

CATHOLIC EDUCATOR



BEARING WITNESS TO THE BEAUTY OF TRUTH

~ A letter from Timothy Schmaltz

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In this Edition

From the President's Desk

A. Joseph Indelicato

The Five Essential Marks of a Catholic School

excerpt from a speech by:
Archbishop Michael Miller

The Sponsorship Model:
Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Dr. Sal Ferrera

What Makes a School Catholic?

Dr. Curtis Hancock

The Secret of Pittsburgh's Success

A. Joseph Indelicato

Integrating Faith and Academics:
The Catholic High School Honor Roll

Dr. Kevin Schmiesing

Bearing Witness to the Beauty of Truth:
A Letter from the Artist

Timothy Schmaltz

A Letter from the President

April 2nd, 2007

Dear Friends,

It is no secret that, on the whole, the last half-century has not been kind to Catholic education in the United States. As Archbishop J. Michael Miller, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, recently summed up the situation:

- There has been a 30% decline in enrollment since 1930 *despite the fact that the Catholic population has grown by over 300%!*
- Since 1960, the market penetration of Catholic secondary schools has decreased from 10% (800,000 Catholic school students to 8 million public school students) to just over 5% (700,000 Catholic/13 million public).
- In 1965 there were 180,000 religious sisters in the U.S.; today there are 75,000, and over 50% of them are 70 years of age or older.
- Since 1990, the U.S. has experienced a net loss of 760 Catholic Schools.¹

The Catholic Education Foundation was established to foster a renewal in Catholic education across the United States, most especially (though not exclusively) in Catholic secondary schools. For the past several years, we have been encouraging individuals who benefited from the Catholic school system to make financial contributions in honor of their mentors, which then makes it possible for others to benefit from Catholic education by funding:

1. Student scholarships;
2. Teacher formation programs;

The recruitment and retention of quality educators through competitive compensation.

Thus, our original intent was to foster renewal through financial support. Yet along the way, we unwittingly stumbled upon a second source of renewal: *an broad, on-going conversation through which all of us interested in the recovery of Catholic education can share ideas, raise awareness of new programs and initiatives, and expand the apostolate.* The launch of the *Catholic Educator* is our attempt to institutionalize this conversation.

To date the Catholic Education Foundation has provided thousands of dollars in scholarship money to deserving and needy students. Yet providing the proper funding is only a small part of reviving our Catholic schools: we must also recover a true understanding of Catholic education and provide our teachers and administrators with the resources they need to so educate. The Foundation stands committed to carrying on John Paul II's *new evangelization*, and welcomes your help.

Warmly,

A. Joseph Indelicato

¹Miller, Archbishop J. Michael. *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*. Solidarity Association: Atlanta, 2006.

The Church Teaches . . .

The following is an abridgement of a Keynote Address delivered in 2005 to a conference on the future of Catholic education by Archbishop J. Michael Miller, Secretary for the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education. The conference was sponsored by the Solidarity Association, which has since issued an updated monograph entitled "The Holy See's Teaching On Catholic Schools" published by Sophia Press. The full text of the keynote address is available at <http://publicaffairs.cua.edu/speeches/06ArchbishopMillerKeynote.htm>.

Solidarity Association

Sept. 14, 2005

Dear Friends:

.....

Right from the days of their first appearance in Europe, Catholic schools have generously served the needs of the "socially and economically disadvantaged" and have given "special attention to those who are weakest."¹ The vision set out by the Second Vatican Council confirmed this age-old commitment: the Church offers her educational service in the first place, the Fathers affirmed, to "those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of faith."² The Solidarity Association, with its providential name which embodies the heritage of our beloved Pope John Paul II, is inserted in the long tradition of St. Angela Merici, St. Joseph of Calasanz, St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, St. John Bosco and so many other Religious and lay people who generously dedicated themselves to Christ's love for the poor, the humble and the marginalized in their educational apostolate.

My intervention's theme, "the Holy See's teaching on Catholic education," is vast, far too vast to be summarized in one brief lecture. Even so, I will try to introduce into the conversation the major concerns that can be found in the Vatican documents published since Vatican II's landmark Decree on Christian education *Gravissimum Educationis*. In this talk I shall draw on the conciliar document, the 1983 Code of Canon Law in its section on schools, and the five major documents published by the Congregation for Catholic Education: *The Catholic School* (1977); *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (1982); *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1988); *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997); and *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines* (2002). Among these documents, in particular I would like to recommend for your study *The Catholic School* and *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*. First I will say something about parental and government rights, followed by some remarks on the school as an instrument of evangelization, and then describe the five components which must be present if a school is to have a genuinely Catholic identity.

