

December 14, 2012
Vol. 3, Issue 3

In this issue:

Intima Ecclesiae natura

Catholic Schools: Indispensable
Instruments of the New
Evangelization

What 'The Economist'
Meant to Say ...

(GSN) Advent's Three Stages of
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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization

*By The Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron
Archbishop of Detroit*

PREFACE

I would like to say, first of all, that I count it a great blessing to be with all of you today. I want especially to thank my brother bishop(s), my brother priests, diocesan school administrators, the staff of O'Meara Ferguson, who organized this very significant symposium, and all of you here present who desire so ardently and work so diligently for the flourishing of Catholic schools here in the United States.

Some of my own most satisfying years as a priest have been those I spent as a teacher at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and at the Gregorian University in Rome during the 1980s and 1990s. I know from this experience, as do all of you who are teachers, the great truth contained in the well-known motto of Blessed John Henry Newman, "*Cor ad cor loquitur*," or "Heart speaks to heart." Just one way of summarizing my aim for this presentation is to say that I would like to speak about what needs to live in our hearts as educators and leaders of Catholic education and how urgent it is that we make the very best use possible of our Catholic schools, so that we might faithfully and effectively communicate the wisdom and virtue alive in our hearts to the hearts of our students.

ON THE ECCLESIAL PEDIGREE OF SCHOOLS

As we move into the substance of this talk, I would like to begin by speaking a bit about what you might call the "ecclesial pedigree" of our schools. To speak of a "pedigree" in this context is to say more than that we have a history of Catholic education, a history of Catholic schools. Rather, we can rightly go so far as to say that our schools are *integral* to the Church. They are an organic extension of the Church, an outgrowth of her very substance. Yes, the Church could be the Church without schools, but she would

not be everything that Jesus wants his Church to be if we did not have schools.

The sentiment behind this truth, if not its explicit articulation, was expressed emphatically at the three Plenary Councils of Baltimore, during the mid-to-late 19th Century—a time when the life of the Church in the United States was beginning to take much more definite shape. Among the many things they decided upon, the Council Fathers made clear in each of the three councils the priority of Catholic education, and made particularly clear the priority of providing Catholic schools *in every parish*.

This summons by the bishops to provide Catholic school education reached its crescendo in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, which emphasized the indispensability of Catholic schools, citing, "their absolute necessity and the obligation of pastors to establish them." The Council Fathers sounded this rallying cry not only to bishops and pastors, but also to Catholic parents, prescribing that, "Parents must send their children to such schools unless the bishop should judge the reason for sending them elsewhere to be sufficient." Of course, before we become very much alarmed, contrasting the bishops' emphatic call to provide Catholic education with the extreme challenge we face today of providing affordable Catholic school tuition, we should note that the bishops of the Third Council of Baltimore further added, "It is also desirable that these schools be free."¹

Now, why was it so very important for the bishops of the United States to make this commitment to providing Catholic schools everywhere they could possibly be established? Among the many levels at which we might answer this question, the many approaches we might make to it, I would like to mention two: the ontological and the practical.

First, Catholic schools are, in a most profound way, an expression of Who our Lord is and who we are. Our Lord is a

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 2 of 9)

Revealing Word, the fullest disclosure of God to mankind. To make what is surely a rather obvious scriptural reference, we might consider the Prologue to the Gospel According to John in this context:

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
all things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.
What came to be through him was life,
and this life was the light of the whole human
race;
the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.²*

What does it mean to profess that, "In the beginning was the Word," but that from all eternity God is communicating himself; that God is not only one who *knows* but who is also *knowable* by his effects in nature and *knowable* in himself through grace? Considering the metaphor of "light" used by St. John, we might remember that from time immemorial men have referred to the "darkness" of ignorance, while a burning torch has served as the heraldic symbol for the "light" of knowledge. We Christians know that the principal metaphorical meaning of light and darkness has to do with the Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, who in his Incarnation has shone in the darkness of this world, enlightening our minds and hearts so that we might be free of the ignorance of unbelief and come to know our heavenly Father. The Church has the supreme privilege of continuing this mission of Jesus Christ, shining his light on a world that waits in darkness, and Catholic schools in a very particular and critical way fulfill this mission as an instrument of the Church.

