

# THE CATHOLIC EDUCATOR

*A Quarterly Journal of the Catholic Education Foundation*



Volume 20 – Winter 2017

## *In This Edition*

<i>A Word From Our Editor</i> <i>Rev. Peter M.J. Stravinskas</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Conference At Seton Hall To Focus On The Role Of The Priest In Today's Catholic School</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>Resurrecting Catholic Schools</i> <i>Chester E. Finn, Jr.</i>	<i>Page 10</i>
<i>Righteousness Exalts A Nation</i> <i>James H. Toner</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
<i>Ph.D.s Enjoy Teaching Elementary and High-School Students</i> <i>Eddie O'Neill</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
<i>Fixing Social Insecurity</i> <i>Robert Royal</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
<i>Where Is The Religious Instruction?</i> <i>Anthony Esolen</i>	<i>Page 18</i>
<i>Celebrating the Gift of Catholic Schools</i> <i>Cardinal Donald Wuerl</i>	<i>Page 20</i>
<i>What to Do About Honey Baby Dolly</i> <i>Tom Jay</i>	<i>Page 21</i>
<i>Trump Issues Statement for National Catholic Schools Week</i> <i>Deacon Greg Kandra</i>	<i>Page 25</i>

***This Football Camp Encourages Your Son To Pray And Go To Mass*** **Page 26**  
*Philip Kosloski*

---

***Catholic Schools Week Address*** **Page 28**  
*Samantha Carlowicz*

---

***Lord, To Whom Shall We Go?*** **Page 31**  
***My Catholic Grade School Is Where It All Began***  
*Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan*

---

***Medford Eighth-Grade Boys Get An Idea*** **Page 35**  
***Of What It's Like To Be A Priest For A Day***  
*Mary Stadnyk*

---

***Closings Aren't The Full Catholic School Story*** **Page 36**  
*Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan*

---

***California High School Makes Millions On Snap IPO*** **Page 38**  
*Karen Gilchrist*

---

***Building Society – An Interview With Rev. Michael McMahon*** **Page 40**  
*The Angelus*

---

***Bishop Flores: What Every Catholic Needs For School*** **Page 43**  
*Patrick Reilly*

---

***How Trump Can Expand School Choice*** **Page 47**  
*Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan*

---

***How to Save the Soul of Our Catholic Schools*** **Page 49**  
*Jared Staudt*

---

***Catholic Education Matters*** **Page 53**  
*Randall Smith*

## A Word From Our Editor

First, I would like to call to the attention of our readers the interview I gave to *Catholic World Report* on our third annual seminar on the role of the priest in today's Catholic school; that item immediately follows this editorial. Please spread the word about what Cardinal O'Malley calls "this important initiative," designed to help bishops, priests and seminarians become more effective advocates for Catholic education and valued participants in the process.

Second, I am sure our cover grabbed your attention! These are the eighth-grade boys of St. Mary of the Lakes School in Medford, New Jersey. The pastor, Father Daniel Swift, is obviously proactive in terms of vocation promotion and also on behalf of his parish school. Let's hope and pray that at least one of these mini-priests makes it to the altar. See the story behind the photo on page 35.

Which becomes the perfect segue into the substance of my present offering: We have to be more forthright about the toxic nature of the government schools (euphemistically called "public" schools). It makes no sense to suppose that parents will expend thousands of dollars on a Catholic school education if our institutions are just a bit nicer or have a "holier" look to them because of a crucifix or Marian statue. No, our schools are – and must be – fundamentally different, in the literal meaning of the word "fundamental." Pope Pius XI saw this clearly and enunciated it succinctly in his 1925 encyclical on the Christian education of youth, *Divini Illius Magistri*: "... the so-called 'neutral' school, from which religion is excluded, is contrary to the fundamental principles of education. Such a school, moreover, cannot exist in practice; it is bound to become irreligious."

Several recent events in my life have coalesced to make me strengthen my conviction in this regard. Permit me to share some of them with you.

During Catholic Schools Week this year, I was invited to preach at a suburban parish on the importance of the parish school, which I gladly did. It was pretty much the standard homily I deliver on such occasions; it received a rather favorable response from the generality of the parishioners, many of whom indicated they have never realized how strong the Church's promotion of Catholic schools is, particularly as reflected in canon law, the teachings of all the popes of the modern era, and the Second Vatican Council (I would be happy to share the text with any interested persons). However, I was attacked (and that is the only word possible to describe the situation) by two government-school teachers and two sets of parents. The teachers took grave offense at my negative assessment of the government schools, asserting that I didn't know what I was talking about. One set of parents declared that "no one is going to tell me how to raise my children"; the other opined that their children were getting a fine education in the local school, period. All of them behaved in a vicious and disrespectful manner. I must say that in forty years as a priest, these experiences ranked among the highest for venom. The possibility for such displays of push-back and anger, of course, are the primary reason why priests and bishops are afraid to confront the elephant in the middle of the living room.

My editorial in our last issue of *The Catholic Educator*, sharing the results of the latest study from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate reporting the negative effect of science education in the government schools on the faith-life of Catholic children, was re-published in a diocesan paper. A mother wrote to me that suggesting that she was putting the salvation of her children in jeopardy by having them attend those schools caused her great anguish and, in her judgment, was very “unfair.”

Now, let’s take a look at some anecdotal evidence for my assertions about the malevolent influence of the government schools.

Interestingly, at the last Mass of the parish where I had preached, a man approached me to say that he wanted to validate my critique of the local government school. He serves as a CCD teacher for the Hispanic children in the parish and was shocked by a revelation of one of his pupils – a fourth-grader. The boy said that, before putting pen to paper for a recent test, he made the sign of the cross. The teacher publicly upbraided the boy: “You can’t do that in a public school. Besides, that’s the superstitious behavior of your grandmother; that’s not what modern Americans do!” So much for the two teachers’ assertion that I was a carpet-bagger coming into their beloved school district with no knowledge of the local scene.

In mid-April, the vice-principal of a high school in Downingtown, a Philadelphia suburb, was caught on camera harassing two youngsters protesting the abortion holocaust on the sidewalk in front of the school. Quite ignorantly, the administrator declared that the teens had no right to “upset my children (that is, high-schoolers) with your signs” because the protesters were on “public property.” His ignorance of the Constitution and settled law would be bad enough, let alone his denial of basic biology in screaming that a fetus “is not a human being, just a collection of cells,” but he then descended into a profanity-laden (“F-bombs” included) screed against the young people, along with the assertion that “Jesus has no place in a public school.” Of course, on that score, he was dead-right.

In the past couple of years, I have – for the first time in my academic career – been involved in education in a non-Catholic environment, teaching in a community college and serving as a supervisor for student teachers in a variety of settings, including government schools.

In a kindergarten class last week, I espied a book entitled, “The Many Different Kinds of Families.” Need one imagine the “kinds” described for the little ones?

In a fourth-grade classroom with seventeen children, I encountered four adults “in charge.” The overall effect? Total chaos! And to think that my smallest class in grammar school was in an eighth-grade class of 68 students, with one nun (who was also the principal). If “order is Heaven’s first law,” we are in serious trouble.

One of the main arguments in favor of suburban government schools is that they are quite “good” (presumably unlike their inner-city counterparts, for which no defense can be made). In a high school social studies class dealing with the Civil War, the entire session was a film on slavery, with a follow-up exercise: Write an essay pretending to be either an abolitionist or

slaveholder. The students knew none of the facts of the era and conflict – only a politically correct aspect of a very complex moment in American history.

Teaching in a community college has been an eye-opener and has convinced me that I have been living in a “fool’s paradise” in my years in Catholic schools. Ninety-nine per cent of the students I have met in the college are the graduates of well-funded suburban government high schools. The ignorance is abysmal: in a discussion of political philosophy, not a single student had ever heard of Winston Churchill or of the Magna Carta; most cannot write or decipher cursive script; the majority never learned the multiplication tables or the parts of speech. Encouragingly, the students – in the main – know that they know very little and resent the fact that, in their own words, they have been taught mostly by “idiots.”

For those who still think suburban government schools are fine, I heartily recommend the documentary film, “Waiting for Superman.” It never mentions Catholic schools; it simply shares data on the almost inevitable alternative.

Where does that leave us in terms of Catholic children?

The Ordinary of a major archdiocese – and a staunch supporter of Catholic schools – recently responded to criticism of his support by declaring: “I have no problem with public schools. Eighty per cent of the children in my diocese go to public schools!” Bishops like John Hughes and John Lancaster Spalding of the nineteenth century would have blushed to have to make that admission.

An inner-city grade school in which I am supervising a student teacher has 600 children, ninety per cent of whom are Hispanic (and thus, mostly Catholic, at least nominally). Meanwhile, two blocks away is a Catholic school with 200 children – and 200 empty seats. What’s wrong with this scenario? As one bishop frequently says, “Why are there more black Baptist children in our schools than Hispanic Catholics?”

As I say in my “promo” homily for Catholic schools, “an education devoid of God is an anti-education.” Hence, no surprise that not only is the moral compass off but even the “secular” elements of education are off-base and largely ineffectual.

Not infrequently, parents will counter by noting that tuition is “unaffordable” or that the local school’s facilities are “superb.” Those questions can be addressed only after we have dealt with the primary issue.

Unless and until we are comfortable in asserting – without fear of contradiction or retribution – that the government schools endanger the souls of Catholic children, we cannot expect to fill our schools. The bishops and priests of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were not afraid to preach that truth – and the result was the blossoming of our schools because parents and serious Catholics were brought to see the reasonableness of the assertion. So, simply put, Catholics cannot and should not support “our good public schools.”

Rev. Peter M.J. Stravinskis, Editor

## **Conference at Seton Hall To Focus on the Role of the Priest in Today's Catholic School**

The Catholic Education Foundation is hosting its third annual seminar on the role of the priest in today's Catholic school at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey (a ten-minute ride from Newark Airport) from July 18 to July 20. The intended audience is bishops, priests and seminarians and is based on the conviction of Father Peter Stravinkas, executive director of CEF, that the viability of Catholic schools is directly proportionate to the presence and activity of priests. Cardinal Sean O'Malley, OFM Cap, Archbishop of Boston and CEF board member concurs: "This is a most needed initiative, and I hope for a healthy response from the dioceses." Topics being covered in the three-day program include: conciliar and papal teaching on Catholic education; the history of Catholic education in the United States; the priestly presence in the school; financial concerns; models of governance and best practices.

In addition to Father Stravinkas, other presenters are: Keith Borchers of the Evangelium Consulting Group; Dr. Thomas Burnford, president of the National Catholic Education Association; Sr. Agnes Cousins, religion department chairman, Charlotte Catholic High School; Mary Pat Donoghue of the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education; Dr. Maureen Gillette, dean of the College of Education and Human Services, Seton Hall University; Vera and Richard Hough, Catholic school parents; Most Rev. Arthur Kennedy, Ph.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Boston; Dr. Constance McCue, director of the Catholic School Leadership Program, Seton Hall University; Most Rev. James Massa, Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn; Stephen Perla, superintendent of schools of

the Diocese of Fall River; Anthony Pienta of the Philanthropy Roundtable; Rev. Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, former principal/vicar general, Archdiocese of Indianapolis; Charles Taylor; former superintendent of schools, Diocese of Gaylord.

Through a cooperative effort with the College of Education of Seton Hall University, participants will also be able to earn graduate credit. Catholic World Report recently corresponded with Father Stravinkas about the conference and current challenges faced by Catholic schools.

CWR: What was the main impetus for beginning this workshop for priests on Catholic education three years ago?

Fr. Stravinkas: The involvement of the priest in the school has been a pet project of mine for years, however, four years ago at the fall meeting of the U.S. bishops, a report on Catholic schools was presented to the body of bishops, in which the essential role of the priest was highlighted. Actually, the report urged bishops to be especially attentive to this issue; that call to action motivated me to put together this program, which has been very successful. We have had priests from more than thirty dioceses over the past two years. As registration has begun for this year, we already have three new dioceses represented. Clearly, we are fulfilling a genuine need of the Church.

CWR: Fr. Stravinkas, you are an alumnus of Seton Hall University. What is the significance of this workshop taking place this year at the nation's oldest and largest diocesan university, which is also the home of one of the nation's most historic seminaries?

Fr. Stravinskias: Truth be told, I am a triple alumnus: a bachelor's degree in classical languages and French; a master's degree in school administration; a master's degree in biblical theology.

The University, very obviously, is named for Mother Seton, a prime mover in the parochial school movement of the United States and foundress of the Sisters of Charity (who taught me up through the fifth grade); the University was founded in 1856 by Bishop James Roosevelt Bayley, Mother Seton's nephew. In its long and distinguished history, Seton Hall has trained tens of thousands of Catholic school teachers and thousands of priests. Indeed, the University still boasts of a large contingent of priests serving in administration and teaching.

We have made a point of having our seminars at sites that have a seminary, precisely to underscore the critical connection between the priest and the Catholic school.

CWR: What are positive characteristics of the diocesan Catholic school systems represented by the participants at this year's conference?