¹Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 15.

²Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 9; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 70.

I. Parental and State Responsibilities

It is the clear teaching of the Church, constantly reiterated by the Holy See, that parents are the first educators of their children. Parents have the original, primary and inalienable right to educate them in conformity with the family's moral and religious convictions.³ They are educators precisely because they are parents. At the same time, the vast majority of parents share their educational responsibilities with other individuals and/or institutions, primarily the school.

Elementary education is, then, "an extension of parental education; it is extended and cooperative home schooling."⁴ In a real sense schools are extensions of the home. Parents, not schools, not the State, and not the Church, have the primary moral responsibility of educating children to adulthood. The principle of subsidiarity must always govern relations between families and the Church and State in this regard. As Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1994 Letter to Families:

Subsidiarity thus complements paternal and maternal love and confirms its fundamental nature, inasmuch as all other participants in the process of education are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents, with their consent and, to a certain degree, with their authorization.⁵

....

II. The Church, Evangelization and Education

What role does the Church play in assisting Catholic families in education? By her very nature the Church has the right and the obligation to proclaim the Gospel to all nations (cf. Mt 28:20). In the words of Gravissimum Educationis:

To fulfill the mandate she has received from her divine founder of proclaiming the mystery of salvation to all men and of restoring all things in Christ, Holy Mother the Church must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing on his heavenly calling. Therefore, she has a role in the progress and development of education.⁶

...

Catholic schools participate in the Church's evangelizing mission, of bringing the Gospel to the ends of the earth. More particularly, they are places of evangelization for the young. As truly ecclesial institutions, they are "the privileged environment in which Christian education is

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

⁴Peter Redpath, "Foreword," in Curtis L. Hancock, *Recovering a Catholic Philosophy of Elementary Education* (Mount Pocono: Newman House Press, 2005), 19.

⁵John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 16.

carried out.”⁷ Catholic schools also have a missionary thrust, by means of which they make a significant contribution “to the evangelizing mission of the Church throughout the world, including those areas in which no other form of pastoral work is possible.”⁸

Precisely because of this evangelizing mission, our schools, if they are to be genuinely ecclesial—and they must be that if they are to be authentically Catholic—must be integrated within the organic pastoral activity of the parish, diocesan and universal Church.⁹

“Unfortunately, there are instances in which the Catholic school is not perceived as an integral part of organic pastoral work, at times it is considered alien, or very nearly so, to the community. It is urgent, therefore, to sensitize parochial and diocesan communities to the necessity of their devoting special care to education and schools.”¹⁰

The Catholic school, therefore, should play a vital role in the pastoral activity of the diocese.¹¹ It is a pastoral instrument of the Church for her mission of evangelization. The bishop’s leadership is pivotal in lending support and guidance to Catholic schools: “only the bishop can set the tone, ensure the priority and effectively present the importance of the cause to the Catholic people.”¹²

III. Five Essential “Marks” of Catholic Schools

Now let’s turn to a discussion of the question to which the Holy See addresses its most serious attention. Its documents repeatedly emphasize that certain characteristics must be present if a school is to be considered Catholic. Like the “marks” of the Church proclaimed in the Creed, so, too, does it identify the principal features of a school qua Catholic. For the purpose of this talk I will expand the four ecclesial marks to five scholastic ones!

....

1. Inspired by a Supernatural Vision

The enduring foundation on which the Church builds her educational philosophy is the conviction that it is a process which forms the whole child, especially with his or her eyes fixed on the vision of God.¹³ The specific purpose of a Catholic education is the formation of boys and girls who will be good citizens of this world, enriching society with the leaven of the Gospel, but who will also be citizens of the world to come.¹⁴ Catholic schools have a straightforward

⁷Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 11; cf Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 9; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 33.

⁸Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 15.

⁹Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 44.

¹⁰for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 12.

¹¹Cf. *The Catholic School*, 72; Congregation for Bishops, *Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2004), 133.

¹²John Paul II, *Ad limina Address to American Bishops*, 28 October 1983, 7.

¹³Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 29.

¹⁴Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 8: “The Catholic school, while it is open, as it must be, to the situation of the contemporary world, leads its students to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepares them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community.”

goal: to foster the growth of good Catholic human beings who love God and neighbor and thus fulfill their destiny of becoming saints.

