

Let us seriously respond to the expectations of the young. Benedict XVI's indications on the vital art of education.

Benedict XVI's indications on the vital art of education

We publish the introduction of the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization in the volume, *Dialogo sull'educazione con Papa Benedetto xvi* (Dialogue on education with Pope Benedict XVI), by Donato Petti, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011



To speak of education is the equivalent of placing it at the heart of our attention on young people. The Church lives this moment with particular farsightedness, remembering how much Blessed John Paul II helped her to rediscover the urgency of dialogue with those who represent the future of society. It is understandable that the problem is approached with a certain embarrassment. One can certainly not attribute responsibility for this situation to young generations. In recent years, we “adults,” have had difficulty taking seriously into consideration the possibility of indicating to them authentic values and correct choices. Not to mention the difficulty and near allergy to addressing the theme of the search for truth. These aspects, together with others such as discipline, responsibility and relationships, call us to an educational effort which involves adults and holds them responsible.

Certainly, we need to recognize that the complexity of life and social living influences the possibility of succeeding in this effort. The results which are before our eyes allow us to see that the remedy for this complexity is not a superficial simplifying of education. Instead, it can be addressed by credible

content, attractive because of the truth which it transmits and not simply for an enticing form. An “educational emergency” is a call to rediscover the community dimension of education. We need to re-establish the fertile connection between certain realities that are always the well-springs of education: the family, the Christian community and different institutions, first among them, the schools. A process which unites the circle of these realities would help us to re-discover the courage which allows us to join together in reaching our objectives, and most importantly the ways for achieving a true formation of the person; the desire to discover the value of one’s own existence which is achieved through making free choices.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



DIVIDENDS FOR LIFE

The Church feels right at home in this conversation. Benedict XVI recalled, “We cannot keep the joy of the faith to ourselves, we must spread it and transmit it, and in so doing, strengthen it in our hearts. If faith truly becomes joy at having found truth and love, it is inevitable that we desire to transmit it, to communicate it to others. In large measure, that new evangelization to which our beloved Pope John Paul II has called us to, passes this way. (June 11, 2000, conference of the Diocese of Rome). Today, we can see how much Benedict XVI, too, is convinced of this necessity. The institution of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization is a concrete response to confronting the cultural crisis with a credible and convincing response.

There is a decisive role to be played by scholastic institutions in education which must permeate the life of the Christian community and the new evangelization. I am thinking of the over 200,000 Catholic schools throughout the world which play an irreplaceable formative role of the top order. In particular, I think of the Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane (Brothers of the Christian Schools) whom St. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle wanted to be at the service of young people to provide them with a consistent cultural formation inspired by Christian faith and developed in a way that was also consistent with the times. It

is a cultural formation which is made even stronger by their specific competency in catechesis and the total dedication of many educators. The educative problem is, in summary, a qualifying element of our time.

L'Osservatore Romano - Rino Fisichella