Fr. Stravinskias: All of the speakers are veteran Catholic educators with a track-record of a strong commitment to Catholic identity and serious accomplishments in the apostolate of Catholic schools. In other words, the seminar participants are not going to be in daily contact with "ivory tower" theorists but with people who will be speaking from experience and conviction.

CWR: As in years past, you have an impressive array of important speakers at

this year's conference. Can you highlight the contributions of one or two for our readers?

Fr. Stravinskias: We are very delighted to have among our presenters this year the president of the National Catholic Education Association, as well as the dean of Seton Hall's College of Education and the director of their Catholic school leadership program. A new feature this time around will be an "alumni panel," that is, priests who have participated in the past and who will discuss how what they learned led to concrete implementation in their own particular apostolates, whether that be as parish priests or full-time teachers.

CWR: What are some of your concrete recommendations for how diocesan bishops can improve not only the Catholic identity and mission of their schools but likewise to encourage the pro-active support of Catholic education on the part of their priests, especially pastors?

Fr. Stravinskias: Every study demonstrates clearly, as well as the direct experience of principals, parents and bishops, that the parish priest is key to the success of a Catholic school. The priest can make or break a school. Therefore, the priest must be convinced of the critical place of our Catholic schools in ensuring the vitality of the Church in our country. I would also make two appeals to bishops: first, that they only appoint as pastors to parishes with schools priests who are totally committed to the project of Catholic education; secondly, that they re-evaluate their own willingness to assign priests to full-time teaching, especially in our high schools (particularly due to the sensitive nature of those years in surfacing and fostering priestly vocations).



CWR: What degree programs already exist that you would recommend to a priest interested in working in the field of Catholic education?

Fr. Stravinkas: Seton Hall has a fine program in this regard, and Dr. McCue is going to share information about it with our seminar participants. The University also gives a generous tuition reduction to clergy, religious and Catholic school teachers – another sign of its commitment to the mission of the Church.

CWR: What role, if any, do seminarians and newly ordained priests play in the life of the Catholic school?

Fr. Stravinkas: I began my teaching career as a first-year college seminarian and have spent my entire priestly life (now going on forty years) in the Church's education apostolate. I happen to subscribe to a policy that many dioceses had years ago (and which, regrettably, most have abandoned in recent years) whereby all newly-ordained priests spent their first five years as full-time high school teachers. It is my considered

judgement that if a priest can teach high schoolers, he can do anything after that as that work requires one to be on his toes, to be prepared, to be present – all skills “transferrable” to any other priestly work.

I should also note that I can happily report that the seminarians and young priests I know are intensely interested in our schools and want to gain the knowledge – and confidence – to be effective ministers in the school setting.

CWR: How can readers help?

Fr. Stravinkas: First of all, pray for the continued success of our efforts. Second, pass the word to priests who could benefit from this experience. Third, provide a scholarship (we have kept the cost at \$500 for the past three years) to a priest whose parish or school might not have the financial means to send him. In any and all of these ways, you will be sharing in the promotion and growth of our schools.

For further information and registration, visit CEF's website:  
[www.catholiceducationfoundation.com](http://www.catholiceducationfoundation.com).

Catholic World Report

[http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Blog/5596/conference\\_at\\_seton\\_hall\\_to\\_focus\\_on\\_the\\_role\\_of\\_the\\_priest\\_in\\_todays\\_catholic\\_school.aspx](http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Blog/5596/conference_at_seton_hall_to_focus_on_the_role_of_the_priest_in_todays_catholic_school.aspx)

## Resurrecting Catholic Schools

The two most important changes in American education policy over the past several decades have been the expansion of school choice and changes to school accountability. So far, they've generally been good for our country and our kids. Yet they've largely left Catholic schools behind—and the leaders of Catholic education haven't tried very hard either to resist these changes or to take advantage of them.

Resistance, mind you, probably would have been futile, although Catholic educators could surely have done more to help shape these changes. But mostly they stood by while change happened. And while those changes were happening in public policy, Catholic schools, overall, seemed like victims of a slow but serious wasting disease.

The statistics are glum. Private school enrollments have declined overall in the past decade, but Catholic school enrollments have declined faster—and started declining earlier. School closures abound. The remaining schools are often located in places where few Catholics live. Many kids attending them, particularly in urban areas, are not themselves Catholic. A lot of Catholic parents no longer feel strongly that their children should attend parochial schools for purposes of religious formation. The economics of the schools have become extremely stressed. Their governance, management, infrastructure, and technology have lagged other sectors. And major national organizations that used to promote Catholic schools seem pretty much to have given up the ghost—perhaps even the Holy Ghost—and accepted decline.

The news isn't all bad, however, and there are steps that leaders of this sector can take to reverse course. Catholic schools are, for example, doing better in places with bona fide voucher programs. Same with tax credit scholarships and such. So those anxious about the future of this sector ought to push hard to launch and expand such financing arrangements—something that may be easier given the new school-choice and voucher energy that's visible in the Trump administration.

Private actions have also proliferated in support of Catholic schools. New York City's Partnership for Inner-City Education is a grand example of this, as is the burgeoning Cristo Rey network. So, too, Seton Education Partners, the Drexel Fund, and various activities associated with Notre Dame's ACE initiative.

Along with boosting schools with better curricula, leadership, management practices, and cash, the best of these revival efforts also feature newfound transparency about educational outcomes. Transparency can be painful, but it's necessary in an era of results-based accountability for schools, an era when we look to see how well a school's pupils are learning and no longer settle for judging schools by their inputs, intentions, or reputation. Private schools of every sort—the pricey independent kind as well as the inner-city, faith-based kind—have lagged way behind public schools in this realm, mostly still relying on tradition, the grapevine, simplistic school-rating schemes and, perhaps, religion to attract families.

New York's Partnership for Inner-City Education deserves special kudos for its transparency. Its leaders and supporters have

managed not only to run better schools than some of their peers, but they're also much more open about results, even when those results aren't as strong as everyone wants. They've also made explicit comparisons of how their six schools are doing in relation to the district and charter schools of the city and the state.

Bizarrely, however, they can't compare their school results with other private or Catholic schools in New York because transparency hasn't reached those sectors. We've no idea whether those other schools are making academic gains, running in place, or getting worse. Someone may know, but certainly not the public or even the parents of their students.

There's a bit more sunshine at the national level, thanks to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which has striven for decades to get a viable sample of private-school students to report their achievement at least in reading and math in grades 4 and 8. Shamefully, NAEP hasn't had sufficient cooperation from private schools to yield a decent sample since 2003, but enough Catholic schools have been willing to participate that we do have some data for their students across the country as a whole—and the results are promising. In eighth grade, for example, in both reading and math, as recently as 2015, pupils in Catholic schools outperformed their public-school peers by a solid margin—more so in reading than in math. If you look at trendlines, the gains made by Catholic

schools over the past decade or so have roughly paralleled those of public schools. More analysis needs to be done here, of course, because the kids aren't identical and it's possible that student characteristics and school selection effects rather than instructional effectiveness explain much of the achievement track record. But NAEP has other limits, too. It can't tell parents (or school shoppers) anything about individual schools or clusters of schools, so it doesn't solve the private sector's transparency problem. (Several states with voucher programs have done more by way of obligating voucher-aided schools to participate in state assessments.)

Increasingly, the coin of the education realm is going to be a school's educational effectiveness, not its reputation, its price tag, the names of its illustrious alums, or how hard it is to get into. I don't suggest for a moment that test scores are an adequate gauge of a school's effectiveness. There are lots more that parents want to know, and not all of it can be quantified. But parents aren't the only consumers of this kind of information. Teachers and school leaders need to be driven by evidence of what is and isn't working. So should policymakers and donors. So, too, the high schools and colleges that kids then move into. The large point is to shift our thinking from schools' reputations and past histories to their present-day effectiveness in producing young people ready to succeed and prosper and be good citizens and parents in twenty-first-century America.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

[http://www.catholicliberaleducation.org/beyond-the-test-newsletter/teachers-are-the-proper-assessors?utm\\_source=Beyond+the+Test+--](http://www.catholicliberaleducation.org/beyond-the-test-newsletter/teachers-are-the-proper-assessors?utm_source=Beyond+the+Test+--)

## Righteousness Exalts A Nation

Karl Marx thought of culture as the superstructure of economics. He was, of course, mistaken. I think, though, that we can use his observation in a different, and helpful, manner. Politics is the superstructure of culture. A good political order follows from a virtuous foundation in the lives of the people. (Proverbs 14:34, 29:18).

As the American Founders understood, we cannot reasonably expect “good politics” (which is the wedding of justice with power) unless there is a strong moral sense in the people. The Catechism puts it succinctly: “The social duty of Christians is to respect and awaken in each man the love of the true and the good. . . . Thus, the Church shows forth the kingship of Christ over all creation and in particular over human societies.” (#2105) A Catholic theory of politics is simply stated: We do not wish to control the apparatus of the State, but we must invariably and insistently speak truth to power.

There’s a reason that the First Commandment comes first. Abjure God, and we abjure sound teaching. (Psalms 111:10) The Church has the overarching duty of anamnesis – of constantly reminding us of supernatural reality. Deference to that reality is the hallmark of the good political order.

In *Veritatis Splendor*, St. John Paul II wrote that “only a morality which acknowledges certain norms as valid always and for everyone, with no exception, can guarantee the ethical foundation of social existence.” The defense of that absolute truth must begin with real education – with learned, orthodox, and engaging professors at

genuinely Catholic institutions. We know that good education is not itself sufficient to ensure a life of virtue; but without it, virtue is lost and with it the prospect of a good political order. We get the institutions, the representatives in Congress, and the political prospects we deserve.

Our politics is often deranged because so is our education. Therein lies the root of the crisis: we cannot have good politics until we have wise and virtuous citizens, and the Church must be instrumental in producing them. After four years of learning at a Catholic college, the graduate ought to be able to call what is good, good; and what is evil, evil. Fail in that regard and very little else truly matters.

One of the great questions of political science is: Who will guard the guardians? With equal urgency we must ask, Who will catechize the catechists? Our education and formation are too often rooted in the poisoned soil of the profane culture around us. We have heard lies so often that we have difficulty in hearing the still, small voice of Truth.

In 1959, St. John XXIII saw the emerging problem: “All the evils which poison men and nations and trouble so many hearts have a single cause and a single source: ignorance of the truth – and at times even more than ignorance, a contempt for truth and a reckless rejection of it. Thus arise all manner of errors, which enter the recesses of men’s hearts and the bloodstream of human society as would a plague. These errors turn everything upside down: they menace individuals and society itself.”

This “contempt for truth” has only worsened in the past half-century, and it has wormed its way into the minds of too many who are charged with speaking with and for the Church and of teaching wisely and well. With the ignorant teaching the ignorant, how are we to do what Pope Leo XIII called us to in his efforts to develop modern Catholic social teaching: The Church, he said, must “make strong endeavor that the power of the Gospel may pervade the law and institutions of the nations.”

When we reform our “Catholic” institutions, we may, please God, then be able to hold our self-proclaimed Catholic politicians to account. (cf. Wisdom 6:8) With restored Catholic education, we may begin to build a culture which can spawn a good and even noble political order. Such a political order,

James. H. Toner

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2017/01/15/righteousness-exalts-a-nation/>

at the behest of its citizens, calls good, good; it calls evil, evil.

Marx, indeed, was wrong, for politics emerges, not from high finance, but, rather, from the womb of what we cherish – or of what we reject; of what we hold sacred – or of what we substitute for the sacred. We will not have moral politics until we have a culture in which the good, the true, and the beautiful are known, defended, instilled. “Catholic education” will be a chimera until our students hear the truth that will set them free. When we truly educate, we form consciences. We will then be developing citizens who can render to God what is God’s and to Caesar what is Caesar’s. We will then know what freedom truly is (cf. Evangelium Vitae #96) – and we may, with restored purpose, pray that it will long reign in the land that we love.

## Ph.D.s Enjoy Teaching Elementary and High-School Students

It's a weekday morning in Atlanta, Georgia, and Nancy Herlihy is preparing her lecture for fourth-graders at Queen of Angels Catholic School.

"I love my job and all the uniqueness it offers," said Herlihy, who completed her doctorate in art education in August 2016. "I always tell people, 'I get to play all day.' The wonders and excitement of my students as they hear what they will be doing for the day is delightful."

Herlihy is one of a number of Catholic educators with doctorates across the United States who have chosen to teach at the elementary or high-school level instead of at the collegiate level.

Queen of Angels was willing to pay for much of Herlihy's studies. The art teacher has been teaching at Queen of Angels since it opened in 1999. All 504 students at the school, from kindergarten through eighth grade, attend her classes at least once a week.

"While there have been many changes over the years, the results have created a school that provides students with a strong religious, academic and multifaceted education," Herlihy said.

Her advanced degree has aided her in creating a guidebook to use with her students on museum field trips. "I still continue to experiment with the different approaches uncovered during my research with the students I teach," she explained.

### *Overqualified?*

At St. Christopher Middle School in East Hartford, Connecticut, James Tanguay teaches science and math to sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students.