If we fail to keep in mind this high supernatural vision, all our talk about Catholic schools will be no more than “a gong booming or a cymbal clashing” (I Cor 13:1).

.....

2. Founded on a Christian Anthropology

Emphasis on the supernatural destiny of students, on their holiness, brings with it a profound appreciation of the need to perfect children in all their dimensions as images of God (cf. Gen 1:26-27). As we know, grace builds on nature. Because of this complementarity of the natural and supernatural, it is especially important that all those involved in Catholic education have a sound understanding of the human person. Especially those who establish, teach in and direct a Catholic school must draw on a sound anthropology that addresses the requirements of both natural and supernatural perfection.¹⁵

For Catholic schools to achieve their goal of forming children, all those involved—parents, teachers, staff, administrators and trustees—must clearly understand who the human person is. Again and again the Holy See’s documents repeat the need for an educational philosophy built on the solid foundation of sound Christian anthropology. How do they describe such an anthropological vision? In *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* the Vatican proposes a response:

In today’s pluralistic world, the Catholic educator must consciously inspire his or her activity with the Christian concept of the person, in communion with the Magisterium of the Church. It is a concept which includes a defense of human rights, but also attributes to the human person the dignity of a child of God; it attributes the fullest liberty, freed from sin itself by Christ, the most exalted destiny, which is the definitive and total possession of God himself, through love. It establishes the strictest possible relationship of solidarity among all persons; through mutual love and an ecclesial community. It calls for the fullest development of all that is human, because we have been made masters of the world by its Creator. Finally, it proposes Christ, Incarnate Son of God and perfect Man, as both model and means; to imitate him, is, for all men and women, the inexhaustible source of personal and communal perfection.¹⁶

.....

¹⁵Cf. Hancock, *Recovering a Catholic Philosophy of Education*, 34. In a speech addressed to Catholic educators in New Orleans, Pope John Paul II presented: “the pressing challenge of clearly identifying the aims of Catholic education, and applying proper methods in Catholic elementary and secondary education. . . . It is the challenge of fully understanding the educational enterprise, of properly evaluating its content, and of transmitting the full truth concerning the human person, created in God’s image and called to life in Christ through the Holy Spirit” (*Address to Catholic Educators*, New Orleans [12 September 1987], 7).

¹⁶Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 18; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 63; Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 35.

3. Animated by Communion and Community

A third important teaching on Catholic schools that has emerged in the Holy See's documents in recent years is its emphasis on the community aspect of the Catholic school, a dimension rooted both in the social nature of the human person and the reality the Church as a "the home and the school of communion."¹⁷ That the Catholic school is an educational community "is one of the most enriching developments for the contemporary school."¹⁸ The Congregation's Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School sums up this new emphasis:

The declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* notes an important advance in the way a Catholic school is thought of: the transition from the school as an institution to the school as a community. This community dimension is, perhaps, one result of the new awareness of the Church's nature as developed by the Council. In the Council texts, the community dimension is primarily a theological concept rather than a sociological category.¹⁹

....

I would like to mention three particular ways in which the Holy See would like to see the development of the school as a community: the teamwork or collaboration among all those involved; the interaction of students with teachers and the school's physical environment.

....

4. Imbued with a Catholic Worldview

A fourth distinctive characteristic of Catholic schools, which always finds a place in the Holy See's teaching is this. Catholicism should permeate not just the class period of catechism or religious education, or the school's pastoral activities, but the entire curriculum. The Vatican documents speak of "an integral education, an education which responds to all the needs of the human person."²⁰ This is why the Church establishes schools: because they are a privileged place which fosters the formation of the whole person.²¹ An integral education aims to develop gradually every capability of every student: their intellectual, physical, psychological, moral and religious dimensions. It is "intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person."²²

To be integral or "whole," Catholic schooling must be constantly inspired and guided by the Gospel. As we have seen, the Catholic school would betray its purpose if it failed to take as its

¹⁷John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 43.

¹⁸Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 22.

¹⁹Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 31; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 18.

²⁰Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 17: "The integral formation of the human person, which is the purpose of education, includes the development of all the human faculties of the students, together with preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, becoming aware of the transcendental, and religious education. Every school, and every educator in the school, ought to be striving 'to form strong and responsible individuals, who are capable of making free and correct choices,' thus preparing young people 'to open themselves more and more to reality, and to form in themselves a clear idea of the meaning of life' (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 31); cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 3; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 99.

²¹Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 8, 26.

