



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Note: The following quotations focus on the topic of *Academics* as it is contained in the documents of the Church which consider education. The following conditions and recommendations apply:

- ❖ The purpose of this selection is to give a sample of the topic. It is not intended to replace the reading of the entire document(s) cited.
- ❖ In-text citations are not included in this document. The document can be accessed in its entirety for this purpose. The paragraph numbers give the exact location of the quotation within the pertinent document.
- ❖ In a few instances spelling has been changed to reflect common usage and for the purpose of clarity. (“program” instead of “programme,” for example).
- ❖ The sections included are only examples and are not necessarily the only references on this topic contained in the document(s).

Academics

Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis), #8 **Vatican Council II, 1965.**

No less than other schools does the Catholic school pursue cultural goals and the human formation of youth.

The Catholic School, #3

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977.

...the Sacred Congregation believes that now is the opportune moment to offer its own contribution by re-emphasizing clearly the educational value of the Catholic school. It is in this value that the Catholic school's fundamental reason for existing and the basis of its genuine apostolate is to be found.

The Catholic School, #38

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977.

In helping pupils to achieve through the medium of its teaching an integration of faith and culture, the Catholic school sets out with a deep awareness of the value of knowledge as such. Under no circumstances does it wish to divert the imparting of knowledge from its rightful objective.

The Catholic School, #39

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977.

Individual subjects must be taught according to their own particular methods. It would be wrong to consider subjects as mere adjuncts to faith or as a useful means of teaching apologetics. They enable the pupil to assimilate skills, knowledge, intellectual methods and moral and social attitudes, all of which help to develop his personality and lead him to take his place as an active member of the community of man. Their aim is not merely the attainment of knowledge but the acquisition of values and the discovery of truth.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal, #53.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988.

...giving order to human culture in the light of the message of salvation cannot mean a lack of respect for the autonomy of the different academic disciplines and the methodology proper to them; nor can it mean that these disciplines are to be seen merely as subservient to faith.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal, #55.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988.

A Catholic school must be committed to the development of a program which will overcome the problems of a fragmented and insufficient curriculum. Teachers dealing with areas such as anthropology, biology, psychology, sociology and philosophy all have the opportunity to present a complete picture of the human person, including the religious dimension. Students should be helped to see the human person as a living creature having both a physical and a spiritual nature; each of us has an immortal soul, and we are in need

of redemption. The older students can gradually come to a more mature understanding of all that is implied in the concept of "person": intelligence and will, freedom and feelings, the capacity to be an active and creative agent; a being endowed with both rights and duties, capable of interpersonal relationships, called to a specific mission in the world.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal, #60.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988.

The increased attention given to science and technology must not lead to a neglect of the humanities: philosophy, history, literature and art. Since earliest times, each society has developed and handed on its artistic and literary heritage, and our human patrimony is nothing more than the sum total of this cultural wealth... The artistic and literary patrimony of Christianity, is vast and gives visible testimony to a faith that has been handed down through centuries.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal, #61.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988.

Literary and artistic works depict the struggles of societies, of families, and of individuals. They spring from the depths of the human heart, revealing its lights and its shadows, its hope and its despair. The Christian perspective goes beyond the merely human, and offers more penetrating criteria for understanding the human struggle and the mysteries of the human spirit.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, #8.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997.

Thus the Catholic school should be able to offer young people the means to acquire the knowledge they need in order to find a place in a society which is strongly characterized by technical and scientific skill. But at the same time, it should be able, above all, to impart a solid Christian formation. And for the Catholic school to be a means of education in the modern world, we are convinced that certain fundamental characteristics need to be strengthened.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, #14.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997.

From the nature of the Catholic school also stems one of the most significant elements of its educational project: the synthesis between culture and faith. Indeed, knowledge set in the context of faith becomes wisdom and life vision. The endeavour to interweave reason and faith, which has become the heart of individual subjects, makes for unity, articulation and coordination, bringing forth within what is learnt in school a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and of history. In the Catholic school's educational project there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom. The various school subjects do not present only knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered.(15) All of which demands an atmosphere characterized by the search for truth, in which

competent, convinced and coherent educators, teachers of learning and of life, may be a reflection, albeit imperfect but still vivid, of the one Teacher. In this perspective, in the Christian educational project all subjects collaborate, each with its own specific content, to the formation of mature personalities.

Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love, #62.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2013.

Catholic schools' educational program foresees an harmonious meeting and merging of study and life. This allows students to enjoy a quality formative experience, enriched by intellectual research in the various branches of knowledge and, at the same time, a source of wisdom due to its context: life nourished by the Gospel.

Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love, #64.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2013.

The curriculum is how the school community makes explicit its goals and objectives, the content of its teaching and the means for communicating it effectively. In the curriculum, the school's cultural and pedagogical identity are made manifest. Developing the curriculum is one of the school's most demanding tasks, because here one makes explicit what are the school's reference values, subject priorities and practical choices.

Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love, #65.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2013.

For a Catholic school, examining its curriculum leads to strengthening what is specific to its nature. It means strengthening the particular way it serves individuals, using the tools offered by culture. Thus, the school's programmes can be effectively harmonized with the school's original mission. One cannot be content merely with an up-to-date didactic offering that simply responds to the demands deriving from the ever-changing economic situation. Catholic schools think out their curricula to place centre-stage both individuals and their search for meaning. This is the reference value, in view of which the various academic disciplines are important resources and take on greater value to the extent that they are tools for educating. From this perspective, what is taught is not neutral, and neither is the way of teaching it.

Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love, #66.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2013.

It has been said that we live in a knowledge-based society. However, Catholic schools are encouraged to promote a wisdom-based society, to go beyond knowledge and educate people to think, evaluating facts in the light of values. They educate people to take on responsibility and duties, and exercise active citizenship. Among matters taught specifically in Catholic schools, pride of place must be given to the knowledge of different cultures, with attention given to helping the students encounter and compare the various cultures' many different viewpoints. The curriculum must help the students

reflect on the great problems of our time, including those where one sees more clearly the difficult situation of a large part of humanity's living conditions. These would include the unequal distribution of resources, poverty, injustice and human rights denied. "Poverty" implies a careful consideration of the phenomenon of globalization, and suggests a broad and developed vision of poverty, in all its various forms and causes.

Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love, #67.

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2013.

In teaching the various academic disciplines, teachers share and promote a methodological viewpoint in which the various branches of knowledge are dynamically correlated, in a wisdom perspective. The epistemological framework of every branch of knowledge has its own identity, both in content and methodology. However, this framework does not relate merely to "internal" questions, touching upon the correct realization of each discipline. Each discipline is not an island inhabited by a form of knowledge that is distinct and ring-fenced; rather, it is in a dynamic relationship with all other forms of knowledge, each of which expresses something about the human person and touches upon some truth.

Canon #806 §2.

Directors of Catholic schools are to take care under the watchfulness of the local ordinary that the instruction which is given in them is at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area.

Canon #803 §2.

The instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life.