He earned his Ph.D. as a young man, and teaching is his second career. He worked for more than 20 years in the pharmaceutical industry. He said he wanted to pursue a doctorate because it would allow more options for him in the workforce. Even with his long career and advanced degree, teaching middle-school math and science is still a challenge, he explained.

"While I certainly have a broad base of experiences to teach from, I must be careful in how I explain things, to keep them as simple as possible," Tanguay said.

"I think that my experience and qualifications add things to my explanations that can make topics more interesting and relevant to the daily lives of my students."

Kenneth Howell is also learning how to best implement his advanced knowledge with younger students. Howell, who has advanced degrees in linguistics and the history of science and philosophy, among other disciplines, spent some 30 years teaching at the university level. Much of his career was spent at the University of Illinois. He is a noted Catholic author and a senior fellow at the Steubenville, Ohio-based St.

Paul Center for Biblical Theology, as well.

Howell now enjoys his time lecturing juniors on the Old Testament at The High School of St. Thomas More in Champaign, Illinois.

“Sure, there is a difference between a high-school student’s intellectual level as compared to a college student’s,” he said.

“My [high school] students are still searching for their way. But I think the unique gift that I bring to the high school is my ‘elderly’ knowledge. Today, we’ve lost that sense of passing down knowledge or traditions from one generation to the next. So I see myself here to love these students and guide them, given my wisdom and life experiences.”

#### *Teaching, Not Tenure*

Liberty Hall, who has a doctorate in historical studies in religion and theology, was on her way towards tenure at Southern Catholic College in Dawsonville, Georgia, before the school closed in 2010.

“I always thought I would be teaching college, and at Southern Catholic, I lived in a ‘teaching wonderland,’” the wife and mother of two young children shared.

However, she soon learned that tenure wasn’t as glamorous as it’s often portrayed. She heard stories from “tenure-track” friends who were stressed out and worn down, with little time to craft creative classroom experiences. She heard about the pressure to

find grant money and publish research, too.

“So I came to Pius X High School, and I’ve found ‘home,’” Hall said. “Teaching high school works for me.”

Among other topics, she teaches Church history and a world-religion class at the Atlanta secondary school. “I’ve realized I simply love to teach,” Hall emphasized.

#### *Education for Eternity*

In reflecting on what is at the heart of a strong, Catholic education, Hall said it is the teachers: “A good Catholic education has educators who care about the salvation of their students.”

“I try to translate the Catholic faith into something meaningful to dozens of students each day,” she added.

Howell agrees that teachers are the hallmark of Catholic education.

“If the faith is dear to the teacher, then it will become dear to the students,” he said.

“We [Catholic educators] have the opportunity to educate the whole person in all that is true, good and beautiful. In the end, Catholic education has the ability to fit together all the disciplines into a coherent, meaningful worldview that hopefully will last long after graduation.”

Eddie O’Neill

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/professors-of-catholic-education>

## Fixing Social Insecurity

Last year, Michel Houellebecq's novel, *Submission*, was a bestseller and culture-marker in France. It's endlessly insightful about religion and public life in our wealthy, worn-out Western nations (there's even an episode in which the protagonist has a vision of the Virgin Mary, though she withdraws and he does not convert). But for present purposes, it's worth contemplating another part of the story: Because of splits among liberals and conservatives, a "moderate" Muslim becomes president of France. He parcels out ministries (similar to our cabinet posts) to various other (non-Muslim) parties, a traditional French practice, giving them a stake in the government.

Only one ministry is reserved for his party: education. In short order, that turns France upside down. Given that schools and universities throughout the country are staffed with teachers and administrators who essentially believe in nothing, it's not hard to change things, even big things, when someone who believes in something takes power. At Houellebecq's fictional Sorbonne, for example, professors retire, are weeded or bought out, or seduced with large amounts of money from the Gulf States. The whole country, including the intellectual class, quickly acquires a Muslim vibe.

But let's jump from that fiction to real-world America, 2017: a new president has now been sworn in and his cabinet is slowly being approved. But at what anthropologists call "liminal" moments like this – when we pass from one place to another – large issues show themselves with new clarity. The uncertainties – and anxieties – of this particular transition make understanding certain issues more urgent than ever.

Our national defenses now seem in better hands. The new Secretary of Defense, General James Mattis, was the first (and most favorably) approved, with good reason. He was not only a good Marine commander. He's a reader and thinker. Full disclosure: my family has personal reasons to thank him, though I'll forego particulars. But ours is only one of many stories about his character – not least that he drove around the country after retiring to visit families of Marines who died under his command.

Our economy is relatively strong by current world standards, hard as that may be to credit. The people President Trump has appointed seem to understand sound economic principles, maybe even better than Trump himself. But while economic principles may be clear, circumstances are always changing. The best economist I ever knew once told me about a policy decision, "It's right, all things being equal. But they never are." We'll soon see if the new economic team is as prudent and effective as the defense team seems to be.

But as these hearings were grinding on something kept nagging me. A Christian, like any other citizen, knows that a country's material conditions – security and prosperity – are important, and can even affect non-material things. But a Christian also can never get very far from the Dominical saying – to the Devil, no less – that man does not live by bread (or physical security) alone.

Watching the grilling of Betsy DeVos, the nominee for Secretary of Education, reminded me of that saying – and Houellebecq's novel. DeVos is a forceful advocate for school choice, which the



educational establishment thinks is code language for racism and a stingy, mean-spirited effort to destroy public schools, though the establishment has already done a pretty fair job itself at the latter.

People talk a lot about failing inner-city schools, by which they mean that government-run schools are not imparting the skills needed to succeed in our economy. True enough; students need to learn how to keep body and soul together. It would help if state-run schools also acknowledged that most sane people think they're more than bodies.

And there's much more at stake. Schools – even in affluent areas – are also not teaching our constitutional, religious, and social traditions very well. For them, traditional America is unjust, bigoted, elitist. It was our high schools and universities that taught millions of Americans to speak the vulgar language of angry moral superiority that we witnessed in the “March for Women” the day after the Inauguration.

Unions, academic groups, our hapless media claim that those who want more local control and individual choice over schools really just want to lower taxes and abandon the poor. In fact, there's an even bigger threat to their status quo. If Trump succeeds, as did Reagan, in making patriotism and religiosity vibrant parts of our public life again, it will be a great achievement in itself. But we know that cannot long last if our

Robert Royal

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2017/01/25/fixing-social-insecurity/>

schools and universities keep pushing statist, secularist, politically correct lessons.

It was no surprise to me, then, that both Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders refused to shake Betsy DeVos' hand when she came in for her hearing. They know how much rides on her appointment. She's a very wealthy woman; they tried to make it seem as if that very fact was disqualifying or something to be ashamed of. True, she's never attended public schools – and why would she? Senators and congressmen who come to Washington rarely allow their kids to go to D.C. schools – with good reason.

Washington is fourth in per-student spending among major American cities. It's 106<sup>th</sup> in terms of outcome. The system cannot even say how many employees or students it has. Unlike her critics, Betsy DeVos has put a lot of money – her own money – into improving education, not just talking about improving it.

But DeVos is being vilified because her department will shape the long-term future. Education is a long game and few have the patience to play it in our digital world. But don't be misled. We need a stronger economy and military and national spirit. Yet they can be easily washed away again if we continue to allow students to spend a dozen years under the schoolmasters and PC regimes currently in place.

Changes at the top, as in Houellebecq's fictional Muslim France, can produce changes everywhere. And the establishment knows it.

## Where is the Religious Instruction?

“When Beowulf goes to slay the dragon that has been ravaging the countryside,” I said to my college freshmen the other day, “all of his thanes swear they will stand by him in the battle. But when it comes to the actual crisis, they are nowhere to be found. Only one of them, Wiglaf, remains loyal and helps Beowulf, who has already suffered a mortal wound, to slay the dragon. Without going so far as to say that Beowulf is a Christ-figure, when he clearly is not,” I continued, “it seems safe to say that the poet wants us to think about Christ upon Calvary.”

So far so good. Everyone knows that Jesus was crucified. Then I asked, offhand, “Which of the apostles was loyal enough to remain near to Jesus when they nailed him to the cross?” An embarrassed silence. I gave them clues. “He is portrayed in almost every artistic representation of the Crucifixion. He is usually portrayed as a beardless youth, because tradition had it that he was the youngest of the apostles.” No reply. “Jesus actually addresses him from the Cross.” Then came five guesses.

“Peter?”

“Judas?”

“Simon?”

“Thomas?”

“Paul?”

Those guesses were more telling and more discouraging than the silence.

Sixteen college freshmen, most of them Catholic in one way or another; and not one of them could recall, “Woman, behold your son.”

It occurs to me that if they had been standing in front of the painting of the Crucifixion in the sanctuary of my boyhood church, Saint Thomas Aquinas in Archbald, Pennsylvania, they would not have been able to “read” it. That’s downright strange, when you stop to consider what prompts religious art to begin with.

For you only paint a scene from Scripture, or carve it in stone or cast it in stained glass, if you can depend upon your fellow Christians to recognize it. You are a part of a shared story of the world, and your art provides for the faithful a shared experience or view of some moment or incident in that story.

Rembrandt’s Return of the Prodigal Son means very little to us if we do not know the parable; we will not understand why the young man is kneeling, and why his shoes are worn to rags, and why the onlookers are wearing robes so royal.

What we have here is in several ways a thorough inversion. The unlettered people of the Middle Ages, when books were scarce and costly, and when there was therefore no particular reason why a farmer or a miller should know how to read, were yet immersed in stories: the paintings and the stained glass windows provided both expression of and instruction in the faith.

That expression and instruction extended also to the wealth of prayers and hymns that the people heard and knew by heart. When the invention of the printing press made books more affordable, giving ordinary

people a practical reason to learn how to read, that put near to hand all of the psalms in their entirety, the propers and commons of the Masses and the daily office, countless

prayers and hymns, and accounts of the lives of the saints.

Now all of that is gone. Our young people know how to read, sort of – our schools have largely abandoned poetry in general and English literature written before yesterday afternoon.

But in the stories of Scripture and the faith they are little better off than the pagan Indians gazing in wonder at the strange signs that spoke to the Black Robe from his book. In important ways they are worse off. Those Hurons and Iroquois had centuries of their own immemorial poetic stories that helped them make sense of the world; our poor sub-pagans do not. They have Homer Simpson and Han Solo.

Let me not suggest that when I was their age I was much better off. Oh, I did know the Gospels backwards and forwards, and the prominent stories of the Old Testament. But beyond that I too was religiously illiterate.

I attended Saint Thomas Aquinas School for six years and learned nothing about Saint Thomas Aquinas. I heard Mass at the church there all the time, and could never recognize Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier in the stained glass window. The wardrobe in the vestry had on its doors a carving of the medieval pelican and its young, with the verse from Thomas' Eucharistic hymn; I had no idea what that was about. No one ever talked about it. The bond of story had been severed.

Anthony Esolen

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2017/01/30/where-is-the-religious-instruction/>

Let me now deliver my prognosis as bluntly as I can. All the CCD classes in the world cannot make up for this loss. If your imagination is formed by mass entertainment – if you are more familiar with Mr. Spock than with Abraham and Moses, if you can sing the sick doggerel of a song by Madonna but cannot hear the words of Jesus telling us about the lilies of the field – then you are like a pagan who has recently been baptized but who still has only the vaguest sense of what it means to be a Christian.

It is not surprising that the old Vikings, newly evangelized, still thought they could go marauding as they used to. It should not be surprising then that new pagans, barely evangelized, think they can snuff out children in the womb, or go their merry way to Sodom.

The head rules the belly through the chest, as C.S. Lewis tells us, taking his wisdom from the old philosophers and poets, and the chest is the realm of imaginative art, which inspires us with tales of valor and holiness, or degrades us with tales of hedonism, cynicism, godlessness, and depravity.

We must evangelize the imagination. Jesus taught by stories. Should that not tell us something?

## Celebrating the Gift of Catholic Schools

The annual celebration of National Catholic Schools Week brings back for many of us memories of our own experience of the gift of Catholic education. Mine include the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who taught me at Saint Mary of the Mount School. Yet, this experience is not something relegated to the past – it is enjoyed by many, many young people today.

We celebrate the gift of this educational opportunity in a special way during National Catholic Schools Week, which is observed from January 29 to February 4 and has as its theme: “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.”

Every day, the teachers at the 95 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington offer 27,000 students that same gift of an academically excellent education rooted in our Catholic identity, which prepares them to follow their own call and someday make a difference in the world, guided by the light of their faith. Nationally, nearly two million students are enrolled in Catholic schools, many of which have waiting lists for admission. These Catholic institutions of learning, homes away from home, bring to students an encounter with Jesus which can transform lives and renew the world.

Our Catholic schools here and across the country are communities of faith because our Catholic identity is woven into the educational experience so that students learn that their faith is a way of life. In our

schools, Jesus is truly present in every classroom.

Our Catholic schools are communities of knowledge. The academic excellence that is a hallmark of our schools can be seen in the 32 Catholic schools in the archdiocese that have been named as Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education since that program began in 1982. This past fall, four of our schools – Saint Pius X Regional School in Bowie, Saint Patrick School in Rockville and Our Lady of Victory School and Holy Trinity School in Washington – earned that honor. Over the years, eight of our schools have earned that distinction twice.