²²Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 29.

goal: to foster the growth of good Catholic human beings who love God and neighbor and thus touchstone the person of Christ and his Gospel: “It derives all the energy necessary for its educational work from him.”²³

....

5. Sustained by the Witness of Teaching

Lastly I would like to close with a few observations about the vital role teachers play in ensuring a school’s Catholic identity. With them lies the primary responsibility for creating a unique Christian school climate, as individuals and as a community.²⁴ Indeed, “it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose.”²⁵ Consequently the Holy See’s documents pay considerable attention to the vocation of teachers and their specific participation in the Church’s mission. Theirs is a calling and not simply the exercise of a profession.²⁶

In a word, those involved in Catholic schools, with very few exceptions, should be practising Catholics committed to the Church and living her sacramental life. Despite the difficulties involved—which you know all too well—it is, I believe, a serious mistake to be anything other than “rigorists” about the personnel hired. The Catholic school system in Ontario, Canada, where I was raised, when pressured by public authorities for what they regarded as reasonable accommodations, relaxed this requirement for a time. The result was disastrous. With the influx of non-Catholic teachers, many schools ended up by seriously compromising their Catholic identity. Children absorbed, even if they were not taught, a soft indifferentism which sustained neither their practice of the faith nor their ability to imbue society with authentically Christian values. Principals, pastors, trustees and parents share, therefore, in the serious duty of hiring teachers who meet the standards of doctrine and integrity of life essential to maintaining and advancing a school’s Catholic identity.

....

J. Michael Miller, CSB

²³Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 55.

²⁴Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 26; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 19.

²⁵Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 8.

²⁶Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 37; cf Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 19.

Mark 1: Inspired by a Supernatural Vision

The Sponsorship Model: Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

By Sal Ferrera

Theodore James Ryken founded the Brothers of Saint Francis Xavier on June 15, 1839, in a small house in Bruges, Belgium. Brother Ryken's vision, as it is captured in the Xaverian Brothers' mission statement, was to "form a community of laymen who as religious brothers would participate in the Church's mission of evangelization through a life of gospel service lived in solidarity and availability among the people."¹ Although the early years of the community were marked by a doubt borne of few recruits and extreme poverty, today there are thirteen schools run by the Brothers of Saint Francis Xavier, eleven of which are here in the United States.

In the face of a decline in the number of Religious in their community, the Xaverian Brothers have adopted a unique model for preserving the supernatural mission of Theodore Ryken and Saint Francis Xavier in schools now run largely by lay men and women. This model, commonly referred to as the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School (XBSS), offers a useful paradigm for other communities of consecrated Religious battling to preserve the Catholic identity of their schools in an increasingly secular culture.

* * *

In 1984, the Xaverian Brothers held a forum to explore ways to perpetuate the Xaverian educational charism despite the obvious diminishing presence of the Brothers actively involved in the day-to-day conduct of their schools. At this gathering, the Brothers decided that the most effective avenues of influence available to them were at the governance and leadership levels within the particular academic institutions. Based on these discussions, the Xaverian Brothers designed the XBSS program to keep Xaverian schools open and positioned for a future of growth by inviting dedicated and committed lay people to participate in the Xaverian educational charism, while playing a careful role in the professional and spiritual formation of the faculty and staff. At the heart of the XBSS program is the involvement by the Brothers of lay colleagues as collaborators at every level of the school's governance and leadership, while the Brothers themselves take an active leadership role **only** at the Board of Trustees level in each school.

More than a decade later, in 1995, the Xaverian Brothers sought to solidify the XBSS Institution. Out of their 24th General Chapter came a call "to stewardship for the Church's mission and ministry of education in the tradition and spirit of the Xaverian charism."² In response to this call, the Brothers formulated rigorous vetting and formation criteria for lay men and women who seek to serve in leadership positions within XBSS schools. Such criteria provides significant

¹Xaverian Brothers, 1988, p.7

²Under *Calls, Goals and Criteria* in "Foundational Documents" on the website for the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools at <http://www.xbss.org/html/foundationaldocuments.html>. Last accessed 2/25/07.

assurance of that the supernatural vision of the Xaverian community's founder, Theodore Ryken, will be preserved within each distinct institution.