As I have said, schools are integral to the Church not only because of who our Lord is but also because of who we are. We are *persons*, not animals or robots. God has created us with a dignity and a capacity for wisdom that correspond, however analogously, to his own. But neither are we

angels, so we also need to learn wisdom and to grow in wisdom. Going back to the Councils of Baltimore, most of us will remember the answer to the question of the *Baltimore Catechism*, "Why did God make me?" God made us to know him, to love him, and to serve Him in this world, so that we might be happy with him forever in the world to come. Notice that the first part of this reason for our existence is *to know* God. There are many ways we come to wisdom and to the knowledge of God, but our schools provide privileged opportunities for this education during the most formative years of our lives.

When I speak of the "practical" level at which we might understand the urgency of promoting Catholic school education, my talk is beginning already to bleed into its next section on the mission of Catholic Schools. To talk about the practical urgency for Catholic schools is to speak about evangelization. At the time of the Councils of Baltimore, the bishops of the United States (as well as countless priests, religious, and lay women and men) were greatly concerned that Catholic children not slip into Protestantism. That the Catholic children of the middle of the 19th Century might lose their Catholic faith, in the face of an overwhelmingly Protestant cultural milieu, was a very real threat.

Today, of course, we face a different, and perhaps even more daunting, threat to our children's faith: the threat that they will become *pagans*. It might help us to understand this danger better if we were to think for a moment about what we do *not* want to happen to our children in the course of their education. Another way of launching this little thought exercise, or assessment, I am proposing is to ask, "What kinds of freshmen do we *not* want to send on to the university?"

I have put together a list of qualities which, while certainly not comprehensive, provides us with a sense of where we do *not* want our students ending-up:

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 3 of 9)

- First, we do not want our students to become **moral relativists**. Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has spoken of the “dictatorship of relativism,” and it is the unfortunate case that children are particularly susceptible to falling under the sway of this dictatorship. Our culture tells us that there is no objective truth, that the best I can do is figure out what is “true” for me and to follow my own heart wherever it leads me. For obvious reasons, this deception has a strong appeal for the young.
- **Nihilism** is another great danger for our students, and is closely related to relativism. If a young person does not believe in truth, then he or she has in a very real way already stepped off of the cliff's edge and into the chasm of nihilism, viewing life as meaningless. We might see in the still-relatively-recent “Goth” movement some of the standard-bearers of nihilism among the young, but there are certainly others: recreational drug users, participants in the “hook-up” sub-culture, and countless other young people whose slogan—were nihilists inclined to create a slogan—would be, “Whatever.”
- If there is one personality type that is a perennial source of frustration for parents, it is that of a “**slacker**.” Of course, there have always been slackers of one kind or another, but in a time and place of such prosperity as we enjoy (even during relatively difficult economic times), when children and adolescents so rarely work in order to help support their families, as was common when our society was predominantly agricultural, and when the abundance of leisure time this prosperity produces is largely taken up with the ubiquitous “noise” of the world—Internet, pop music, video games, texting—we have a breeding ground for slackers.
- The final category I would like to mention is a bit more sophisticated, but I think you will see that it fits the religious perspective of many of our young people. Here I am

talking about what the sociologist Christian Smith has called “**Moralistic Therapeutic Deism**.” This could be described as the “default” religious perspective of young people today. Although it has an innumerable variety of expressions, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism has the following characteristics, generally speaking:

- A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth. However, this view is not tied to any affirmation of the Incarnation or the Redemption.
- God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- Good people go to heaven when they die.³

I'm sure we can all recognize some young people of our acquaintance who fit this profile. One very common form of this Moralistic Therapeutic Deism is found among those who describe themselves as “spiritual,” but not religious. We might call them “**slacker deists**.” Some even go so far as to say they follow Jesus, but not a religion. And while we clearly can see the inherent contradictions in these positions, the hard truth is that we have not done a good enough job in evangelizing the young people who hold them.⁴

THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Okay, I think we have spent enough time on what we want to avoid, and so now I would like us to move into an explicit consideration of the *mission* of Catholic schools. Here, as I have indicated before, at least implicitly, we are really talking about Catholic education as a share in the work of evangelization, particularly the New Evangelization called for by Blessed John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. As you may know, the New

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 4 of 9)

Evangelization is “new” in three ways: in *methods*, in *ardor*, and in *expression*. The *message* is the same Gospel, the Good News of our salvation. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”⁵ And the *goal* of evangelization remains the same: bringing Jesus Christ to all people and bringing people to Christ and into the fullness of life in his Church.