Our Catholic schools are communities of service where students learn how blessed it is to give of themselves. Every day, as they learn how to be productive citizens in their future careers, they help each other in the classroom and share God’s love and mercy with others too by bringing food to the hungry, collecting clothes and other supplies for the poor, visiting the elderly and helping younger children.

Catholic schools are truly a gift and rely on our support, and on community and government partnerships, to make Catholic education affordable and accessible for families. They are a gift I carry with me every day, knowing from personal experience what a blessing they are for every student and for our nation and world.

Cardinal Donald Wuerl

<http://cardinalsblog.adw.org/2017/01/celebrating-gift-catholic-schools/>

## What To Do About Honey Baby Dolly

In 7th grade, I started acting up. My father died suddenly near the end of 6th grade and when he was gone, my behavior changed. One fine day in 7th grade, Mr. Mac, my language arts teacher, whose first name was Harry, came into my social studies class to convey something to our teacher, Mrs. Gooding. When he entered the classroom, for reasons I still don't understand, I blurted out, "How's it hangin', Harry?" Mr. Mac conveyed his message to Mrs. Gooding, then flicked his finger at me and said, "You." I immediately panicked. The most serious disciplinary action I'd received during my grade school years was being sentenced to sitting on my hands during story time in Kindergarten (I couldn't resist the girls' pony tails). We turned a corner into an outdoor corridor. Suddenly, Mr. Mac stopped, grabbed me by the collar and shoved me against the warm brick wall. His face was ruddy and grave as he pushed it a half-inch from mine. "You will never disrespect me like that again." He half-breathed, half-growled the words. I nodded my head frantically in agreement and he released me.

In high school, I had a hard-nosed, ex-marine priest as an English teacher. Fr. Lukan, still sporting a buzz cut, as gray as the ashes piled in the ashtray on his desk, explained to us bewildered freshmen that he expected all graded essays returned to him. "The reason for this," Fr. Lukan explained, "is so that when mommy and daddy come complaining to me because Honey Baby Dolly got a bad grade on his report card, I can show them your work and tell 'em, 'Honey Baby Dolly got a bad grade because Honey Baby Dolly can't write worth a damn.'" The truth was clear, and liberating.

At my first job out of college, I worked at a small business owned by the father of a classmate. This man came from Arkansas and, though a devout Catholic, was as hard as the Ozarks. Every day, without exception, he wore a plain button-down long-sleeve shirt (tan or gray), the kind you find at Goodwill, sleeves rolled up carelessly, jeans held up with a brown belt clasped with a big silver buckle adorned with chunks of ivory and turquoise. He wore the same boots every day. He chewed constantly on toothpicks and his idea of a great "supper" (lunch) was Furr's all-you-can-eat cafeteria. He constantly grumbled that the federal government should issue belts to Americans with their names on the back, "so they know who they're screwin'." I once suggested an improvement or two to my work area, such as a vent for AC. It got pretty warm in the cramped space in the back of the building where my workbench was, especially during the sultry summers in Dallas. My boss looked me straight in the eye with an unblinking, manly certitude and said in his deep, sonorous voice, thickly imbued with a southern drawl, "You know where to find sympathy don'tcha? In the dictionary, between sh\*t and syphilis."

I was reminded of these episodes from my youth when I heard about universities offering psychological support to students suffering anxiety after the election results last November. A professor at the once esteemed Yale University gave his students a pass on mid-term examinations because of all the weepy emails he was receiving. He determined his students were simply too distraught to take a test. I remember when

only death got you out of a college exam, preferably your own.

More troubling reactions were reported elsewhere. The University of Michigan provided Play-Doh and coloring books to help their students cope with what is the most traumatizing experience they have ever had in their lives thus far. Squeeze it out, kids. Squeeze it out.

Tufts University made arts and crafts available, while the University of Kansas reminded their students that therapy dogs were available every other Wednesday for those distraught over the election. Perhaps the most utterly absurd account comes from Cornell University, which hosted “cry-ins” where teachers provided soft, blubbing students with equally soft tissues and hot chocolate. I was expecting President Obama to utilize his beloved Executive Order privilege to provide government issued pacifiers and blankets to these inconceivably benighted and expensive babies.

Perhaps, I’m not being charitable. Yet, I learned along the way that truth sometimes has a sharp edge. These kids don’t need pandering teachers handing out Play-Doh and Tinker Toys. The teachers are partly to blame in the first place for this abominable display of infantilism. These kids need a Mr. Mac or a Fr. Lukan. Honey Baby Dolly needs to be shoved against the wall and told some inconvenient truth, maybe even slapped in the kisser, as my dad used to say. Maybe they should be put to work.

A great way for kids to develop some callouses, both physically and emotionally, is menial labor. I’ve had many menial jobs from delivering pizza to doing landscaping in 120° heat. We all learned at least two things in my family: work and

responsibility. This meant, when you do well, don’t boast. When you screw up, don’t blame someone else. Never make yourself someone else’s problem. Always have at least \$20 in your pocket. There was no empty praise in our house.

Throughout high school, my friends and I worked at fast-food restaurants. It was greasy, hot, and humbling. The worst was when a girl you liked came in and saw you there in your ugly polyester uniform smeared with secret sauce and topped by a dumb hat. It had its dangers, too. I remember picking up a friend for school one morning. He came out of the house with big white bandages wrapped around both hands. He worked the grill at McDonald’s and the previous night he slipped on a spot of grease. He tried to save his hands by aiming them at two beef patties sizzling on the grill, but he was a tall, lanky kid with big hands. Those measly patties weren’t enough to save his skin. The worst part was cleaning the grill. It was like a ring in Dante’s Inferno leaning over that hot grill scrubbing away at 2:00 a.m. It was even worse on Friday nights when I had to be at football practice at 8:00 Saturday morning. But, my mom made it clear. If I wanted gas in the car and money in my pocket, it was my responsibility. No handouts at the Jay household, and no car insurance with less than a B average at school.

One summer I worked with the half-crazy older brother of a friend. He decided to start a palm tree trimming service. He climbed the trees while I waited on terra firma for the jagged-toothed fronds to come down and piled everything up into the truck to take to the dump. He liked throwing fledglings at me whenever he encountered a bird’s nest. I became adept at quickly ending the suffering of those little creatures. Severing their heads

was better than leaving them to burn to death in the brutal Phoenix heat, or to starve, or to wait for a stray cat to gobble them up. These experiences were formative. They helped ground me and prevented me from thinking I was owed anything.

Do kids work anymore? It seems so many of them now are too busy playing organized club sports arranged and paid for by their parents. Kids seem to hardly have an hour left that isn't organized for them by adults. And, parents are only too happy to shove electronic devices into their kids' hands before they can even talk. They gasp that it's so cute the toddler can already operate the smart phone, certain this is a sign of tremendous intelligence.

By the time that kid is 10 and sitting in my classroom, he can't focus on anything more than 10 seconds if it isn't moving. So, his parents take him to their unscrupulous pediatrician who diagnoses "some form of ADHD" and prescribes a medication. But, the doctor doesn't know what dosage to prescribe. How can he? "Some form of" means everything and nothing. So, a trial period ensues during which time the child complains of headache and nausea until the dosage is correct, which probably just means his body has gotten used to it. By the time he graduates high school, he is awarded a crutch and sent off to college, for which he never doubts someone else must pay. He does advanced studies in identity politics, tolerance and how to enforce it, victimhood, feminism, Shakespearean misogyny, and social media. His diploma confirms that he has earned his sense of entitlement and that society now owes him everything he demands, including a president of his choosing.

In the early 1970s, 18-year-olds were fighting for their lives in the jungles of Vietnam. In the 1940s, they were storming the beaches of Normandy or charging into a meat grinder on Okinawa. Today's 18-year-olds are playing with clay and coloring because they can't handle the results of an election. As Jesus said, in the beginning it was not so.

In Plutarch's "On Bringing Up a Boy," he laments the proliferation of bad teachers and the ignorance of parents, observing that "the behavior of some fathers is contemptible" because "they put their children into the hands of frauds and charlatans." Maybe Plutarch saw the future.

Reflecting on children in a text entitled *On Anger*, Seneca observed:

"We ought to allow him some relaxation, yet not yield him up to laziness and sloth, and we ought to keep him far beyond the reach of luxury, for nothing makes children more prone to anger than a soft and fond bringing-up... He to whom nothing is ever denied, will not be able to endure a rebuff, whose anxious mother always wipes away his tears, whose pedagogus is made to pay for his shortcomings... Flattery, then, must be kept well out of the way of children. Let a child hear the truth, and sometimes fear it; let him always reverence it." (My emphasis.)

College students today don't trouble themselves about truth because their teachers tell them daily it doesn't exist. But, if they really believed the drivel fed them by their teachers, parents, and social media, they wouldn't need the therapy dogs and hot cocoa.

St. John Chrysostom, following the classical ideal of virtue, also urged prayer:

“Furthermore, let him learn to pray with great fervor and contrition.” He also recommended fasting for teenagers on Wednesdays and Fridays. Like the ancients, Chrysostom knew a disciplined body leads to a disciplined soul, which is paramount. “First train his soul and then take thought for his reputation in the world,” Chrysostom writes. Most importantly is what Chrysostom calls the “master principle,” by which he means wisdom. This is the function of philosophy, whereby “he may know God and all the treasure laid up in Heaven, and Hell and the kingdom of the other world.” Given the repudiation of authentic education in favor of training and social conditioning, it is no wonder millennials demonstrate a deplorable incapacity to reason.

Tom Jay

<http://www.crisismagazine.com/2017/honey-baby-dollies#.WJPmn2Ps67g.email>

Chrysostom said young people need to curb their spirit, both a blessing and a curse, because it produces both good and bad. Menial labor humbles the spirit of a young person. It encourages respect for the value of work and compassion toward those who either lack employment, or who have little hope of attaining anything higher. I recall a Hispanic boy I bussed tables with at a country club when I was 19. He was my age, intelligent, and had dreams. I asked him why he didn't apply to college. He said he couldn't afford it. I told him about financial aid. He told me he was in Phoenix illegally. That job was better than anything he could find in his hometown in Mexico.

Menial labor helps young people understand what really matters. It is a powerful antidote to entitlement, and it prepares them to strain toward the summit of wisdom. One could do worse than learn to pray and work.



## **Trump Issues Statement For National Catholic Schools Week**

This may be a first. After a Google search, I couldn't find another president who had done this.

Text below, which was released on Friday:

In recognition of National Catholic Schools Week, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of the dedicated Catholic school administrators, teachers, priests, and support organizations who work tirelessly to build and sustain quality Catholic schools across the Nation.

The theme of this year's National Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools:

Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service." I appreciate the many ways in which Catholic schools nurture devotion, impart wisdom, and minister to the 2 million students who enter their halls every day and to the diverse communities they serve.

Congratulations for the tremendous work you have done to educate our Nation's youth each and every day. Your continued and sustained efforts are vital to our success and prosperity as a country.

Sincerely,

DONALD J. TRUMP

*<http://aleteia.org/blogs/deacon-greg-kandra/trump-issues-statement-for-national-catholic-schools-week/?print=1#sthash.Z8uZqcxN.dpuf>*

## **This Football Camp Encourages Your Son To Pray And Go To Mass**

Starting this summer, St. Norbert Abbey, Catholic Athletes for Christ (CAC) and Catholic Kids Publishing will be hosting an innovative football camp that hopes to impact the lives of high school boys by teaching them how to play as well as how to pray. The camp, for teens entering grades 9-12, runs from June 22-25 and will be taking place on the campus of St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin.

Tom Wall, organizer of the new Our Lady of Victory Football Camp, explained to Aleteia how the idea arose after he and another coach realized the impact coaches have in a teenager's life.

Coaches have a strong influence on their kids. That was the way it was for me with my coach. I don't remember really much of what he taught us on the field... in fact, I don't think I remember anything. I remember the lessons of discipline, hard work, adversity, sportsmanship. When kids are trying to figure out who they could or should listen to coaches always get through. They always get through.

This was also the experience of Dan Duddy, Chapter Program Coordinator for CAC, who discovered first-hand the influence of coaches when asked by parents to talk to their kids.

I've been a high school football coach for 38 years and the last 22 of those years I was a head football coach. I used to have fathers call me and say, "Would you please talk to my son about his chores at home or about his history grade or the way he talks to his mother?" And then when I got older I found myself going to [my kids'] coaches and saying the same thing, "Hey, could you talk

to Michael about his school work?" And I started to understand that we have to hold ourselves accountable to this responsibility as coaches. And if we're going to call ourselves Catholic men then we better be practicing our faith and we better be inspiring them to do the same.

As head coach, Duddy decided to develop his own football camp that included the sacraments, mentoring and reflections on the Bible. Duddy explained to Aleteia the amazing power of the camp and how it influenced his team beyond any of his expectations.

The football camp that I led evangelized our kids and in turn it evangelized our football players' families. Our players evangelized their own families through our camps. I had a father come to me and say, "Coach Duddy, Brian woke up the whole family on Sunday and told us we're all going to Mass. Coach, my family has not been to Mass in 22 years. The last time we were in Mass was for Brian's First Communion."