These criteria include:

- In-service training for all Board members of each school on the spirit of the Xaverian charism, the XBSS governance model, and expectations for mission effectiveness.
- The chief administrator of the XBSS must demonstrate familiarity with and commitment to the expectations and demands of all aspects of Catholic education.
- Formational activities for all administrators, faculty and staff in XBSSs to help them understand the spirit of the Xaverian charism.
- Stringent selection and development process for school personnel on the basis of their educational and professional competencies, their effectiveness in working with youth, their understanding of Catholic education, and their willingness to participate actively in the Church's ministry of education.
- Periodic forums for faculty and staff from all the Sponsored Schools with programs dealing with various spiritual and professional formational issues.³

As membership in their community declines, the Xaverian Brothers choose to share responsibility for mission, governance, administration, and educational ministry with lay persons of the school community (teacher, parents, students, alumni). As the face of the Church has changed, so too has the Brothers' implementation of the Founder's vision evolved to include lay persons who share the same passion for the important work of education and forming young people in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet the Brothers are careful to make their mark on the spiritual formation of the leaders of their school, cognizant of the fact that leaders will mold the cultures of the institutions in their charge. Thus, while the Xaverian Brothers provide the spiritual support needed to realize this mission and ministry, their partnership with lay educators represents a new understanding of Church and allows the Congregation of the Xaverian Brothers to fulfill their mission in the Sponsored Schools today.

Dr. Sal Ferrera was appointed the first lay president of Xaverian High School over a decade ago. Since that time, he has overseen the growth of the school's endowment from \$60,000 to over \$14 million.

³*Ibid.*

Mark 2: Founded on a Christian Anthropology

What makes a school Catholic?

By Curtis L. Hancock

Catholic parents are usually grateful that their children are enrolled in Catholic schools. Often they punctuate their expression of thanks with the remark that “at least there I know my kids are getting some instruction in the Catholic Faith.” When I hear such a remark, I get the impression that sometimes parents think that a school is Catholic because of religious instruction and that the “school part,” the rest of the curriculum, is just a vehicle for catechism. Now, while we certainly celebrate that Catholic schools train children in the Faith, we may still caution parents not to overlook something important: a Catholic school is or should be Catholic in the whole of its curriculum, not just in the part specific to religious instruction. For, while catechism is at the center of Catholic education, the substance of a Catholic school involves religious instruction and more besides.

This follows naturally when one considers that the aim of Catholic schooling is development of the whole person. To fulfill its mission, a Catholic school must do justice to the complex vision of the human person emanating from the Gospel. This vision includes our spiritual destiny, but it includes our natural state as well. Human beings are first natural creatures, who are called by their Christian faith to a spiritual life. But the one does not rule out or defeat the other. A basic Catholic teaching is that grace perfects nature; it does not destroy or replace it.

This complex vision of the human person is evident when Jesus commands at Matthew 22:37 that we should love the Lord our God with our hearts, with our souls, and with all our intelligence. Here he is saying that we are to take our natural gifts, in this case those special powers that make us human in the first place, and through the grace of the Holy Spirit convert them into powers for Christian living. This spiritual fulfillment of our human nature is our perfection. Here also is the fullness of education, since true education seeks to perfect us. To play on a

remark by St. Thomas Aquinas: Catholic education takes the water of human nature and converts it into the wine of Christian life.

So, whenever instruction is developing our human potentials, it is genuinely Catholic. Accordingly, Catholic instruction does not take place only in the religious education classroom. It occurs also in the gymnasium, the art studio, and the English class. By perfecting any and every aspect of our human nature, we conform to God’s will. For God’s aim is to make us his friends in the fullness of our humanity.

Another way of describing the task of Catholic education is to speak of it as a “liberation.” The Gospel aims to redeem and save us. But it also aims to set us free. It prescribes an authentic sense of freedom and warns against its counterfeit. What is that counterfeit? It is the belief that freedom consists in pursuing whatever we want. Christian wisdom builds on our knowledge of human nature to caution us against that mistake. Once we know what it is to be human, we can judge how humans should live their lives. It is a false and destructive idea of freedom to want something that undermines our humanity, a warning captured in D. H. Lawrence’s remark that a cry for freedom misguided by ignorance “is a rattling of chains and always was.”

Accordingly, a Catholic school conveys a genuine freedom, even if it is paradoxical. The paradox of authentic freedom is that it rests on habit formation. Every good teacher knows what every good parent knows: children thrive in an environment of order and benevolent discipline. These conditions protect them from maladjustment and instill self-control. Furthermore, the cultivation of habits in general insures a productive, not an aimless or destructive, freedom. Freedom is not just choice; it is choice grounded in habits, learning, and skills. Once a person is skillful, he or she is able to exercise choices in ways that are truly rewarding. Without learning or habits, a child's life is like a cork bobbing on the water's surface, at the mercy of this or that wave or current. Such a life deprives a person of the self-mastery and intelligent choice defining an autonomous life.

