishops (1996).

#### Particular situation of the French Catholic schools in the specific framework of association with the State by contract

- Simple contract: the teachers, remunerated by the State, remain depending on private law. This kind of contract still exists only for some primary schools.
- Association contract: the teachers, remunerated by the State, are contractuels depending on public law. The schools receive a yearly compensation to finance the working costs and salaries of the people of private law, such as the headteacher who is appointed by the “tutorship authority” (congregation or diocesan authority).

The contracts have enabled Catholic Education to live and to answer one of its missions: to be open to all, which is impossible without the State funding. Furthermore, the respect of the constraints linked to the contract doesn't prevent the exercise of the proper character of a Catholic school.

#### Plan and content of the formation

Very recently, the French Catholic Education has profoundly modified its whole formation system. The question was to:

- “decompartmentalise” the different formations (initial training and continuous training as well);
- re-define the territorial spaces supporting the formation structures in order to limit the general costs and to offer equal formation chances to all;
- organise the principle of subsidiarity;
- be able to form teachers and school executives according to the orientations of Catholic education.

As far as the headteachers are concerned, it's not necessary to insist on the importance of their task: the headteacher is responsible for the link between the educational project and the pedagogical and educational practices. He is the animator of the whole educational community and has a pastoral responsibility. Under his impetus, the evangelical lightening of the educational project must go across the whole community and life of the school: the art to live together in reference to Jesus Christ.

The French Catholic Education has given itself a concrete mean to improve the formation of its executives by setting up a “formation tutorship” especially for them. The IFCEC – *Institut pour la Formation des Cadres de l'Enseignement Catholique* (Institute for the Formation of Catholic Education's Executives) – has a double objective:

- to coordinate and develop in synergy all what already exists in matters of school executives' formation: headteachers, diocesan directors, educational executives, trainers;
- to realise some formations.

The duration of the course is three years. A theological, canonical and ecclesial formation enables the future headteachers to better understand the mission of Catholic Education. This formation is developed in cooperation with Catholic universities. It answers a real need. The generation of headteachers who are now retiring had succeeded directly to religious people; so they had received, in a kind of osmosis, a basic formation. The generation coming today didn't have such a chance. It seems essential to plan, from now on, a follow-up to this formation under the form of a continuous formation during the first years of activity.

In conclusion: “*Such as you have been educated, you will educate*”. The French Catholic Education is at a turning: renewing of executives; sociology of pupils; the image of Catholic Education changes very quickly. Changes need time and energy. The headteachers and teachers will be able to answer the today's educational needs only if they have received the right formation. That's the reason why Catholic Education especially takes care of the contents of the formation and clearly says that it's not neutral but follows the way of faith: “*Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses*” (Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, Dec. 1975).

## II. FATHER ANGEL MIRANDA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF DON BOSCO EUROPE

Father Angel MIRANDA presents *an experience of teacher formation by the Salesian Fathers*.

The Salesian network has more than 700 educational and pastoral presences in Europe, among which there are different types of schools, working in different social and cultural contexts. Today, the main concern is the formation of lay people who must continue the mission and educational work of the religious founders: teachers, educators, headteachers, etc.

### New paradigms

Before speaking about formation, it seems useful to reflect on some new paradigms which influence life in a Catholic school today. We remark some shifts:

- from a school focused on the teachers' authority and teaching toward a school focused on learning processes;
- from a society based on ethic values toward an increasing interest for aesthetic values;
- from a school focused on intelligence development toward a knowledge society;
- from a linear and progressive teaching toward a school in which science is acquired in a circular manner, starting from a small core;
- from the importance of the presence of the educator near the pupils toward an on line teaching;
- from the sense and value of concrete reality toward virtual, abstract, ideal reality;
- from a philosophy in search of the reason and the sense of things toward a more important value given to sensations and feelings;
- from the importance of the contents toward a learning based on narrations;
- from a type of relations between young people insisting on the encounter and communication toward the simple fact to be together;
- from a timetable for each action: entertainment, study, family, ... toward a society “open” round the clock and every day of the week.

All these new paradigms oblige us to change our perspectives concerning teacher formation.