Realizing the impact they could have on young people, Duddy and Wall then put their heads together, along with Father Jim Baraniak, a Norbertine priest and chaplain to the Green Bay Packers, to brainstorm a new type of sports camp that featured strong Catholic coaches who would be able to influence the lives of teenagers in a positive way.

The result, Our Lady of Victory Football Camp, will be led by quality instructors from colleges, universities and high schools who will be able to teach the boys not only how to throw a Hail Mary, but also how to pray one.

Each day will include Mass, where the boys will be able to see their coaches participate and witness to them the importance of prayer. The rest of the day will be a mix of intense football instruction on the field as well as talks and presentations by priests and speakers off the field who will focus on topics such as virtues and servant leadership. The hope is that this program will impact these boys positively and help form them into strong Catholic leaders in their community.

At the same time, both Duddy and Wall want to emphasize that it is still a “football camp” and not a religious retreat. The boys

Philip Kosloski

*<http://aleteia.org/2017/02/06/this-football-camp-encourages-your-son-to-pray-and-go-to-mass/?ru=0f0fcae5adc4fb2e38519991f08e7cf7>*

who attend the camp will be put to the test physically and taught techniques from some of the best football coaches in the area.

After this summer Duddy and Wall plan to evaluate the success of the camp and will work with anyone interested in establishing a similar camp in their area. It could be a football camp, a girl’s basketball camp, or any high school sport. The goal is to use all sports as an avenue to reach kids and evangelize them.

For more information or to register for the Our Lady of Victory Football Camp, visit [www.olvfootball.com](http://www.olvfootball.com).

## Catholic Schools Week Address

Good morning, everyone. My name is Samantha Carlowicz and I am a senior at St. John Paul II High School and graduate of St. Margaret Regional School. Mr. Keavy asked me to share a few ideas about Catholic schools with you, as one who has attended Catholic schools for the whole of my educational career – Kindergarten to Senior Year – and at only those two schools. Needless to say, I have spent almost three-quarters of my life in roughly the same community of people, and I wouldn't want it any other way.

Ever since middle school, the one thing I have always said was my favorite thing about Catholic Schools is that the people are like a family to me. Three characteristics of any family, including our Catholic School family, in particular stand out to me; the focus on knowing one another, caring for one another, and having shared values and traditions.

A couple of weeks ago, I had a bit of free time after school so I decided to visit St. Margaret's just to say hello to a couple of teachers and students. It was dismissal time so there were teachers out greeting parents as usual, and as I approached, several teachers came over to me to greet me. Now the first question I was asked was the obligatory "How are you?" but what followed surprised me. They asked me, "So, how are your parents? How's your sister? What's she been up to? How's your brother? Is your dad still commuting or working from home?" Walking into a school, you would've expected a "How's your schoolwork been?" or "Are you getting good grades?" No, no. This was like walking into a family holiday party and having your aunt

or uncle strike up a conversation with you over a bowl of crackers.

The thing about Catholic schools is that these people – teachers, parents, even fellow students – do not just know us enough to know where our parents work or what we've been up to at school, but they care about us as individual people. When I've talked to friends I've met over the years who attend different schools about their school-life, they usually respond that "school is school." Here at our Catholic schools, however, school is spoken of lovingly because our school is rooted in love; the love of Christ for each and every one of us.

Although all of us can attest to the ideas of knowing one another and caring for one another as a school-family, one of the other aspects that is often forgotten is the importance of having shared traditions and values. In a Catholic school, no matter what classes you take, one of them will always be religion. Therefore, just walking into school you already have at least one thing in common with every other person around you.

Over the summer, I worked as a camp counselor at Camp Farley (looking around, I now know some of you because you were my campers). During our training before the campers arrived, we were talked to about how we should interact with the campers and about what "good" and "bad" topics of conversation were. What struck me was that under the list of things we should avoid talking about was religion. At first, that didn't seem like a problem to me, I just wouldn't talk about it. However, I soon realized just how difficult it was to be surrounded by people that either would not

understand what I was talking about or who I could not even talk to about my faith. Every Sunday morning over the summer, I'd wake up and go to Church, change into my staff shirt, and arrive at camp before noon. Whenever I heard something in Church that inspired me or made me think, I had to keep it to myself rather than share it because I was in an environment that wasn't faith based.

It's easy to take for granted the atmosphere of shared traditions and values we have here at our Catholic schools. For me, it was not until I was in an atmosphere where the Catholic faith was not a central part that I realized just how valuable it is to have a family of people who understand what you believe in.

In addition to having a community rooted in a shared history and support for one another, Catholic schools are creating individuals who are knowledgeable in their faith. Individuals who can, as many of our teachers say, be the best people we can be because of that knowledge. Even though we are all at different stages in our lives, we will all come to realize how understanding our faith influences our lives. Here's how I realized that.

In middle school, the best yet most frustrating class was always Mrs. Caradimos' science class (don't worry, Mrs. Caradimos, it will make sense in a minute). My classmates and I often complained about what we were learning because we said it was confusing or didn't make sense. All these formulas and definitions and ideas were just packed away in our brains like papers stuffed in a folder. Then Mrs. Caradimos would tell us we were going to do a lab, resulting in only more grumbling and complaints. But then, as we were

following whatever steps were laid out for us in the experiment, something would click. Bam! In a single moment, like magic, it all made sense; the formulas, definitions, all of it suddenly organized itself into something we could understand.

It sounds nerdy, but attending a Catholic school for 12 years is much like learning science. All this time, we've been learning about who God is and what the Church has to do with that and what our jobs as a disciples are. For me, all this knowledge of faith has been piling up in my head for a while, but now I am finally experiencing those "Bam-moments" where it all just clicks. And this knowledge of faith I have really does influence the decisions I make every day. I am at the point now that I know enough about what I believe and what the Church teaches that I actually stand up for what I believe in when other people do not understand.

Now, knowing again that we are all at different stages of our lives, you may wonder how this applies to you; what does this mean for the future. As I am sure many of you will agree, the most common question for us young people is the classic "What do you want to do when you grow up?" Being a senior – and I know it applies to my fellow seniors and to all you 8th graders as well – it seems as though this is the only conversation I have with anyone. For me, I plan on attending college next year and pursuing a degree in engineering. Of the four colleges I have applied to, only one is a Catholic school; the other three are science-based institutions. What this means for me is that this may very well be my last year attending a Catholic School.

And that? That seems really strange to me. Pursuing science as a career is something I

truly feel called to do; I love science after all and have come to love how the scientific and theological worlds intertwine. However, I also understand that many people who pursue science do not believe in the Catholic faith, or really any faith at all. And this concerns me sometimes because I want to believe in the future what I believe now, that God is the center of my life and my salvation. I want to continue to have that knowledge of faith, that family of faith I have now. However, deep down I know that wherever I decide to go, it is because that is where God is leading me. Because my life

has been built upon a foundation of faith through my experience in Catholic schools, I know that I will find God wherever I am, and that's a pretty sweet thing to know. In Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a book I'm sure many of you are or will be familiar with, the main character Scout says this of her best friend, Dill: "With him, life was routine; without him, life was unbearable." For us, our "him" is Jesus, is our faith. With Him, life is routine; as routine as going to school every day. Without Him? Life would be unbearable. Thank you, and may God bless our Catholic Schools.

Samantha Carlowicz (posted by Christopher Keavy)

<http://sjp2hs.org/crosstalk/catholic-schools-week-address/>

## **Lord, To Whom Shall We Go? My Catholic Grade School Is Where It All Began**

Last Saturday I had the honor of speaking at a dinner in Austin, Texas, to benefit their schools: Can I share my talk with you as we find ourselves in *Catholic Schools Week*?

Thank you, Diocese of Austin!

I am happy and honored to be with you!

Often have I heard of your hospitality and friendliness here in Texas, and now I sense it personally.

So, thanks for your gracious invitation and warm welcome.

I come as a friend and admirer of your good bishop...

I come, really, because I will go anywhere to speak about our beloved Catholic schools. You know, I have twenty-four years of Catholic education, from grade school through doctoral studies, and I consider it essential and contributing to everything I am and do.

Of course you'd say that about yourself, one might reply, but that esteem for my own Catholic schooling is validated by so many others.

In New York, I daily meet with movers and shakers, CEOs and business moguls. Often do they tell me that, when they see that a job applicant is a product of a Catholic school, they favor that applicant and take a closer look. Why, I ask them? Because the Church does it so well! If they have graduated from a Catholic school, these executives tell me, an applicant can spell, write, read, add,

subtract, is courteous and disciplined, reliable and hardworking. Not bad!

By now some of you are asking, "Then why can't my kid get a job!"

Never mind!

Now, of all of my two-dozen years of Catholic education, including college, a venerable university in Rome, and The Catholic University of America in D.C., none were more profitable to me than my eight years at Holy Infant Grade School in Ballwin, Missouri. I would not be the man, the human being, the believer I am today without those eight years in my parish grade school. When those people, my folks included, founded the parish in 1954, even before a permanent church, a rectory, or a hall, they built a school. And I'm glad they did.

Mind you, I'm far from perfect, and am aware of my flaws...but it's my Catholic elementary school education that taught me to acknowledge those humbly, and to face hell when they surfaced.

I have to give a lot of talks like this. So, the organizers always ask, "How do you want us to introduce you?"

I always reply, "I really don't care what you say, as long as it's short, and as long as it starts, 'Timothy Dolan is the oldest of five children born to Bob and Shirley Dolan, and graduated from Holy Infant Grade School in 1964.'"

The rest, folks, is gravy—the meat and potatoes is my folks, family, and Catholic grade school.

Catholic schools are so effective because they teach us

to love God and our neighbor,

to serve the Lord and others,

to get to heaven by living virtuously and believing strongly,

to love God and country.

To love God and country...

I saw that last Thanksgiving. My five-year-old grandnephew, Walt, is in kindergarten at St. Francis School in Washington, Missouri. Walt was eager to tell me, “Uncle Tim, I know the ‘Our Father’ and the Pledge of Allegiance. I learned them at school.” “Wow, Walt,” I responded, “let’s hear them!”

Sure enough, little Walt buzzed through the Lord’s Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance very well, just as he had learned at St. Francis Grade School. God and country...

So, at Thanksgiving dinner, when the family asked me to lead grace, I announced, “Nope, I’m going to ask Walt to pray the ‘Our Father.’”

Oh, he beamed! “Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...with liberty and justice for all. Amen.”

So much for separation of Church and State! But, you get the point! Walt had already learned love for God and country, at five.

I’m looking out in admiration at people who love God and our country. I also realize all of you worry about our country, and about the faith of our kids and grandkids.

Every day you’re hit with appeals from good causes dedicated to ameliorating one of these many problems.

I hear more and more people observe, “There are so many needs, so many causes, so many problems that need my help. I wish there were one cause that would let me help all those needs.”

Guess what? There is.

You worried about the epidemic of drug and substance abuse? Well, you should. Statistics show that graduates of Catholic grade and high schools have a better record of avoiding addiction than others;

You are concerned about the poor and hungry? Glad you are. Studies show alumni of Catholic grade and high schools land better jobs, have more stable and lucrative employment, and avoid the unemployment and financial woes that lead to poverty; and our graduates are much more likely to volunteer in service to the poor;

You are anxious that your kids are going to believe in God, go to Church, and seek virtue? The stats show that graduates of Catholic elementary and secondary schools have higher levels of faith, pray more often, attend Church on Sunday, volunteer more often in community projects, give more to the poor and to the Church, and are much more likely to think about a vocation to the priesthood and religious life;

How about good marriages and strong families? You fret about that? You ought to.



Here we go again: the research shows that those who attended Catholic schools have happier, faithful marriages, more kids, more unified families, and—get this—more satisfying sex lives—now, there, folks, I’m an amateur and must trust the experts—than others.

I could go on and on...but you get the point: you want to support one cause that helps them all, be generous to our Catholic schools.

Former police commissioner of the NYPD Ray Kelly told me often, “Most of my cops are products of Catholic schools.”

And a Marine general assured me, “40% of the Corps are Catholic, and those who went to Catholic schools are the finest.”

I was once at a symposium on support for Catholic schools where former Florida Governor Jeb Bush spoke. He told the audience, made up of high wheelers, “Look, I realize most of you give a lot of money to the colleges you went to. That’s good. But, listen, why not give a bundle to the Catholic grade school or high school you went to? Odds are they don’t have an endowment. You could not have graduated from that college you give to if you hadn’t gone to that Catholic school.”

Folks, our schools are Catholic. That means they belong to everybody. We just don’t count on the parents, or the parishioners, or the diocese to subsidize them. We all got the duty!

And friends, let’s drop the hospice attitude about our schools. The way some of us whine, you’d think our beloved schools are “on hospice”—we love them, we sure have fond memories of them, we are grateful for

them...but, well, according to this mentality, they’re slowly dying. The best we can do is prolong their days a bit, and help them die painlessly.

Malarky! They are strong, promising, bold, and gritty. They fight for every penny they got so they’re not spoiled or feeling they’re entitled to everything. The problem is not with the team but with us, the spectators, who wring our hands and bemoan their passing.