Accordingly, Catholic education aims at nothing less than a genuine "liberal education," from the Latin, *liberare*, which means to be set free. Catholic education liberates our human potentials so that they can be actualized and habituated in a truly human way. If so, we have a moral duty, a call of conscience, to bring to maturity our human potentials. Since grace perfects our nature, our human potentials cooperate, and do not conflict, with our Christian calling. This is a liberal education that comprehends the whole curriculum of a Catholic school.

By appreciating that Catholic education tries to make excellent our faith-informed human nature, we can specify the tasks of teaching: to habituate the child (and later the adult) in spiritual, intellectual, emotional, moral, and physical excellence. These aims cover the whole curriculum. Hence, a Catholic school is truly and fully Catholic not just because of religious instruction, but also because of the "school part." Parents, educators, administrators, and students should celebrate that their school aspires to be Catholic in all its functions and programs, a school that is Catholic from the inside out.

*Dr. Curtis Hancock is a full professor at Rockhurst University and holds the Joseph M. Freeman Chair of Philosophy. His most recent book is **Recovering a Catholic Philosophy of Elementary Education**.*

Mark 3: Animated by Communion and Community

The Secret of Pittsburgh's Success

By A. Joseph Indelicato

No community may be in communion unless its members are united around a common good. It is the role of the community's leader to identify that common good, and to order the community's activity around it. For this reason, Archbishop J. Michael Miller remarks that "[t]he bishop's leadership is pivotal in lending support and guidance to Catholic schools: 'only the bishop can set the tone, ensure the priority and effectively present the importance of the cause to the Catholic people.'"¹ No contemporary bishop exemplifies the fulfillment of his episcopal responsibilities better in this regard than Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl.

Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl is known nationally for his emphasis on education. Appointed sixth Archbishop of Washington in May 2006 and installed on June 22, Archbishop Wuerl is chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Catechesis and chairman of the board of the National Catholic Educational Association. He was involved in developing the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, published in 2006, and is the author of several books and numerous articles on the Catholic Faith.

As public debate has focused on the quality and financing of education, Archbishop Wuerl has been at the forefront of finding innovative ways to make Catholic education affordable and accessible to all. He is deeply committed to the Archdiocese of Washington's Center City Consortium in its effort to work with the wider community to sustain inner city parochial schools and bring a high quality, faith-based education to at-risk children. During his 18 years as Bishop of Pittsburgh, he founded The Extra Mile Education Foundation, in cooperation with the business and foundation community, to endow and sustain parochial schools in Pittsburgh's inner-city. The Crossroads Scholarship Program distributes scholarships to graduates from the Extra Mile schools so they might attend Catholic high schools, while the Bishop's Education Fund, founded in 1995, has distributed substantial tuition assistance for over 23,000 students.

The results of Bishop Wuerl's efforts in Pittsburgh are astounding. According to the Terra Nova Achievement Tests in 2005 (for grades two through eight, given to over 19,000 students diocese-wide) and 2004's Iowa Tests of Educational Development (given to approximately 1,800 Catholic ninth- and tenth-graders), Pittsburgh's Catholic youth handily outperformed their public school counterparts. Fifth-graders in the Pittsburgh Diocese read at the 10.0 grade level, while fifth-grade public school students tended to read at the 5.7 level. Eighth-graders had impressive reading scores at the 12.9 grade level, compared to the national average of eighth-graders reading at the 8.7 level. Tenth-graders read at the college level, while the national norm was at the sophomore level. Math scores reflected academic superiority as well. The payoff: 97% of graduates from the Diocese continued on to post-secondary education following their 2005 graduations.

¹John Paul II, *Ad limina Address to American Bishops*, 28 October 1983, 7.

Perhaps a more significant indicator of success of then-Bishop Wuerl's commitment to Catholic schools, though, is the market penetration of Catholic education within the Diocese. Of a school-age population of approximately 65,000, over 32,000 students attend Catholic schools – a market penetration of close to 50%! Further, of the 104 elementary schools in the Diocese, only nine of the elementary schools are consolidated, while the other ninety-five are attached to parishes. This assures not only financial assistance, but the care and spiritual nourishment of the schools by both the pastoral staff and parishioners. While Catholic schools may be closing at an alarming rate around the country, the Diocese of Pittsburgh is a wonderful reminder that reviving Catholic education begins with strong leadership.