Furthermore, we also must underline the phenomenon of the new *areopagus*, these learning groups where everything is announced, where young people perceive the call of so many “unknown gods”: Play Station, MP3, CHAT... which pose so much questions to our educational and pastoral task. That's what some people call “the parallel schools”.

### The keys of the future for our school

- 1) The first key concerns “the being” of our school: its identity as a Catholic school.
- 2) The second key refers to “the making” of the school: the quality that makes it capable to answer the needs and expectations of pupils, families and society.

But this isn't sufficient. Moreover, identity and quality have to interact. Quality will not be real if it doesn't correspond to a concrete identity.

### A new school

All this leads us to consider the necessity to create a new school, able to hold a dialogue with the reality of people and of the society in which it works today:

- a school which will focus on the development of learning processes: to teach in a more personalised way;
- a school where information gives priority to the integral development of the person;
- a school which doesn't limit itself to a formation action but which encourages self-formation;
- a school which isn't only a place where young people come but also an atmosphere in which they live;
- a school in which the assimilation of concepts will be replaced by a learning through experience;
- a school which doesn't settle for forming "good pupils" today, but which thinks to educate "ex-good pupils" for life.

### The formation of teachers

What means "educate" today? What's an educator? What means "to be a witness" in a Catholic school? What's an educator according to the style of Don Bosco? We must re-interpret the role of the educator.

### A new formation philosophy?

When we, Salesians, speak about teacher training or formation, some aspects make us think to an evolution in the significance and philosophy leading the formation of our teaching staff. We represent this in two directions: "*We are coming from...*" and "*We are going to...*". We are coming from a conceptual formation (a series of themes developed in a summative way) and we are going to a formation with modular formative contents, to the acquisition of ideas, of personal and professional competences.

Interaction between competences and knowledge: the ability to use knowledge, understanding, practical and mental skills to effectively identify and solve the actual problems.

The professional and personal profile of our educators and trainers comprises 4 dimensions:

- (1) personal development,
- (2) professional development,
- (3) development as a believer, a Christian,
- (4) development as a person involved in a Salesian educational project.

(1) At the level of the personal dimension, there are different kinds of skills:

- personal: personal maturity, identification with the mission, vision and values of the school, esteem and application of the knowledge for both the personal property and the common good, development of critical mind, working culture.
- Social: leadership in the professional milieu, welcome ability, sense of participation, teamwork, solidarity.
- Opening to transcendence: ability to live and act with a sense of life, capacity to educate and to be witness.

(2) At the level of the professional dimension, in the pedagogical and didactical formation, we must take some aspects into account:

- Capacity of effective communication.
- To identify and understand the learning possibilities and difficulties.
- To favour cooperative learning.
- Professionalism and educational and teaching competence.

- (5) At the level of the Christian dimension, we propose a formation stimulating:
- believing identity,
  - presence as an active member of the Christian community,
  - fealty to the pastoral educational project of the school,
  - in an intercultural and interreligious climate,
  - opening to evangelisation and development, with priority to the poorest,
  - capacity to stimulate the dialogue faith – culture – life.
- (6) At the level the Salesian dimension, people involved in a Salesian educational project have to:
- identify with the mission, the vision and the values of our schools;
  - promote a concrete type of person, of school, of society and of Church;
  - accept and identify with the recipients, a preventive pedagogy and a Salesian spirituality.
  - And this within a pastoral and educational project which can be summarised in the following sentence: “*To evangelise by educating and to educate by evangelising*”.

As far as the recipients are concerned: there are generally specific meetings for new teachers, during the first two years of teaching. Formative activities are split in specific groups. Others are dedicated to leadership staffs: headteachers, executives, etc.

The methodology varies according to the recipients: training days, seminars, self-formation processes, etc.

There are a lot of difficulties: time and rhythm problems, balance between the compulsory and the optional, economic questions, balance between the contents and the concrete interests of teachers, etc. But, little by little, exchanges are developing at the transnational level between teachers of different European countries.

### **III. PROF. DR. PETER DAMIAN STILWELL, DIRECTOR OF THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF LISBON**

Professor STILWELL, Director of the Faculty of Theology of the Portuguese Catholic University in Lisbon, presents three experiences of *distance learning: eLearning*.