We need, however, to respond vigorously to the call to bring new ardor, methods, and expression to the work of evangelizing in our Catholic schools. All institutions, and perhaps in a particular way schools, easily fall prey to the temptation to become complacent, believing that what has worked in the past—or what one believes has worked—will always work. Yet it is the case for every institution, just as it is the case for every Christian, that self-examination and conversion are always needed. We must examine ourselves, allow God to purge away what is not good or not working effectively—not-Christ, and to turn to the Lord with purer and more zealous hearts.

And I believe that in the case of our Catholic schools, we need to do more than the ordinary, day-to-day kind of self-examination and conversion. We need to go down to the very roots of our school systems and re-think everything we are doing, being sure along the way that we and all of our coworkers have a laser-like focus on the mission of sharing Christ with our children. We need to work towards nothing less than a re-foundation of our Catholic schools here in the United States, if we are to meet the challenges of the Third Millennium and give our children a more ready opportunity to save their souls.

We know that the greatest gift we can give to our children is Jesus, who is the pearl of great price. We want them to be faithful members of his Church, for their good, for our good, and for the good of the whole world. We want this above all because it glorifies God when we raise up new saints.

And to speak of forming saints in our schools gives us, in one word, the true goal of Catholic education, against which I was, a couple of minutes ago, contrasting my list of the qualities we want to avoid in our students. What we want for our students, to put the matter in its simplest form, is that they become *saints*. A school that is an effective instrument of the New Evangelization will equip each of its students with all that is needed to offer a wholehearted “yes” to the universal call to holiness.

Of course, I should acknowledge right off that “holiness” is a broad term, and I want to name just a few of the most basic qualities a Catholic school seeks to inculcate in its students:

- First, a **conviction about the truth**. As Blessed John Paul used to say, “(The Church) imposes nothing.” But we do need to do a better job of *proposing* the truth about God, about the human person, and about the universe. To borrow an expression from one of my own teachers, Msgr. Robert Sokolowski of the Catholic University of America, we need to form students so that they will become “agents of truth,” able to know the truth and to articulate and defend the truth in a world that has become hostile to the truth.

- We also need to give our students a **sense of order**. And I should add here that none of this is the job merely of our religion or theology courses. It is not saying too much to say that there is a Catholic way of doing Calculus or Physics. There is a Catholic wisdom which needs to permeate all aspects of the life of our schools. All of the academic disciplines reveal to our students the mind of God, who has given wondrous order to his creation and equipped us to recognize this order and to find inspiration for creative work, authentic human progress, and, especially, worship of our Creator. We respect greatly the legitimate autonomy of intellectual activity, but we also know that

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Instruments of the New
Evangelization

What 'The Economist'
Meant to Say ...

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 5 of 9)

faith and reason are partners in the work of discovering truth.

- Out of this sense of order naturally flows a **sense of one's purpose or mission**. Our schools must be training grounds for future saints, as I have said, but a great deal of the work of sanctification is recognizing one's God-given purpose or mission. Our schools need to be "vocational schools," not in the popular sense of the term, but insofar as they help our children to discern God's will and help them to grow in faith and courage so that they can offer to God a wholehearted "yes" in reply to his call.

The virtues I have just identified fit closely, of course, with the host of other virtues we must foster in our students, including the theological and cardinal virtues, as well as the virtues of piety and chastity, two virtues which today seem troublingly scarce among our children. If we raise up great mathematicians, scientists, medical professionals, or business people, but they do not go to Mass or confession faithfully, or have given themselves over to lives of self-indulgence, then we simply have not fulfilled the mission Our Lord has entrusted to us.

How do we make our best effort to fulfill the mission to share Christ in and through our schools? While it is not my place to speak about the particularities of school administration, I do think that some general principles are worth our consideration. I have already said that the whole life of a school needs to be suffused by Catholic identity. Academics, athletics, drama and the arts, and all of the elements of the life of a school need to be shaped by our Catholic faith, which never violates the true character of these endeavors, but does elevate and ennoble them.

We also need to be aware of the deeply personal nature of education. I mentioned Blessed John Henry Newman's motto, "*Cor ad cor loquitur*," or "Heart speaks to heart." One way of talking about the mission of our

schools is to say that in our schools we have a group of older persons leading younger persons to see how to "handle" the world successfully, sharing the wisdom and virtue alive in their hearts with the young people entrusted to their care. That means that our hearts and those of our co-workers in Catholic education need to have wisdom and virtue living within them. It is not enough for school administrators, teachers, or coaches simply "to say the right things." All of us who are involved in education need to strive for wisdom and virtue ourselves, so that we might offer not only the raw material of teaching but genuine personal *witness* of the preeminent and eternal value of Christian wisdom and holiness.