Don’t wring your hands: fold them in prayer and use them to sign a check!

And the major problem our schools have, at least where I come from? We need more students! Oh, everybody recognizes they’re the best, everybody says, “Oh, I wish I could send my children there,” but fewer and fewer do...so more schools close...because the parents can’t afford it. That’s why we need scholarships!

In the Archdiocese of New York, we recently completed a \$120 million capital campaign for scholarships to our schools. Steve Schwarzman, a prominent civic and business leader, not a Catholic, gave us one-third of that. When I thanked him, he replied, “Listen, I’m a good businessman. I run an enterprise here in New York. I need good workers and prosperous clients. They come from Catholic schools. For me, it’s a sound investment.”

And never forget the soul, the spiritual. We say in New York, “Our Catholic schools just don’t get our students into good colleges and good jobs. They get our kids into heaven.” Recently, I visited a little five-year-old girl, dying from leukemia, in the hospital. I spent time with her distraught dad, a very wealthy, influential man.

“Cardinal,” he began, “I could buy this hospital, I could fly in any oncologist from anywhere in the world. But, right now, there’s absolutely nothing more I can do for my little girl. All my power and wealth is of no help. The only thing that keeps me going is the prayer I learned in fourth grade at St. Joseph Grade School. Will you say it with me

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan

<http://cny.org/stories/My-Catholic-Grade-School-Is-Where-It-All-Began,15043#.WJogNWm61Jw.email>

for my little sweetheart?” And together we prayed the *Memorare*.

To have a better life here for ourselves and for others; to have an eternal life in heaven.

The Catholic school product...

Now, if that’s not worth fighting for, I don’t know what is! Thanks!

## **Medford Eighth-Grade Boys Get An Idea Of What It's Like To Be A Priest For A Day**

When it comes to the vocation of priesthood, Father Daniel Swift doesn't just plant ideas in the minds and hearts of young men, he gives them practical experiences from which they can learn.

One idea Father Swift, an assistant director of vocations for the Diocese and pastor of St. Mary of the Lakes Parish, Medford, has introduced for eighth-grade boys is "Priests for a Day" – a program in which he provides boys with "clerics," the black shirts priests wear and white collars. He then asks the boys to wear the clerics one day to school.

Father Swift said he came up with the idea for the boys of St. Benedict Parish, Holmdel, when he was pastor of St. Benedict Parish. It's an idea he brought to Medford for the eighth-grade boys of St. Mary of the Lakes School.

Noting that he decided to hold "Priests for a Day" this year during Catholic Schools Week, Father Swift said that on the day he

gave the boys their shirts and collars, he told them to "put them in their book bags without saying a word to anyone" and to put the clerics on the next morning when they were getting ready for school.

Father Swift said it was interesting and humorous to hear the boys share how their families reacted after seeing them in the clerics.

"They thought it was pretty cool," Father Swift said of how the boys responded to what it was like to dress like a priest.

In addition to "Priests for a Day," Father Swift said other recent ways he has promoted vocations to the priesthood included hosting an afternoon to St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Wynnewood, Pa., where boys had an opportunity to see a seminary and meet men who are studying to become priests. On April 30, he is planning to host a diocesan-wide afternoon at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary as well.

Mary Stadnyk

*<http://www.trentonmonitor.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=14665&SectionID=5&SubSectionID=172&S=1>*

## Closings Aren't The Full Catholic School Story

Are our schools back in “hospice mode”? Have we returned to the “slow amputation” strategy where every year we announce the closing of a few more of our beloved schools?

One could be pardoned asking those sober questions after last week’s somber announcement that five of our Catholic grade schools were to close at the end of this academic year, and one was to be converted into a Universal Pre-K.

The past four years have been rather bracing for our schools. After the decision to regionalize, all parishes share in the financial support of our schools, which would—with some exceptions—now no longer depend upon one parish but upon a region of them. We had anticipated that with the new plan, no schools would have to shut down for the near future.

That has indeed been the case. Alleluia!

Remember, though, that we had also forecast that the future would not be without such painful decisions, and that keeping the high caliber of our schools would always require sacrifice, grit, and tough choices.

Thus, last week.

What we can do is answer those two questions—Are we back in “hospice mode,” where we grudgingly admit that our cherished schools are slowly dying, and that all we can do is keep them alive painlessly for a while longer? And, have we returned to an “amputation strategy,” where each year we cut off a few more of our schools?—with a resounding no!

Recently, we completed a marketing strategy for ongoing evangelization in the archdiocese. What was clear is that the overwhelming majority of our people praise our schools and do not want any more to close. We can’t let them down.

Why, then, do so many parents choose not to send their children to our schools? That, of course, is the remedy here. Those schools just shuttered were not inferior schools.

They were sterling schools with not enough children to keep them robust.

How, then, to increase enrollment? We might list some of the reasons we hear given by those parents and critics who do not support our schools, and see if they’re valid: “The enrollment is sinking. I don’t want to send my child to a school that will probably close before she graduates.”

Not a good reason: This year, enrollment in our schools did not decline, the first time in twenty years, and went up by 659 children. “Well, we can’t afford them. That wealthy archdiocese has to put its money where its mouth is!”

We do. This year, the archdiocese will invest \$14,373,292 into our schools, and the parishes, \$11,143,322 (totaling \$25,516,614).

“Well, what about the poor kids? They can’t afford them!”

This year, 7,216 students are receiving scholarships amounting to \$13,476,482, 255 (which, by the way, leveraged another \$17,825,759 in tuition, since all our children must pay something).

“But, why sacrifice, when our Catholic schools hardly do any better academically than the free government schools!”

Wait a minute! Last year, our schools outperformed both New York City and State schools in English language arts, and in math.

“But, what about religion! We hear our schools are weak in Catholic identity and values.”

Check what you’re hearing. Last year, all of our schools but three passed the national religion knowledge exam. And prayer, the Bible, daily religion class, frequent Masses, devotion, and confession are the norm in a

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan

*<http://cny.org/stories/Closings-Arent-the-Full-Catholic-School-Story,15121#.WKzntLVnb-8.email>*

school where the flag and the cross dominate each room.

We are not polishing our medals. Our schools are laboratories of creative, innovative learning. I think of our “blended learning program,” the “Engineering Tomorrow” initiative, and the establishment of an executive director of Catholic identity to assure that our schools do not just get our kids into college and solid employment, but into heaven.

So, let’s admit it; last week’s announcement was sad. But it is not a reason to hang up the black crepe. There are abundantly promising developments to keep us confident, and to encourage our people who rave about our schools to send their kids, grandkids and neighbors there.

## California High School Makes Millions On Snap IPO

A high school in Mountain View, California, has made millions from Snap's initial public offering (IPO) less than four years after investing \$15,000 in the Venice, California-based technology company.

Saint Francis High School was one of the first investors in the company behind the ephemeral messaging app Snapchat, having invested a small proportion of its endowment fund in Snap Inc's seed round of financing in 2012.

Snap made its trading debut Thursday at the New York Stock Exchange. It had priced its IPO of 200 million shares at \$17 each but shortly after the opening bell stock began trading significantly higher, eventually closing at \$24.48 per share – up 44 percent on expectations.

Saint Francis, a private Catholic school with annual tuition fees over \$17,000, sold 1.4 million shares – two thirds of its overall stake – for \$17 per share at Thursday's IPO.

The school has not confirmed its overall return but it is estimated to have made nearly \$24 million, according to officials cited by NBC.

Simon Chiu, president of Saint Francis, announced the good news Thursday in a letter to parents.

"The school's investment in Snap – which this morning announced the completion of its IPO – has matured and given us a significant boost as we continue our work towards realizing the bold vision and goals set out in our community-inspired strategic plan: leading with Hope & Zeal," noted Chiu in the letter.

"This incredible boon will not, by itself, completely fund the goals of the strategic plan, but it will lay the necessary foundation and give us a remarkable head start," he added.

The school first became involved in the technology firm in 2012 when Barry Eggers, a parent of two Saint Francis pupils and founding partner of venture capital firm Lightspeed Venture Partners, became intrigued by his children's use of the app.

Eggers met with Snap co-founders Evan Spiegel and Bobby Murphy, who at the time were working out of Stanford dorm room, and, having been suitably impressed, prompted Lightspeed to lead a \$500,000 investment round – the company's first.

Lightspeed invested \$485,000 and Eggers invited Saint Francis' to put forward the remaining \$15,000 from its investment fund that had been created in 1990 by parents and former Saint Francis president Kevin Makley to support long term initiatives.

In his note to parents, Chiu thanked Eggers' for his "remarkable generosity".

A blog post by Barry Eggers posted Thursday on Lightspeed Venture Partners' website said: "While I've enjoyed Snap's journey with my Partners as an early investor, I have the unexpected bonus of sharing the experience with my children.

"It's been amazing for us to watch how far Evan and Bobby and Snap have come since that kitchen table conversation between my

daughter and me...and how much they've already changed how we communicate today."

Karen Gilchrist

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/03/california-high-school-makes-millions-on-snap-ipo.html>

## Building Society – An Interview With Rev. Michael McMahon

**Angelus Press:** What role should the school play in the social formation of a child?

**Fr. McMahon:** As we know man is both material and spiritual, having a body and a soul, and this human nature is also social. Simply put, man is meant by his very nature—body and soul—to live in society, in community with his fellow man. This is the very essence created by Almighty God. The stupidity of “social contracts” and “noble savages” aside, common sense, sound philosophy, and long experience clearly demonstrate the most basic need from cradle to grave of one man for another. Walk to your kitchen, open up the refrigerator door and pull out something to eat; now stop and think for a moment on the multitude of social interdependencies implied in this simple and mundane action before you eat that piece of mom’s chocolate cake.

**Angelus Press:** Sounds delicious, but what of the school’s role?

**Fr. McMahon:** A complete school, one perfect in the philosophical sense, must form a man in the totality of his nature. Educators must leave nothing to chance, but must carefully construct a curriculum which aims at forming body, soul, and the social aspect of human nature. Rolling the balls out, for example, at gym class with no care to order and organization, with no plan or purpose, is a dereliction of duty and basically a waste of time. Each hour and facet of the school day must be meticulously planned and supervised with a keen eye to formation. What goes for the body in physical education and the intellect in the classroom must go as well for social formation. Thus, it is incumbent upon those in charge to be

cognizant of the need to direct and form their students socially, to form this nature which God has made.

**Angelus Press:** Father, the need is obvious, as obvious as human nature itself, but how is it done?

**Fr. McMahon:** Before answering “how,” it would be first important to describe “what.” The essence of living in society, whether it is in the basic unit of the family or any other group or organization, is an understanding of and service to the common good and proper order of that community. Thus, correct formation in view of the individual taking his proper place within society will focus there: constructing an environment which fosters this knowledge and service. A great work by teachers and administrators will be their vigilance in first the selfless recognition of neighbor, then of a common good or goal, and one’s own role in being a member, and also a servant, of both. You can already see that a man must possess humility, knowing he holds a place, plays a role in a larger community, thus accepting a responsibility to fulfill his duties to family, school, country, and Church. “Get out of your own bellybutton” is a frequent refrain familiar to my students. In other words, stop thinking only of yourself, your needs, your comfort and be a man—recognize your duties and responsibilities to your neighbor, to your class, to the Academy, and to the Mystical Body. It is truly a beautiful thing to see a young man blossom from the immature, pure receiver to a generous giver and contributor.

**Angelus Press:** Is there more “what”?



**Fr. McMahon:** Certainly. The goal is a well-formed man who understands that he is to serve a good greater than himself, more important than his own likes, dislikes, whims, and desires; that he is not “A#1, top of the list nor king of the hill.” In one word, he is meant to be a gentleman. This concept is so important that it demands definition and explanation. The dictionary can get us started: A man whose conduct conforms to a high standard of propriety or correct behavior. This gentleman must be of noble and strong character, one carefully formed and solidly founded upon perennial principles, both of reason and faith. A Catholic gentleman—and in the most profound sense there can be no other—is simply a man grounded in reality and common sense with a flowering of virtues both natural and supernatural. The maturity of this man, actually a very serious definition of maturity itself, will be the recognition of reality—reality as God has made it, and as His Divine Providence governs it.

**Angelus Press:** “How” now?

**Fr. McMahon:** There is even more to say on the “what” but given the intended brevity of this interview, we can pass to “how.” Social formation must begin at home, and remain concurrent while a child is at school. This is a serious parental responsibility since the primary end or reason for matrimony is the begetting and educating of children. The primary educators of a child are mom and dad, as natural law and Holy Church teach and maintain. These rights must be respected and, of course the accompanying duties reasonably and vigorously performed even as a good school is entrusted with the care of a child. Responsible parents know well the need for schools which provide what cannot be given at home alone.