In his introduction Prof. STILWELL starts from the statement that lots of students arriving at the University have a lack in profound knowledge of the faith. The reason of it is that education is more and more fragmentarised. In the new economic context young people have more and more autonomy and mobility. The transmission of values, like it happened in the past, is no longer possible. We thus have to opt for new methods. One of these is distance learning.

Prof. STILWELL presents three examples developed in Lisbon:

#### (1) *Advanced Catechetical Synthesis*

This programme has been developed by the Faculty of Theology of the Lisbon Catholic University, in cooperation with the National Secretariat of Catholic Education and the Institute for Distance Education and Formation (IEFD).

It gives a spiritual and doctrinal synthesis of Christian faith through the guided walk of the Catholic Church's catechism. The project proposes a theological development of the doctrines and the historical and ecclesial context of the catechism formulation. It wants to assure a minimal knowledge of the Bible: the parts, the interpretation modes, etc. It wants to stimulate the student to discover the relic of the doctrinal patrimony in art and culture, and in the social doctrine of the Church.

The programme is made for leaders, teachers and catechists. It also gives, beside the catechism synthesis, some moments for discussion and prayer. About 270 people follow these modules during 10 months.

(2) Post-graduate and specialised course in Religious Sciences in the field of "Religious Tourism and Patrimony"

"Religious tourism" is increasing and requires specialised knowledge in the choice of journeys and the presentation of contents. This course gives great importance to art, anthropology, history, liturgy and theology, as well in the Christian tradition as in the Jewish or Muslim traditions.

(3) Master in Religious Sciences in the field of "Religious Patrimony and Cultural Transmission"

These studies explore architecture, plastic art, museological patrimony, but also the traditions and rites characterising the great historical religions.

Such a method of distance learning through the Internet gives the participants the opportunity to connect at every moment of the day. For further information: [www.ucp.pt](http://www.ucp.pt)

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## SECOND INTERVENTION OF FATHER JAMES HANVEY SJ

1. We use different languages, different discourses. A theological language is a coded language. Most of us work in a secularised world and can thus ask the question: in what does this concern our concrete situation? This language can be a “*mantra*”, a kind of ritual language in which we comfort ourselves. The question isn’t that we are not attentive, but being attentive isn’t really the same thing as being listening. In any case, we use a language that common people don’t use.
2. The process. Each of us has an own expertise, but rather adopt a passive attitude. We must invite the others to enter into our discourse. It’s important for us to listen to different visions because the Spirit doesn’t speak in a linear way.
3. Secularisation. We use the word “secularisation” in a too nuanced way. There is, in the one hand, the strong secularisation: religion has no place in it and isn’t necessary; religion may only exist at the private sphere. In the other hand, there is the soft secularisation: we are all involved in the same network, but we have different expectations.  
DE BOURDIEU, quoted by Mgr McKEOWN, mentions a static concept of “*habitus*”. The Church isn’t a static community. Our question is: how can we develop a dynamics in this community? How can we give shape to the values of this community? The non-ideological generation present in our schools today gives us an enormous chance.
4. An anthropologic question. A capitalist culture instrumentalises the human being. We don’t follow this way and start from the value of each person in oneself and in relation with the others. This is important for our scale of values and our own identity.
5. The ecclesial dimension. Schools take part in the mission of the Church. John FAUGHTON has made a survey on the European youth and he has distinguished two characteristics in young people:
  - (1) they are in search of extraordinary experiences
  - (2) and of authentic communities.
6. The question is not only to find leaders, but especially to form groups: we must give a large sense to formation in leadership.

Father HANVEY asks two questions for the last working groups:

1. How do we prepare for leadership: which are the key characteristics of such a formation?
2. Which are the main structures for developing and supporting leadership? Which links must exist between education and formation, bishop and Church?