Ensuring that educators do more than just "talk the talk" will, in turn, prevent the problem that arises when students learn skills without wisdom, or learn the mechanics of "practicing their faith" without any true personal appropriation of the Christian life. This personal appropriation of wisdom and virtue allows our students to live lives of true freedom and excellence. They will be prepared to face a world that is often hostile to our way of life with the conviction that comes from strong faith and the ability to articulate the truths of that faith and how those truths fit with the order of the natural world.

Speaking of the hostility of the world, it is essential that all of us understand very clearly the cultural ethos in which our schools exist, so that we can do the best job possible of building the right kind of culture within our schools. We need to know the world, and we need to be engaged with the world, but we cannot capitulate to the world, or allow worldly sensibilities to shape the student life at our schools. One way of saying this is that we do not want to be Amish, living in isolation from the world, but we also do not want to assimilate to the world in the way of many mainline Protestant denominations. Remember Our Lord's teaching in Matthew 10:16:

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Vol. 3, Issue 3

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Intima Ecclesiae natura

Catholic Schools: Indispensable
Instruments of the New
Evangelization

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Meant to Say ...

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 6 of 9)

"Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves."

We need to help our students to be world-wise without being worldly, to see clearly the good and the evil elements of the culture and yet to see them with innocent eyes, so that they may withstand the inevitable temptations they will face and persevere in the faith we have taught them long after they leave the classroom.

To speak of our engagement with the world, however, raises another matter which can be particularly sensitive: What do we do when the agents of the world are in our classrooms? With the general decline in the practice of the faith among Catholics, educators report that they see more and more often that the very children entrusted to their formation in the Catholic faith do little, if anything, to practice their faith outside of school. Given the tremendous influence young people have on one another, there can be no doubt that the decline of living and active faith among our students is having a profound effect on the Catholic identity of our schools.

Yet there is an obvious challenge to be met: On the one hand, we want our schools to be places where people feel welcome, where the love of Christ is extended to as many people as possible, and where we evangelize those who are not fervent in their faith. Also, there is a very practical reason to be more welcoming—to boost enrollment, which can cripple a school if it is not strong. Speaking frankly, is that not the motivation behind many Catholic school advertisements which feature an excellent sports program or cutting-edge technology more prominently than anything having to do with the Catholic identity of the school?

On the other hand, while we acknowledge these good reasons for wanting to take a more "open" approach to marketing and enrollment, there is the undoubted difficulty that arises when a high percentage of our

students come from homes where the Catholic faith is not taken seriously.

I will not presume to offer an exact answer to this challenge, which does not in fact have an exact answer, but I do believe we need to be active in discerning what wise strategies we might employ to make the most of our opportunities for evangelization and to minimize the degree to which our children might "pick up mixed signals" during the years of their Catholic school education. Just one example of a tactic we might use is to create formation groups for our parents, perhaps along the lines of confraternities, fraternities, or sodalities. I am sure there are many other effective ways to bolster the Christian formation of our school families.

I would also propose that no matter what the composition of our classrooms between practicing Catholics, non-practicing Catholics, or non-Catholics, **we need to be very clear about what we are offering to families as Catholic educators: a thoroughly Catholic environment in which all students will be offered a privileged opportunity to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ in the community of the Church and to achieve excellence in a range of academic disciplines and extra-curricular activities.** We offer this this opportunity, this service with a heartfelt welcome to all of the students who wish to participate in this experience, but with no apologies for its Catholic character. We do not offer merely a "private school experience" or an alternative to inadequate government schools. We offer Jesus, as we know him in the Church, and this life is available for any who would welcome it.

