

Quotes from
The Catholic School,
The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977

In her encounter with differing cultures and with man's progressive achievements, the Church proclaims the faith and reveals "to all ages the transcendent goal which alone gives life its full meaning". She establishes her own schools because she considers them as a privileged means of promoting the formation of the whole man, since the school is a centre in which a specific concept of the world, of man, and of history is developed and conveyed.

The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith.

It is precisely in the Gospel of Christ, taking root in the minds and lives of the faithful, that the Catholic school finds its definition as it comes to terms with the cultural conditions of the times.

A school is, therefore, a privileged place in which, through a living encounter with a cultural inheritance, integral formation occurs.

The school must stimulate the pupil to exercise his intelligence through the dynamics of understanding to attain clarity and inventiveness. It must help him spell out the meaning of his experiences and their truths. Any school which neglects this duty and which offers merely pre-cast conclusions hinders the personal development of its pupils.

Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school. His revelation gives new meaning to life and helps man to direct his thought, action and will according to the Gospel, making the beatitudes his norm of life. The fact that in their own individual ways all members of the school community share this Christian vision, makes the school "Catholic"; principles of the Gospel in this manner become the educational norms since the school then has them as its internal motivation and final goal.

The Catholic school is committed thus to the development of the whole man, since in Christ, the Perfect Man, all human values find their fulfilment and unity. Herein lies the specifically Catholic character of the school. Its duty to cultivate human values in their own legitimate right in accordance with its particular mission to serve all men has its origin in the figure of Christ. He is the One Who ennobles man, gives meaning to human life, and is the Model which the Catholic school offers to its pupils.

Since the educative mission of the Catholic school is so wide, the teacher is in an excellent position to guide the pupil to a deepening of his faith and to enrich and enlighten his human knowledge with the data of the faith.

For all these reasons, Catholic schools must be seen as "meeting places for those who wish to express Christian values in education". The Catholic school, far more than any other, must be a community whose aim is the transmission of values for living.

The Catholic school community, therefore, is an irreplaceable source of service, not only to the pupils and its other members, but also to society. Today especially one sees a world which clamours for solidarity and yet experiences the rise of new forms of individualism. Society can take note from the Catholic school that it is possible to create true communities out of a common effort for the common good.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia//congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19770319_catholic-school_en.html