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**REPORT ON THE WORKSHOPS**  
**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

**ENGLISH SPEAKING GROUP**

**President: Mgr O'REILLY (IRL) – Secretary: Ms Oona STANNARD (E&W)**

1. The characteristics of the leadership and the leader in the Catholic school

- Persuading force
- Decision force: one must be able to consult, but at the end of the day one must be able to take a decision and to act.
- Specialised knowledge: an appropriate knowledge and vocabulary, the faculty to link the histories with one another, and the confidence to use knowledge and experience.
- Communication skills: capability to explain the uniqueness of the school; capacity to clearly put forward the evangelical values, in order to testify, to clarify.
- To be visionary, but the vision of the “night”! Capacity to convince from the community standpoint. And to help people on the way of an “identified elsewhere”.
- To be able to motivate and inspire: leadership qualities must be developed in the children through living these qualities.
- To be able to work in team and to offer a delegating leadership model. Since leaders must offer passion and, at the same time, work with their head and their heart, they aren't clones, but there's place for individuality and personality.
- We must present leadership to young teachers as an objective and we must guide them towards the kind of leadership we expect from them. We must encourage the teams to use their complementary competences in a delegated leadership.
- Leaders must be able to develop their competences and to realise their vision; a more practical than theoretical activity.
- Relational aptitudes: the leader must be able to make a choice, to take decisions.
- Adaptation faculty: to be able to adapt oneself to the permanent change, but without any compromise on the central aspect of the mission.
- To have an ecumenical mentality: to want dialogue and to be ready for dialogue with other religions.

2. Structures the leaders of Catholic schools can support

- We can ask each school to evaluate its own support to leadership and to formation in the school.
- The headteacher has the “right” to expect a good leadership model from the diocese, as delegating leadership and team work.
- We must remind the leader of a school that his work is considered as precious by the diocese and that he can feel it through concrete signs.
- The leader must be supported by the school governing bodies.
- The Catholic educational project, the values and the mission of the school must be publicly recognised and supported at the adequate level within the school (and by the external structures of the school, too), in order to enable the leaders to lead with full clearness about their practices, without being afraid to offend anyone, without being obliged to meet expectations as if values had to be neutral.
- It was suggested that the Catholic school and/or those who work in it should annually receive recognition: this should be given only if, every year, a recognised formation is developed in the school.

**FRENCH SPEAKING GROUP**

**President: Mgr JOUSTEN (B) – Secretary: Mr Paul MALARTRE (F)**

We heard in the lecture on Monday morning that the Catholic school implies a community, and that it wants to assure at the same time cultural development, development of social solidarity and ecclesial development. We thus wonder if the Christian community forms a “core”, such as the religions present as a community in our schools in the past. This community, above all the one of the teachers, is naturally marked by secularisation.

Will the project have its actors? It's precisely the community that can generate a leader, the headteacher. We don't expect from him/her to be a manager, but to take the responsibility of the educational project. We wish the headteacher will incarnate authority because he/she is recognised by the others as a witness. This community has the mission to live the Christian project with adults and pupils. It can offer to its members, and particularly to the teachers, the possibility to discover little by little the importance of the Gospel as a source and lightening of this educational project and of the vision on the pupil.

## **GERMAN SPEAKING GROUP**

**President; Mgr SIEBLER**

Which are the challenges the Catholic school is faced with? Our Catholic schools are not only formation schools; they also have a Christian image as basis. The Catholic school respects the different talents and competences of pupils, and never makes a pupil be an object. It promotes a living community composed of parents, pupils and teachers.

In post-communist countries particularly, the culture consisting in interesting parents to the school life isn't yet very developed and must thus be stimulated.

## **ITALIAN SPEAKING GROUP**

**(Romania, Poland, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy)**

Some points which were reminded:

1. The regulations in the framework of which Catholic schools have to work are very diverse from a State to another, but also in a same State.
2. The States want neutral teachers. But it's useful to remind to the governments that Catholic schools are establishments of public service organised by private people, but which must be funded as public service.
3. Contrary to their bishops, the religious congregations want to be autonomous in their decisions (for instance about the closure of a Catholic school).
4. Methodologically it's advisable to make a distinction between (a) initial training of teachers for Catholic schools; (b) in-service training of teachers who are already working in Catholic schools and (c) training of teachers who are new in a Catholic school.