MEASURING SUCCESS: SOME INDICES

Now that we have the mission of our schools pretty well in-view, I would like to speak a bit about how we can measure the success of our schools. All of us who are involved in education or other kinds of bureaucracies are familiar with "outcomes assessments," and while the very term may freeze the

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Intima Ecclesiae natura

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Evangelization

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 7 of 9)

hearts of some of us, in fact most of us would acknowledge the importance of measuring progress and identifying areas of potential improvement. I will speak about some proposed benchmarks of success in some of the most important aspects of the life of a school:

- First, I want to speak about **Letters and the Arts**. The world presented in speech glorifies God, and so we should let it disclose itself accurately and elegantly. Words are about truth, after all. Students should be habituated to a further consideration of how the part of the world that is disclosed, from the diagramming of sentences to the poetry of Dante, fits into the whole of God's creation. Students should also be equipped and then called on to engage with the classic texts which display the strategic distinctions of our community's wisdom. Our students should not be allowed to fall prey to the contemporary misunderstanding that Western culture has nothing more to offer in an age of technological postmodernism. Such a view would hold that the narrative of human life and dignity held fast by countless generations of our forebears is now meaningless, and that the only narrative worth considering is the uninterrupted advance of technology, which produces an endless stream of tools of productivity, convenience, and comfort.
- In the **Sciences**, we must be sure that our students leave our schools with an understanding that the order discovered by science is guaranteed by God's authorship of creation. Science is not an enemy of religion, but rather leads—when done properly—to a deeper piety and to the glorification of God. To repeat what I said earlier: faith and science are complementary, and we need to help our students not only to “parrot” this truth, but to understand it so that they can defend it.
- In the area of **Catechesis**, we want to form young Catholic men and women who

can offer to their society the Church's confession of faith and who are able to articulate that faith in persuasive terms. Our catechesis needs to be as intellectually rigorous as the most rigorous elements in our curricula. As I have already implied, our catechesis also needs to be in harmony with the other academic disciplines, so that together our students will be able to see the intellectual life as a coherent whole.

- In **athletics and other extra-curricular activities**, we need to seize upon the natural enthusiasm of our students and families for these activities and foster them as schools of virtue. Sports, in a particular way, but also other extra-curricular activities, provide a significant analogue for moral action, and we cannot afford to lose these opportunities to inculcate the Christian way of life.
- With regard to **Vocations**, we need to be attentive to what our students choose to do with their lives. We cannot “track” every student, but we need to pay close attention to what they are doing in college and beyond, and to think carefully about what we can do to help them know God's will and say a wholehearted “yes” to his will as it is made known to them. This “yes” to God's call has both to do with the professions our students take up and with their state in life, whether God calls them to Marriage and family life, to the priesthood, or to consecrated life. And while I believe it is true to say that an increase in vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life would serve as an excellent sign of the spiritual health of our schools, I want to acknowledge that this is partly the case because such an increase would almost certainly correspond to an increase in the number of our students who are entering Marriage for the right reasons—because they have discerned that this is God's will for them and because they have found the person with whom they can build and share a life of faith, hope, and love.

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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 8 of 9)

- The “source and summit” of the Christian life is the **Holy Eucharist**, as we know, yet how many of our students fail to attend Sunday Mass both while they are in our Catholic schools, and then after they graduate? While there are limits to the degree to which we can influence the parents of our students, we should never become discouraged or stop trying to help our families practice their faith, and we should aim in a very particular way at the age when our students become old enough to practice the faith on their own, helping them through the years to assume personal “ownership” of their faith and preparing them to celebrate the Eucharist with a deep appreciation of the Mystery of Faith. We have to help our students to see the Mass, not as a kind of shibboleth, but as the fullest presentation of the believer’s relationship with God and the world. A Catholic school student needs to see that, “The world I live in is created and redeemed in Jesus Christ, and I owe God worship and thanks for this, and the life for which my school prepares me is a participation in the Paschal Mystery, which accomplishes the renewal of this world which has been wounded by sin.”

- Closely related to the Holy Eucharist is the **life of repentance** into which we invite our students. A world that tells children (and adults, for that matter) that they are perfect just the way they are does not provide an easy environment for teaching or learning about the life of penance to which we are all called. Yet if our students leave our schools without being committed to a life of repentance, we have failed in our mission. Regular recourse to confession is at the heart of the life of penance. As is true with the Holy Mass, confession is not to be seen as a mere tribal act that one can abandon in adulthood without deep spiritual consequences. Rather, confession is a necessary manifestation of the believer’s wounded stance toward God and the world which he or she is learning “to deal with” in the school. Wise people are

repentant people, and we need to help our children see this connection.

- The final measure of success I would like to speak about is that of **forming witnesses**—really, of forming those who stand ready to be *martyrs*. Is this not the ultimate measure of the Christian life, the expression of faith, hope, and charity *par excellence*? If there is an “up-side” to the cultural dissonance Christians face in today’s world, it is that we can hear more distinctly the perennial call to be prepared even to die for our faith.