Homeschooling will always be an emergency measure, dictated by necessity, never an ideal. For all the so-called success stories like a Tim Tebow (N.B.: a die-hard evangelical whose “pastor” father has devoted his life to “converting” Catholic Filipinos to “Christianity” with periodic help from Tebow himself), there is simply too much solid theory, history, and experience which shows otherwise. The properly organized school, with the means at its disposal, will continue and strive to perfect the formation begun at home in terms of ordered and hierarchical social interaction and virtue. Especially for boys who must become men—mature, strong and virtuous—the environment provided by a good Catholic school is essential. A young man is meant to be disciplined and challenged, in order to grow, expand and to conquer. The proper environment will foster and develop that virile spirit of the crusaders, explorers and missionaries. As the great Chrysostom stated: “You have been armed, O Christian man, not to tarry and remain idle, but to sally forth to battle.”

**Angelus Press:** Does a boarding school outperform a day school?

**Fr. McMahon:** Having been educated myself at day schools, and now with 17 years of experience teaching, counseling, and administrating both day and boarding schools, the latter is clearly superior, especially socially for young men. The unity of purpose and direction alone in a properly run boarding school ensures this success. The history of Catholic education, especially in nations with strong and solid Catholic roots, speaks volumes on this preference. Proper courtesy, manners, dedication to duty through demanding chores with organizational and management responsibilities, etc. are easier to instill in a

boarding school. On the surface, much of this can be done at home, but not with numerous and diverse peers, nor within such a hierarchy. To quote Dr. Brian McCall, one of the very best current Catholic thinkers:

“Schools introduce more hierarchy with different grade levels, teachers, and principals. Boarding schools, particularly a religious one, present a living organic hierarchical community. The students do not only interact with their academic class, but must function in a hierarchical society, day and night. They must work their way through the levels of hierarchy appreciating the good and burdens of each. If there are priests, religious, lay teachers, and staff there are even more distinctions of inequality that play a role in formation.”

**Angelus Press:** Don’t the boys become too independent away from home and parents?

**Fr. McMahon:** Distinction: Properly independent, Yes; Too independent, No. Social formation, being an exercise to instill virtue, will demand balance—in medio stat virtus. The goal is to form a Catholic man, one capable of living a strong and vibrant Catholic life today, in this world, today’s world. We need virtuous men, meaning strong men, capable of crushing human respect, dedicated to truth, and standing firm for the social rights of Christ the King. This type of man, a sane and saintly man, must have a strong will, strong enough to docilely submit itself to the will of God, and yet also strong enough to defy an immoral and godless world. The Catholic boarding school provides the necessarily safe environment in which a teenage boy can grow and develop under judicious and religious supervision into a mature young man capable of

recognizing reality with an appreciation and exercise of true liberty—the “liberty of the sons of God.” A monumental task, yet a crucial one for the glory of God and salvation of souls.

**Angelus Press:** Excellent Father, but we need to close for now. Any final words?

**Fr. McMahon:** I would be remiss if I neglected to speak about the intense communal spiritual life afforded by the boarding school, which contributes not only to the personal sanctification of a young man, but also to the fortification of the Mystical Body of Christ. Each member properly vivified and strengthened makes up what “is lacking in the Body of Christ.” Access to daily Mass, frequent confessions, chapels that are a short walk from bunkrooms, constant priestly and religious presence, the Divine Office, and prayer in common throughout the day—these are irreplaceable in the formative years. This well-structured, disciplined, and religious environment forms a truly Catholic esprit de corps, laying the foundations on the solid rock of ordered charity—the love of God above all, and the love of neighbor as oneself for the love of God. Let me conclude with the bold words of a man’s man, Saint Boniface:

“I yearn to go forth where the dangers are, not because I particularly enjoy those dangers, but because I know it is there that the battle rages for the souls of men and nations. God set me before the front lines. Let me not end my days in comfort and complacency... Run towards the roar of the lion! Run towards the roar of battle! That is where Christ’s most glorious victories shall be won!”

*The Angelus*, January/February 2017

## What Every Catholic Kid Needs for School

Does “Catholic education” begin in Catholic schools—or is there something more foundational?

Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas, has an intriguing answer.

Last week, in his St. Hildegard Lecture at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, Bishop Flores argued that there are “habits of the soul” that, when developed “prior to formal education,” help students become more aware of the relationships among physical and abstract realities and God.

This, he says, prepares a student to study disciplines as varied as “grammar, rhetoric, music, biology, medicine, morality and mystical contemplation.”

I spoke with Bishop Flores following the lecture to discuss the implications for Catholic families and teachers.

### Back to the Garden

By encouraging formation that occurs “prior to formal education,” Bishop Flores does not propose some sort of Catholic preschool, although developing good habits in the home and parish at a young age is important.

Instead, by “prior” he means fundamental, a prerequisite for a good education at any age. In his lecture at the University of Mary, he noted that St. Hildegard of Bingen and other great saints exhibited a “synthetic impulse, by which I mean a purposeful concern for the deeper connections that bind all that exists.” They grasped how things and ideas relate to other parts of reality, the “kinship” and order in God’s creation.

This, argued Bishop Flores, was partly a result of their upbringing within a Catholic culture and worldview.

For St. Hildegard, the synthetic impulse was “fertile ground” to produce impressive writings, musical compositions, poetry, moral teaching and scientific studies without ever having the sort of formal schooling that is common to most great thinkers. She had a mind “like Jacob’s ladder,” said Bishop Flores, that ascended to the sublime and descended into practical concerns without difficulty.

This sense of both divine purpose and the relatedness of all reality is valuable to learning, Bishop Flores argued. The synthetic impulse enables the student to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the world around us.

It is “somewhat natural to human beings” and therefore available to non-Catholics, but for a faithful Catholic, the synthetic impulse: . . . becomes robust and fruitful with baptism into the faith; it comes with looking at life and reality from the gut awareness that the source of all that is, is the Good God; this good God loves immensely, and was interested in a garden at creation, not a wild and chaotic forest of beings related only by a competitive need to survive.

He recommended that Catholics spend more time with other people who appreciate the connectedness of all things, especially how humans relate to each other. He mentioned several categories of good company: children, whose thoughts naturally tend to both realism and imagination; the poor, whose dependency makes them appreciate the “reciprocity of human relations;” poets,

writers and other artists, whose work is “reflecting the creative act of the WORD;” farmers, who are attuned to the “natural rhythms of nature;” and the saints, because charity is “the gift of knowing how to relate.”

### **The Confidence of Catholics**

I explored these themes further with Bishop Flores after the lecture. If the synthetic impulse is foundational to a good education, I wondered, does it suggest particular methods and practices in formal Catholic education, or is it cultivated entirely outside of our schools?

Bishop Flores believes that Catholic educators certainly can help nurture students’ synthetic impulse—“if you don’t have it, you have to develop it,” he said. But the point of his lecture was to suggest that Catholics, because of their faith, culture and worldview, tend to come to school already confident in the relatedness of things, making them well-prepared for learning and discernment.

Catholic educators should ask, he said, “How well habituated is the student body to seeing things as interrelated? How well have they maintained a traditional Catholic sense of the connectedness of reality?”

Where the synthetic impulse is noticeably lacking, a Catholic school can help.

“But it works much better if there is already a foundation in the home,” Bishop Flores said.

I asked whether he thinks that, given the very secular culture in which most Catholic families live today, many homes still provide this foundation for young Catholics?

He acknowledged the “very steep undertow” in our culture, which is highly individualistic. But he said there remain “expressions of very deep Catholic life” in prayer, spirituality, music and the arts. This sets many young people “on the road” to perceiving truth and the relations of things.

As for Catholic schools and colleges, it’s clear that many today have drifted away from the integrated learning and strong core curricula that helped reinforce the synthetic impulse for previous generations of Catholics. In his lecture, Bishop Flores lamented the “intellectual culture of endless disciplines and sub-disciplines happily unconcerned with what a colleague across the campus may be doing or thinking.”

What has been lost, he said, “is the sheer human joy of pursuing the signs of relationality we know are present in things that may at times appear disparate and unrelated.” Young people should wonder about the unity of creation, but academia wants them to analyze facts in isolation. Still, that’s not the case throughout Catholic education. Bishop Flores said he is “impressed” by some Catholic schools. It “can be a blessing” that smaller schools have limited resources, he said, because teachers and parents have to work together, increasing the cohesiveness of the community.

He experienced that cohesiveness himself when studying at the University of Dallas, a faithful Catholic college. He was also “very impressed” by what he saw last week at the University of Mary.

Bottom line: there’s much to be restored in education, but “Catholic institutions are in the best position to do it.”

## **Flesh and Blood**

Earlier I mentioned Bishop Flores' recommendation that Catholics spend more time with people in whom the synthetic impulse is especially strong. I asked him to relate this to Catholic education—can schools help provide this for students and faculty?

Obviously schools offer the opportunity for adults to engage with children, one of the groups he mentioned. It's the encounter with children that draws grade school teachers to the profession. But Bishop Flores suggested that college professors are often too isolated in their disciplines and even socially.

"Many theology and philosophy professors, to put it bluntly, need to get out more," he said.

We discussed the value of older students mixing with younger ones, an aspect of homeschooling that I've found particularly healthy for my own kids. Bishop Flores said he encourages high school students to mentor younger ones and develop an ethos of "looking out for each other."

Catholic education can also introduce students to the poor. But the encounter should be more than "social justice" activities and providing material aid, Bishop Flores suggested. It should help students relate humanly to the people they help by getting to know them.

"The poor are not a category," he said. "We've eclipsed the personal encounter, because we've categorized people."

With regard to experiencing the arts, we talked especially about the Hispanic Catholic culture prevalent in his Brownsville Diocese, with its "very tactile" feasts, processions and devotions. Bishop Flores

said these are reminders of early European expressions of Catholic life, like the ornate Polish churches he explored as a youth, which can be "extremely powerful" in transmitting the faith and encouraging wonder.

"The Church needs to recapture some of the ethnic beauty of the Church," he said. And students should be introduced to the saints, especially by the display of relics. Bishop Flores finds that young people "are the most responsive" to such tangible displays of both divine and material reality.

"Christianity becomes an idea until you put some flesh and blood on it," he said.

## **True Catholic Education**

After our conversation, it occurred to me that Bishop Flores' contemplation of the synthetic impulse is helpful to developing a proper sense of Catholic education.

Instilling good "habits of the soul" in young people prepares them for formal schooling, but it is already part of Catholic education in its own right. Catholic education is not an institution with the label "Catholic." It is the project of forming young people in the faith for fully human living and to gain the inheritance promised by Christ.

So when Catholic parents and parishes nurture the synthetic impulse by teaching the faith and living Catholic culture, it is as much an exercise of Catholic education as teaching theology in a classroom.

Blessed John Henry Newman said Catholic education should integrate religion and science so as "to reunite things which were in the beginning joined together by God, and

have been put asunder by man.” By appreciating “the grandly expressive relation between all things that are,” Bishop Flores added, “a Christian is called by grace to be

the mediator of a related world that struggles to live up to its relations.”

Now that sounds like a Catholic education that lives up to its name.

Patrick Reilly

<https://cardinalnewmansociety.org/bishop-flores-every-catholic-kid-needs-school/>

## How Trump Can Expand School Choice

While addressing Congress last week, President Trump called for passage of “an education bill that funds school choice for disadvantaged youth.” He added that families should be able to choose “public, private, charter, magnet, religious or home” schooling. These comments, and his subsequent visit to St. Andrew Catholic School in Orlando, Fla., are encouraging. I hope Mr. Trump will push Congress to make scholarship tax credits available to working-class families nationwide.

These programs provide tax credits for individuals or corporations that donate to nonprofit scholarship organizations. St. Andrew’s is a classic example of how students benefit. Some 300 students at the school receive scholarships through the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship program. Statewide, nearly 98,000 low-income children attend parochial or private schools thanks to this program.

I have seen firsthand why Catholic families and leaders support scholarship tax credits. They help advance educational and economic justice. They strengthen society by creating opportunity for those who might not otherwise have it. Recipients of the credits aren’t the only ones who benefit. Last year the Peabody Journal of Education reviewed 21 studies on how school choice affects test scores of nonparticipating students. Twenty concluded that competition led to improvements in affected public schools.

The taxpayer also saves money. Providing alternatives reduces both school overcrowding and costs. Public-school classrooms would not be able to handle the

considerable influx of children if Catholic and other religious schools closed. We save the public money, and we educate children just as well, if not better, for half the cost when you compare Catholic school tuition with public school spending per pupil.

I have fought for scholarship tax credits in New York since 2012 and have seen the difficulty of winning passage—despite broad and bipartisan support, including, in the past, from Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Democratic and Republican legislators and more than 30 labor unions. We came close to winning passage in 2015 but were blocked in the state Assembly at the behest of teachers unions.

That’s why a national solution is needed to bring relief to families who need it. Since a federal scholarship tax credit program would enact sweeping change swiftly, it needs to be done right.

First, the program should cover all 50 states. Seventeen states, including Vice President Mike Pence’s Indiana, already have robust scholarship tax credits. Children in the other 33 deserve the same opportunities.

The program should allow donors to choose from a broad array of scholarship organizations, such as Inner City Scholarship Fund in the Archdiocese of New York, the national Children’s Scholarship Fund, and the Bison Fund in Buffalo, N.Y.