A. Joseph Indelicato is President of Caritas Consulting, LLC and the Catholic Education Foundation, respectively, both of which are located in Rochester, New York.

Mark 4: Imbued with a Catholic Worldview

Integrating Faith and Academics: A Report on the CHSHR's Academic Component

By Dr. Kevin Schmiesing

In 2004, the Acton Institute, a non-profit educational organization in Grand Rapids, Michigan, inaugurated an annual program, the Catholic High School Honor Roll (CHSHR). The program's goal is to promote excellence in Catholic education by recognizing the top fifty Catholic high schools in the United States.

The Honor Roll's assessment process is comprised of three dimensions: academics, Catholic identity, and civic education. Animated by the Second Vatican Council's call for Catholic education to prepare students for both the "earthly city" and the "Kingdom of God," the Honor Roll requires that applicants demonstrate outstanding commitment to all of these areas.

In his landmark address on Catholic education, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Archbishop Michael Miller, insisted, "Catholicism should permeate not just the class period of catechism or religious education, or the school's pastoral activities, but the entire curriculum." The CHSHR recognizes the importance of this mark of Catholic education and attempts to measure schools' success in achieving this aim. While this article will focus on the CHSHR's academics component, Archbishop Miller's remarks point to the fact that the various dimensions of Catholic education, though distinct, are ultimately inseparable. Therefore, it is only natural that the discussion will include cross-reference to other portions of the CHSHR evaluation process.

Within the mark of "imbuing Catholicism" throughout the curriculum, Archbishop Miller includes discussion of two subpoints: the "search for wisdom and truth"; and "culture, faith, and life." Under the latter heading, Miller notes, "Schools prepare students to relate the Catholic Faith to their particular culture and to live that Faith in practice." These points illustrate the importance of academic excellence in Catholic high schools. To engage the culture, students must be adequately equipped with the necessary intellectual tools. More mundanely, given the competition of free government schools, it is critical for their survival that Catholic schools maintain (or, where necessary, regain) their reputation for outstanding academic performance.

To evaluate schools' achievement in this area, the CHSHR takes into account the following items: standardized test scores (PSAT or equivalent); number of years of mandatory course work in various subject areas; and Advanced Placement activity (number of course and test pass rates). The CHSHR staff's constant communication with high school officials ensures that these measures do not become outdated. For example, recognizing that some elite schools are moving away from AP tests to other methods of high-achievement instruction, the CHSHR is developing alternative measures of assessment in that area.

The CHSHR, appreciating the diverse clienteles of Catholic high schools across the United States, attempts to take into account the socio-economic status of a school's students. Having assessed tuition levels, tuition assistance rates, and admission selectivity, the scoring method

applies a multiplier that rewards academic achievement in schools that serve more challenging groups of students. The effect of this adjustment mechanism is that inner-city and open admission schools can be competitive with suburban and highly selective schools.

Returning to the aforementioned point about the integration of the various sections of the CHSHR evaluation process, it is important to note the close relation of the academics and Catholic identity dimensions. “Instruction should be authentically Catholic in content and methodology across the entire program of studies,” says Archbishop Miller. That goal is not impossible, but certainly more difficult, to reach where the faculty is not comprised predominantly of practicing Catholics. In light of this, the CHSHR survey instrument asks questions concerning the percentage of Catholic faculty and the existence of programs to enhance the faculty’s understanding of and commitment to Catholicism.

The extent to which a Catholic worldview informs the curriculum is also assessed through the civic education component of the CHSHR. That survey section asks questions concerning the knowledge and use of Catholic social teaching within the instruction of civics, government, and economics. With Archbishop Miller, the CHSHR stresses the role of theology within the curriculum by focusing on that subject in its Catholic identity component. At the same time, it also shares the prelate’s concern that “we must always take special care to avoid thinking that a Catholic school’s distinctiveness rests solely on the shoulders of its religious education program.” The CHSHR’s questions about Catholic social teaching, put to teachers of business, government, and economics, demonstrate this concern.

Even as Catholic high schools strive with varying levels of success to approach the ideal laid out by the Church’s teaching on education—and summarized by Archbishop Miller—so the CHSHR attempts imperfectly to measure this success. Over three years of operation the Honor Roll has benefited from the feedback of school administrators and others and continually improved its scoring mechanism. With the cooperation of schools, parents, and all the stakeholders in Catholic education, the CHSHR hopes to encourage Catholic high schools to approach ever closer the goal articulated so eloquently by Archbishop Miller: “An integral education aims to develop gradually every capability of every student: their intellectual, physical, psychological, moral and religious dimensions.”