DUC IN ALTUM!

As I move into the conclusion of my talk, I want to be clear that it is not only the bishops of the 19th Century who saw the urgent need to form and maintain Catholic schools. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2005 articulated the need for schools, writing:

Young people are a valued treasure and the future leaders of our Church. It is the responsibility of the entire Catholic community—bishops, priests, deacons, religious, and laity—to continue to strive towards the goal of making our Catholic elementary and secondary schools available, accessible, and affordable to all Catholic parents and their children, including those who are poor and middle class. All Catholics must join together in efforts to ensure that Catholic schools have administrators and teachers who are prepared to provide an exceptional educational experience for young people—one that is both truly Catholic and of the highest academic quality.⁶

Indeed, Catholic schools are uniquely suited to advancing the evangelizing mission of the Church, offering a privileged opportunity for the formation of our children in Christian discipleship. We must all be committed to strengthening our schools, both in their Catholic identity and in the financial resources we commit to Catholic education.

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Vol. 3, Issue 3

In this issue:

Intima Ecclesiae natura

Catholic Schools: Indispensable
Instruments of the New
Evangelization

What 'The Economist'
Meant to Say ...

(GSN) Advent's Three Stages of
Longing



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Catholic Schools: Indispensable Instruments of the New Evangelization (page 9 of 9)

Speaking of financial resources, I often think to myself about what a marvelous blessing it would be if we arrived at a point when all of the parents who wanted a Catholic education for their children could provide it! I hope and trust that this symposium will provide some insights into how we can concretize the steps we need to take in order to fulfill this aspiration, which can too easily strike us as an "impossible dream."

I firmly believe this, however, regarding the financing of Catholic school education: **If we are fulfilling our mission, we will find the resources we need, and if we are not fulfilling our mission, then all of the resources in the world will be of no avail.**

I also believe that in order to re-launch Catholic school education, fulfilling the mission Our Lord is calling us to fulfill through our schools, we need to become agents of a fundamental renewal of our Catholic schools. Here I look to the great scholar Alcuin, who was the schoolmaster of Charlemagne and a very significant reformer of Catholic education around the turn of the 9th Century and one of the leading lights of the Carolingian Renaissance. Alcuin's efforts at launching a new education project bore great fruit, reshaping Christian culture over 1000 years ago.

Today, **we're Alcuin**. Christ is calling us "(to) put out into deep water"⁷ in the work of renewal. We must be "deep" in our self-examination, "deep" in the changes we are willing to make for the sake of our mission, and "deep" in the boldness with which we will launch out into a new way of educating our children. Half-measures will not be sufficient to do the job. Our schools need our commitment, our self-investment, and our resolve if they are to become the instruments of the New Evangelization Christ wants them to be. Our children need what we have to offer in our schools, which is to say they need Jesus, and woe to us if we fail them. Jesus himself expects this of us, and we cannot disappoint him. I am resolved to spend the rest of my time as Archbishop of

Detroit working to strengthen our schools. I know that you join me in that resolve, because we know that nothing less than our children's salvation is at stake.
7 Lk 5:4.

*Praised be Jesus Christ, now and forever.
Amen.*

(1) Fanning, W., "Plenary Councils of Baltimore," The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, (New York: Robert Appleton), 1907, 16 January 2012, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02235a.htm>.

(2) Jn 1:1-5.

(3) As found in Dean, Kenda, "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism?," 18 January 2012, <http://kendadean.com>.

(4) W. Bradford Wilcox, in his review of the book *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* by Christopher Smith and Patricia Snell, entitled "The Lukewarm Generation," *First Things* (March 8, 2010), observes: "What is to be done? Smith does not provide any easy answers to this question in *Souls in Transition*. He does, however, offer some excellent advice to parents and religious leaders about how they can steer today's children away from the lukewarm lives being lived by contemporary emerging adults. According to Smith's analyses, children are more likely to end up as committed and consistent young-adult believers if their parents integrate religious faith into daily family life; if children are exposed to engaging adult believers in their churches; if they have good religious friends; if they live chaste lives; and, interestingly, if they have to suffer for their faith. In other words, family, friends, sex, and suffering will have a lot to do with how successful the next generation of young people will be in avoiding the lukewarm path being trod by many of today's emerging adults.

(5) Heb 13:8.

(6) United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, 2005, 21 January 2012, <http://www.usccb.org>.

(7) Lk 5:4.