### I. What qualities do we expect from the leaders?

- (1) To be able to make a synthesis between professional aspects (the competences) and the reality of the faith experience (the "being").
- (2) To understand the values of the act to educate and, at the same time, the methods to realise these values.

### II. Structures and methods

- (1) To promote relations with the pupils and the families in order to link the heart and intelligence of the person.
- (2) The faith of the teacher must be nourished by a stable relation with the ecclesial community and thus also with the bishop and the local community.
- (3) Teachers, who are recruited on the basis of their professional competences and their faith, must be supported by their own associations. And that because teachers in service in Catholic schools may not be only a formation object, but they must also form themselves. An institution less valorises the "being" than an association or a local community do.
- (4) The future teachers of a Catholic school, still in formation, must see the formation they received in a Faculty of Theology of a Catholic University, recognised by the State.
- (5) Faculties of Theology must be interested in the formation in order to improve the quality of it.
- (6) Regular meetings between the bishop and the people responsible for the Catholic school must be recommended. And per diocese, special days should be dedicated to the Catholic school, for instance at the beginning of the school year.
- (7) It is proposed to send the reports on these meetings to the Bishops' Conferences in order to enable the bishops to discuss these reports internally.

## SPANISH SPEAKING GROUP

### I. How do we prepare for leadership and which are the key characteristics of it?

1. Identification of the mission, the vision and values of the Catholic school.
2. Coaching and team work.
3. Reading life in a positive way with opening toward renewal and change.
4. Communication skills.
5. Sense of the transnational and exchange.

### II. Structures and links

1. All what promotes self-respect.
2. To promote qualities and clearly express the functions.
3. To work to formation in a network of institutions.
4. Institutional delegation.
5. To develop aptitudes for communication: information, languages, media, ICT.

## REPORT ON THE LAST WORKSHOPS Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005

## ENGLISH SPEAKING GROUP

### I. Content of the formation of Catholic schools' leaders

- Gospel.
- Basic principles like evangelical values and Catholic ethos.
- History of the Church.
- Main saints.
- Religious orders active in the field of education.
- Legal questions.
- Culture of the proper country.
- Youth culture and adapted didactical methods. A cultural diagnosis of key competences; this to be able to read the signs of life and to be politically attentive, as well in the Church as in the world.
- Competence in matters of moral argumentation, logics and communication formation. Competence to live oneself values, to answer to questions concerning values.
- The example of the Web Site of the K.U.Leuven ([www.thomas.be](http://www.thomas.be)) is mentioned: dialogue around some problems, for secondary schools, "a way to look".
- Experience for developing and guiding different liturgies and to transmit that to a team.
- To be able to make tradition accessible in a modern context. Aptitudes to facilitate the sensibilisation to this tradition.
- Aptitudes to reflect individually or in group.
- Inspired by the example of Slovakia, where all the Catholic schools must yearly develop a formation plan presented to the signature of the bishops, the members of the working group recommend a yearly evaluation of the school, which would sum up all what is above mentioned, in order to create an active education community.
- The question was asked: how to form and support non-Catholic teachers?
- There is a need for a diocesan office to support the schools and develop, lead and support activities for the schools.

### II. Which role for the CEEC?

1. Isn't this a mission for the CEEC and the CCEE as well? Both organisations should be able to make a description of the teacher's ideal which could be strongly supported by the Vatican.
2. The CCEE could give a mandate to the CEEC for what should be done.
3. It was said that for the CEEC members also, time has come to form the bishops.

4. Is there no risk for us to “rediscover the wheel”; not using all what is already available?
5. To establish a Web Site with the documents of the Vatican and to create links to the Web Sites of all the countries with their documents and some specific documents.

### III. What kinds of exchanges are possible between countries?

1. Electronic exchanges.
2. Assistance by some national secretariats to countries where a national secretariat of Catholic education doesn't yet exist.
3. To publish the possibilities offered in the framework of the Socrates and Erasmus Programmes, and the opportunities to go studying in Catholic schools in other countries, or to go teaching in other countries.
4. Continuity in the contacts, in the follow-up of personnel and leaders.
5. Need for a strong leadership in the CCEE (there are several reference points between CCEE and CEEC).
6. To recommend the Bratislava initiative.