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Mark 5: Sustained by Gospel Witness

Bearing Witness to the Beauty of Truth

Article Eight of Part Three of the Catechism of the Catholic Church is an elaboration of the Eighth Commandment, “you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”¹ In elaborating on the full breadth of meaning connoted by the term “witness,” Section VI of Article Eight explores “Truth, Beauty, and Sacred Art.” Here the Church acknowledges not only that “Truth in words . . . is necessary to man, who is endowed with intellect,” but that “Truth can also find other complementary forms of human expression”² – namely, Art.

“Arising from talent given by the Creator and from man’s own effort,” the catechism goes on to say, “art is a form of practical wisdom, uniting knowledge and skill, to give form to the truth of reality in a language accessible to sight or hearing.”³ “Sacred art is true and beautiful when its form corresponds to its particular vocation: evoking and glorifying, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God – the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ.”⁴ In other words, the role of Sacred Art is to bear witness to the beauty of God’s creation, and to inspire in others a reverence for His work and a commitment to His Truth.

Explaining the fifth essential mark of a Catholic school – Sustained by Gospel Witness – Archbishop Miller speaks primarily of the administrator’s responsibility to sustain Gospel witness in his school by maintaining a faculty of committed Catholics. The faculty’s example, it is true, has perhaps a more profound influence on the youth than the intellectual instruction they give. Yet there is still another way that administrators and teachers can bear witness to the Gospel, besides both their words and deeds. That way is the placement of Sacred Art in conspicuous locations on school grounds, so that students may be inspired by the visual beauty of God’s creation as well as the intellectual.

Unfortunately, coincident with both the rise of minimalism in contemporary architecture and a decline in the numbers of consecrated religious, Catholic schools have become increasingly barren of visible reminders of God’s good news and the presence of Christ in our midst. Timothy Schmaltz, a prominent Christian sculptor, recognizes the danger that such a trend presents to Catholic culture in general, and to the education of children in particular.

¹Exodus 20:16.

²Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2500.

³Ibid, 2501.

⁴Ibid, 2502.

A Letter from the Artist

by Timothy Schmaltz

I am devoted to creating artwork that glorifies Christ. The reason for this devotion, apart from my Christian beliefs, is that an artist needs an epic subject to create epic art.

I describe my sculptures as being visual prayers. When I create a three-dimensional sculpture in bronze, I am quite aware that it will last longer than myself. I realize I am between two things that are much more durable than myself: Christianity and bronze metal. It is between these that I have developed a subtle appreciation for what Saint Francis meant by “instrument.”

It brings me happiness when my sculptures are installed outside; three-dimensional bronze works of art are excellent advertisements for any Christian church. The best compliment these sculptures receive is to amaze and fascinate the most cynical youths of today. If they think that the art is amazing, they will have to think that the message is as well; a “cool” sculpture outside a church may make them think that, likewise, something “cool” is to be found inside the church. My purpose is to give Christianity as much visual dignity as possible. Christian sculptures are like visual sermons twenty-four hours a day.

When visiting the great cathedrals and museums of Europe, one is given many messages of the Christian Faith through the great works of art. However, one message these great masterpieces convey to us in modern times is that the Church was all-important and glorious..... once, approximately five hundred years ago. Unfortunately, this creates the impression that the themes represented are antiquated and should be viewed in a museum. However, when original artwork is created today and placed in living spaces, the statement expressed is: “the Church is all- important and glorious....today!”

Saint Gregory the Great wrote that “art is for the illiterate”; the use of images was an extremely effective way to educate the general population. Our contemporary culture is in the same state today, not because of illiteracy, but because people are too busy to read. In this world of fast-paced schedules and sound bites, Christian art creates “visual bites” that introduce needed spiritual truths in a universal language.

Christian sculpture acts for many as a gateway into the Gospels and the viewer’s own spirituality. After looking at an interesting piece of art, the viewer is curious. “Who is this man on a cross? Why does he suffer?” The more powerful the representation of the art, the more powerful the questions become.

Creating art that has the power to convert. Creating sculpture that deepens our spirituality. Attaining these two goals describes my purpose as an artist.

Timothy Schmaltz is an independent sculptor residing in Ontario, Canada. His work can be viewed on-line at <http://www.sculpturebytps.com>.