



Consortio

KATHOLISCHE HOCHSCHULE ITI

SPECIAL

The Congested Crossroads of Education: What are Our Choices?

The Closing Words of the Rector of ITI Catholic University, Dr. Christiaan Alting von Geusau, at the International Education Summit, Trumau, May 6, 2023

Why are the crossroads of education “congested”? There is too much traffic at these crossroads, and that traffic consists of three main elements: ideologies, reforms, and technology paradigms. “Ideologies” refers to the latest ideologies, fashions, and orthodoxies currently promoted by the media or those in power as the acceptable way of thinking. “Reforms” refers to the constant reforms of education that we have seen in many European countries and the United States over the past decades—continual reforms whose purpose remains unclear.

Ideologies, reforms, and technology paradigms often lead us to forget what education should really be about

And “technology paradigms” refers to the need to figure out how to implement technology in such a way that the technology truly serves humanity, and not the other way around. All three of these elements



The joy of asking questions and discovering answers

– ideologies, reforms, and technology paradigms – are competing for implementation, often leading us to forget what education should really be about.

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What is Education? What is Its Foundational Mission?

Educating leaders for Church and society: this is the ITI’s mission and vocation. But what is the nature of education itself, and what is *its* foundational mission? This is an essential question that is highly debated in our modern society.

This *Consortio Special* offers a collection of lectures, essays, interviews, and quotations that sheds light on the understanding of education from various perspectives. It complements the ongoing discussion about the multifaceted nature of education by addressing contemporary challenges and outlining the need for further reflection on a variety of related issues.



Learning How to Think and How to Debate

What is needed in education is firstly to learn how to think and how to listen to the language of being through nature and reason, while recognizing the transcendence of human life. Furthermore, education needs ordered intellectual discourse, which in turn requires virtue education and practice—specifically the virtues of patience, prudence, humility, and courage. Ordered intellectual discourse requires training in rhetoric and debate. In our modern times with its constantly changing orthodoxies, young people find it increasingly difficult to disagree civilly, that is, to be able to deal with people with whom one disagrees and actually debate with them without immediately starting to label them or call them names. And finally, education requires not just reading and writing, but also working with one’s hands: to move, to go out into nature, to actually taste reality, to create and build, of course under the guidance of instructors. Working with one’s hands is an element that is greatly lacking in our educational system and needs to be further developed.

So, what are our choices when it comes to reducing the traffic at the crossroads of education? I propose to answer this question by giving my own responses to three questions that have guided this summit on education.

Making Visible What is Hidden in a Person

The first question is: What is the most important task of education for man and for society? I think the most important task of education is to make visible what is already present in a person, namely, what he or she is meant to be. The image of the “midwife” in education, which was mentioned during the conference, is a powerful image because it describes so well what

education is meant to be: Education is not about us creating something new ourselves; rather, educators are tasked with helping to deliver something that is already there within the individual in front of us, and then helping that individual find his or her vocation, his or her place in the world.

This can be accomplished by strengthening individuality instead of uniformity and developing the capacity to live in community instead of in an atomized world, while once more learning the uplifting and



Dr. Geusau, ITI President and Rector, Professor for Philosophy of Law and Christian Education

healing power of beauty. In his book *Education at the Crossroads*, Jacques Maritain puts it very simply: “The education of man is a human awakening.” And later he goes on: “What is of most importance in educators themselves is a respect for the soul as well as for the body of a child, the sense of his innermost essence and his internal resources, and a sort of sacred and loving attention to his mysterious identity, which is a hidden thing that no techniques can reach.” So once again, no matter how helpful they may be in many ways, no specific techniques or technology—not even artificial intelligence—will ever be able to give sacred and loving attention to the mysterious identity of a human person. Instead, it is the educator who is tasked with bringing forth that mysterious identity within the student, without imposing him- or herself. So, in the words of Jacques Maritain, true education is an appeal to intelligence and free will.