## **FRENCH SPEAKING GROUP**

**(Belgium, Romania, Greece, Hungary, France)**

- I. It should be useful to realise a module on “what is a Catholic school in Europe” and this, in the cultural context of accelerated change. We must prepare teachers to this change. We should focus on a humanism referring to Christianity. Such a module should also give a *status quaestionis* of the situation at cultural, religious and social levels: what kind of pupils do the teachers have in our schools?
- II. Romania stresses the importance of trainer training for the generations who have known 50 years of communist system, like in Croatia, Slovenia, Romania and Slovakia. In this last country, the identity of the Catholic school still remains linked to this past.
- III. To develop an educational project in co-responsibility.
- IV. Formation of leaders as competent and motivated actors.

## **GERMAN SPEAKING GROUP**

**President; Mgr SIEBLER**

In the second workshop, the German speaking participants took as theme the personality of the teacher and the profile of the headteacher.

The ecclesial governing bodies must see to find headteachers who contribute to the profile of the Catholic school by their inner commitment. They must both be competent as teachers and able to convince as Christians. The Church is responsible for their continuous formation also in the religious domain. Communities and dioceses must, with their responsables, including the bishops, show interest for the challenges facing the Catholic schools. They should also express clearly their appreciation.

## **ITALIAN SPEAKING GROUP**

**(Italy, Albania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland)**

### I. Which contents?

- Knowledge in management and organisation.
- To have the opportunity of working to an educational project for a Catholic school.
- Relational competences and communication skills with pupils, parents and teachers.
- Knowledge of basic documents like “*Gravissimum Educationis*”, elements of the codex of the Canon Law, documents of the Bishops' Conference.
- To complete professional formation with an ecclesial, spiritual basis and a living faith.

## II. Actions for the CEEC

- To send a letter to the Bishops' Conferences mentioning the recommendations of the present seminar.
- To disseminate the acts of the seminar. To gather and disseminate information on programmes organised in the different dioceses.
- To develop a Web Site for disseminating the documents.
- To promote exchanges between institutes.

III. In the case of multicultural and multilingual dioceses, a partnership should almost be compulsory (for Romania, for instance, with Spain and Italy).

## **SPANISH SPEAKING GROUP**

### I. Integral formation

- of the person
- in the pastoral pedagogical project
- in the sense of belonging to the local Church
- in spirituality, Christian life and testimony
- in pastoral formation
- and some technical elements such as the taking of decisions.

### II. Methodology

- exchange of good practices
- transnational organisations
- bilateral exchanges and agreements
- preparation seminars on concrete didactical means of formation
- to disseminate the good practices

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**CONCLUSIONS**  
**By Mgr Cesare NOSIGLIA, Bishop of Vicenza, Italy**

**General conclusions**

1. To create and develop a network between the different training institutes.
2. To support formation.
3. To establish links between secondary schools and universities.
4. To give teachers a continuous training.
5. To live an educational project referring to Christ.
6. To create a fund for the schools in need.
7. To transform the school into a community forming the integral person.

**Practical conclusions**

1. Each Catholic school must have a priest as reference point with the parish.
2. Educators must listen to their pupils, organise for them some meetings around spirituality, some retreats, and hold a special diocesan day the Catholic schools.
3. At the European level, this kind of initiative must be repeated. A letter must be sent to the Bishops' Conferences with the mention of the necessary contents of formation and the suggestions made during this seminar.
4. To send the report to everybody.
5. To gather and disseminate the good examples of formation.
6. To be open to ICT.

**In the absence of Mgr NOSIGLIA at the closing session,**

**CONCLUSION**  
**by Mgr Luc VAN LOOZ, Bishop of Ghent, Belgium**

Mgr VAN LOOY regrets the absence of the Chairman of the Seminar, Mgr NOSIGLIA, who had to go for other obligations.

He says it should be very useful to continue this dialogue with Mgr MILLER. In fact, it should be good to have another opportunity to exchange with him about his vision and the starting point of the schools, namely the hard reality.

As far as the working method is concerned, it should probably be interesting to reserve more time for discussions in such a meeting. That would guarantee a better outcome.

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