Finally, a federal scholarship tax credit program must not infringe on religious liberty. The Catholic Church has always

stood in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and our most effective charitable ministry is our schools. A high-quality, values-based education is simply the surest path out of poverty.

For more than 200 years, and preceding the existence of public schools, Catholic schools have been educating children in New York. There are 200,000 Catholic school students in New York State, nearly half in New York City. Adding funds for scholarships for lower- and middle-income families would benefit even more students.

Ninety-seven percent of Catholic high-school students in the Archdiocese of New York  
Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-trump-can-expand-school-choice-1489016469#livefyre-toggle-SB12393089145047054611504583010440920968934>

York graduate in four years, and 95% go on to college. Students in our inner city schools, where 65% of students are at or below the poverty line, match the overall graduation rate.

President Trump's visit to St. Andrew could not come at a better time. I hope he has taken to heart the value our schools provide in educating young minds and strengthening families. Let's encourage him to take the next step in ensuring that more parents across the U.S. have a choice in their children's education.



## How to Save the Soul of Our Catholic Schools

“How can we make our school more Catholic?” This is a real question schools ask, some with perplexity. Is it a new curriculum? Better religion classes? Having the kids come to Mass? The answer is vital for the future of Catholic education. The sociologist Christian Smith notes, from his extensive research on the life of young Catholics, that “we cannot report that Catholic schooling and youth group participation have robust effects on emerging adult faith and practice.”

It is obvious to just about everyone that Catholic education currently is sliding into free-fall. As Smith further reports: “Between 1964 and 1984, 40 percent of American Catholic high schools and 27 percent of Catholic elementary schools closed their doors” and the rate has not decreased. Those that remained open “proved less well grounded in the Catholic faith and therefore less capable of passing on a robust Catholicism to their students.” This reality should lead to some serious soul searching among Catholic educators and clergy. We need to do things differently!

We tend to think of the “Catholic” in Catholic schools like sprinkles that are added on top of an ice cream cone. What makes a school Catholic is religion class and an occasional Mass, but otherwise a school is just a school. Our teachers and administrators have been formed in a secular model and don’t always know how to approach Catholic education as a distinct method of formation. There is not a bureaucratic solution from a committee or focus group that can save a school. Instead, we need a spiritual and intellectual renewal.

The Catholic faith must be the heart and soul of the school, not an add on. A few

accidental elements, however important they may be, are not enough to make a school Catholic. Catholicism should permeate everything the school does, not in an exterior and artificial way, but by naturally shaping the approach to education and formation. There are two general ways of conceiving this. First, the school should form a distinctively Catholic environment or culture. Second, the curriculum must flow from and lead to a Catholic worldview.

On the first point, Pope Benedict XVI made clear that “Catholic schools should therefore seek to foster that unity between faith, culture and life which is the fundamental goal of Christian education” (“Address to the Participants in the Convention of the Diocese of Rome,” June 11, 2007). Note, the goal of education is not employment or practical skills. It is to unite one’s faith and life, to provide integration that should last into adulthood. We could say that Catholic education should teach us how to be a Christian in the world, or to go even deeper, how to be a saint.

Secondly, faith should shape the curriculum, not by artificially trying to make the content Catholic, but by uniting all subjects within a Catholic world view. One great example of this can be found in Stratford Caldecott’s *Beauty for Truth’s Sake*, in which he shows that the logical and mathematical structure of the world flows from the Logos, God’s own truth through which he created the world. He shows how numbers and music reflect this order. Another example can be found in Simon Weil’s relation of mathematics to prayer, which shows how studies affect the soul in a way that flows into the spiritual life.

Here are some practical points of what must be done to make a school more Catholic. Most of them are actually quite simple.

First, just as the Eucharist is the source and summit of the faith, so it must be the heart of the school. The culture of the school should form around the rhythm of the liturgy. At a minimum the school should have Mass weekly, but daily Mass more than anything else would make the Eucharist a priority in our Catholic formation. Eucharistic adoration should also occur on a weekly basis, teaching the kids how to adore and honor Jesus in the Eucharist.

The next most important element consists in the witness of teachers and administrators. They embody the faith in their example and way of teaching and leading. Pope Benedict taught that teachers “must also be ready to lead the commitment made by the entire school community to assist our young people, and their families, to experience the harmony between faith, life, and culture” (“Address to Catholic College Presidents,” April 17, 2008). Hiring must include mission fit and dedication to forming children in the faith. Formation for current teachers is essential to help them grow in their relationship with God and knowledge of the Catholic tradition.

In addition to teachers, we need the witness of clergy and religious as an active presence in the school. Their role will make clear that the school exists as part of the Church’s mission of evangelization. Their presence also will plant seeds for vocations. How will children discover a vocation with a model to guide them? Two dioceses with the highest rate of vocations have all of their high school religion courses taught by priests.

Even secular people expect that a faith-based school will provide strong human formation. If our graduates are not more virtuous and mature than students graduating from the public schools, we have fundamentally failed. Without this formation, how else will our students navigate the challenges of our culture, let alone exercise leadership? Students also need to experience Jesus in a living way, not only in prayer, but also by encountering the poor. Human formation and service should make the teaching of the faith concrete. If it is just words in a book, it will be quickly discarded, as happens more often than not.

Continuing this point, another crucial way of making the faith come alive entails teaching our students how to pray. Prayer is where we meet God most directly. Pope Benedict made this point very clearly at the beginning of *Deus Caritas Est*: “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.” Do our students encounter Christ or do they just pass a test on doctrine? We have to teach them to pray, especially through *lectio divina*, where they learn to enter into a conversation with God, listening to his voice in Scripture and responding to him.

Catholic education is part of a long tradition. One of the first Christian schools opened in the second century, the Catechetical School of Alexandria, with teachers such as Clement and Origen, taught not only the faith, but also philosophy and mathematics. After the fall of Rome, Boethius and Cassiodorus advocated for Christian, classical education, writing textbooks on the trivium and quadrivium. The Church also founded the first universities. Catholics have access to an overwhelming educational,

artistic, literary, and cultural legacy. But, graduates of Catholic schools generally don't encounter this tradition much and if they do it will be remote and abstract. As Christopher Dawson argues in *The Crisis of Western Education*, we have to immerse our students in the living legacy of Christian culture so they can be formed by it, live it, and pass it on to the next generation.

Education is largely a matter of language, which we use to communicate and express ideas (this is true even outside the liberal arts). Latin is the Church's language and learning it opens a doorway to Catholic history, tradition, and liturgy. It helps to impart a distinct identity, including being able to pray in common with other Catholics throughout the world. Practically speaking, it sheds light on the English language as at least thirty percent of its vocabulary comes from Latin and another thirty from French (which itself originates in Latin). Also, Latin helps us to grasp the basics of grammar more easily than through English (probably because of English's much simpler grammar).

The arts provide immersion into the Catholic tradition. The Church has an unrivaled literary, musical, and artistic tradition. As we emphasize the technical elements of education, it is important to remember that deep thinking and expression are something that computers will never master. The liberal arts will be more relevant than ever with the rise of robotics! Literature helps situate students within the story of the Catholicism and to explore moral and spiritual themes in an embodied way. Building on Latin, Gregorian Chant provides a simple and beautiful way to help form a contemplative mind and it also laid the foundation for the development of classical music. The visual arts are essential for cultivating an

imagination informed by the faith. Students should be familiar with the great, Catholic artists and their works.

Immersion in the beauty of the tradition should overflow into school Masses. School Masses are not known for their reverence or beauty, especially in music. If students learn to be prayerful in school, this should express itself primarily at Mass, as the children will know how to enter into its mysteries to meet God there. The homily should confidently lead the children into the mystery of the liturgy and its readings, reserving a conversation and Q&As for their increased presence in the classroom.

Finally, the school should look Catholic. The environment should be enriched by Catholic symbols and the beauty of Catholic art. Archbishop Michael Miller, in *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, expresses this point well:

If Catholic schools are to be true to their identity, they should try to suffuse their environment with this delight in the sacramental. Therefore they should express physically and visibly the external signs of Catholic culture through images, signs, symbols, icons and other objects of traditional devotion. A chapel, classroom crucifixes and statues, signage, celebrations and other sacramental reminders of Catholic ecclesial life, including good art which is not explicitly religious in its subject matter, should be evident.

I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that Catholic schools must be more Catholic or they will not be differentiated enough from public schools to survive. As we witness an enormous crisis of public education, we should reflect on how we have followed these schools in their methods to our own

demise. The Church has its own legacy of education, which has been marginalized in the last fifty years, but which must be revitalized. If we truly embrace our faith in our own schools, in forming a Catholic

culture and worldview, we can save our schools and begin to shape the culture more broadly through the lives of our graduates. By saving the soul of our schools, we'll help save our own souls!

R. Jared Staudt

*<http://www.crisismagazine.com/2017/save-soul-catholic-schools#.WNpfKZeBrv0.email>*

## Catholic Education Matters

“Take care and be earnestly on your guard not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children’s children.” (Deuteronomy 4:5-9)

There are two equal and opposite mistakes people often make about Catholic secondary education – both well intentioned, both fatal for the future of the Church.

The first mistake is to treat Catholic secondary education as if it were public school with a Mass and then to start thinking about a Catholic high school the way many people think about other high schools: as merely a means for getting into a “good college.” You have to keep your grades “up,” but those grades are often disassociated from any actual skill at things like reading complex books, writing literate prose, or making a solid argument. “Keeping one’s grades up” for people who hold this view often has more to do with parents and principals browbeating high school teachers into raising grades and lowering expectations than with students mastering a subject.

Some people appear to assume that some magic transformation will happen in college. Bored students, abused by years of secondary education, will blossom miraculously in four short years. I teach in a college. I’m not saying it never happens, but it’s like thinking you can send your son to college to learn to be a pro basketball player. Most players, even very good ones, don’t make it beyond college ball. And if they’re not very good when they go in, it’s highly unlikely they’ll get the chance to improve in that sink-or-swim environment. Students

struggling to get C’s doing high school-level work rarely get A’s doing college-level work.

While proponents of this first view sometimes think it’s a good thing for students to go to Mass and Confession, they rarely believe that courses in theology are worth much time or effort. The substance of theology, centuries of high-level intellectual effort and profound reflection, counts for little, it seems. It’s only important that the theology teacher go to student sports and theater productions, be supportive, and show that theology (God, the Church) cares.

But God help the teacher whose low grade in theology endangers a son or daughter’s prospects at a “top school”! Hell hath no fury like a parent whose hopes for a scholarship are dashed by a low-grade in . . . theology. It’s like being denied Harvard because you got a low grade in basket weaving. The indignity! The absurdity!

A less common mistake (opposite in one way but that ends up reinforcing the first), is made by people who care little about the intellectual formation of the students as long as the school is “getting them into heaven.” As long as there is Mass and Confession and the priest or sisters seem orthodox, then all is well. Whether students in the school are actually learning anything; whether anyone is cutting through the heavy layers of teen cynicism and the white noise of the culture; whether they are learning to live as Christian-Catholics by desire and design and not merely by default – these are questions too rarely asked. If the school announces itself as “orthodox,” then it’s supposed to be fine.

Neither party seems to care much for a distinctively Catholic education: that profound and systematic search for an understanding of faith which has inspired centuries of great minds from Justin Martyr to Augustine, John Chrysostom, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Dante, Theresa of Avila, Newman, Pieper, Chesterton, and Pope Saint John Paul the Great. It was the faith in the ultimate unity of truth that gave rise in the Middle Ages to that venerable institution, the university. Centuries of the most profound reflections on the human condition, and most of it relegated to dusty bookshelves in a backroom in favor of hugs, sports teams, STEM, and yet another school assembly on sexual ethics.

There is nothing wrong with any of these things, but when you get kids in college who read and write at a sixth- or seventh-grade level (no more than five pages of reading for homework; no more than two or three sentences in an essay having to do with one another); know little more about their faith than that the Catholic Church is against abortion and pre-marital sex; can't tell you what Pentecost is or who Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were (this is not uncommon); and have not only never read Dante, Chesterton, or Newman, but have absolutely no idea who they are, then you suspect maybe somewhere someone had the priorities wrong.

Randall Smith

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2017/03/29/catholic-education-matters/>

Fulton Sheen was one of the great lights of a generation ago. He tried to impart to the lay faithful the richness of the Catholic intellectual tradition, with frequent discussions of Descartes, Pascal, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and many others in order to instruct the simple Catholic laborers and housewives who watched his television show. He clearly believed this was the way to help Catholics make their faith a living reality amid the complexities of the modern world.

Those with the benefit of high levels of secular education who face the challenges of a complex social and political culture need high levels of understanding of their faith; otherwise the faith will soon seem childish and decay into a dead letter, an empty shell: Catholicism with no conviction.

When will Catholic schools once again have the faith Fulton Sheen did in the inherent intelligence of the lay faithful sufficient enough to throw out the boring, empty trash they traffic in now – in order to give young people the real thing? A hundred pages of any modern theology textbook will never be worth a single page of Augustine's Confessions, John of the Cross's Dark Night of the Soul, or the Gospel of John.

Such an education is our children's birthright. Only a fool would sell it off for a mess of pottage.