Attaining Inner Freedom

The second guiding question is: What are the biggest dangers and challenges in our current educational landscape? I see the biggest challenges in the tendency to put bureaucracy over pedagogy, processes over persons, and economy over human ecology. This ultimately leads to the dehumanization of education. So, knowing these challenges, what should be done? Again, we can turn to Jacques Maritain, who says: “The prime goal of education is the conquest of internal and spiritual freedom to be achieved by the individual person.” All the great minds have this focus on the individual person. This is not an egocentric person—focusing on the individual person pays respect to the uniqueness of each individual human being as created in the image and likeness of God. That’s the starting point. The goal, as Maritain says, is “the liberation [of the

True education is an appeal to intelligence and free will



m page 1 individual person] through knowledge, wisdom, good will, and love.”

The challenge in our educational systems is to overcome all structures and influences that seek to force students into a straitjacket, dictating what one is allowed to think and say or write. We must break down the systems and structures and influences that try to push learners into this straitjacket; otherwise, we will never be able to attain the inner freedom that should stand at the heart of education. This is why the “thoughtcrimes” about which George Orwell writes are the ultimate killer of human flourishing. In fact, last Sunday in Budapest, Pope Francis decried “oppression based on the imposition of a consensus,” which occurs when society tries to impose a consensus where a consensus does not exist using the force of certain institutions like social media or the press or educational institutions.

Cultivating the Mind and Soul

This brings me to the last question: If you were appointed the minister of education today, what would be your first decision or priority? This question makes our discussion real and concrete. For myself, the first thing I would do would be to re-introduce the principle of subsidiarity—a principle deeply rooted in Catholic social teaching—into education. I would do this by working to reduce the role of the state and of economic and ideological interests in education. Instead, I would work to allow teachers, professors, schools, and universities, through the relationships that they have with students, to seek the most effective way to cultivate the mind and soul of each individual student, awakening each one to his or her calling in life. In other words, I would work for the de-politicization and re-humanization of education. Another aspect of re-humanizing education that I think would be important to work on is reducing the number of hours young people are required to sit still in classrooms so as to allow for more movement and hands-on learning.

Concretely, this means reducing bureaucracy and paperwork as much as possible. This reduction has to happen from the top down, starting with a major decrease in the tasks for which ministries of education the world over are responsible. Obviously, general legal frameworks and basic standards of quality would still be necessary for education—I am not against ministries of education in principle,

but I think that many of their competencies should be returned to the levels where they can best be enacted as required by the principle of subsidiarity. In my experience, European educational systems are mostly overregulated, while US-American educational systems tend to allow more possibility for enterprise, for instance, in the realm of private initiatives in education. I think a middle way can be found between these two systems where this principle of subsidiarity is truly respected.

Delving into the Mysterious Reality of Life

In conclusion: what are our choices? To use the recent words of Pope Francis: “Culture truly preserves and defends our humanity. It immerses us in contemplation and shapes persons who are not prey to the fashions of the moment, but solidly grounded in the reality of things.” The word “reality” is important here: I think our culture, and thus also our educational institutions, are rapidly losing this grounding in reality. We get carried away with all sorts of new ideologies, new ideas that are promoted from various directions and often have no source in reality whatsoever. Pope Francis goes on to say: “True lovers of culture, in fact, never feel entirely satisfied; they always experience a healthy interior restlessness and plunge with humility into the mystery of life.” In our universities and schools, we must strive to cultivate this healthy interior restlessness and this willingness to plunge with humility into the mystery of life. This means that we are never done learning and that science is never settled. There is no such thing as settled science because science is our way, as human beings, to try to come closer to the truth and to the reality of what it means to be human. And that is a process that will continue for as long as humanity walks on this earth.

Education, then, is the art of asking questions, the art of accepting but at the same time delving into the mysterious reality of life. It is a journey that never ends, and that each teacher is called to serve and not to master. ✨

Science is our way, as human beings, to try to come closer to the truth and to the reality of what it means to be human



Studying in nature broadens students' minds

Teachers as Students of the *Magister Interior*

The Need for Educators to Remain Lifelong Learners

This lecture was given by ITI Grand Chancellor Christoph Cardinal Schönborn in German at the opening of the second day of the ITI's Education Summit "Education at the Crossroads," May 6, 2023

In this introductory speech I would like to say a few things about Thomas Aquinas, who of course is no stranger in this house. Specifically: what does Thomas Aquinas have to say to us about the question of this symposium? Among the concerns of our symposium is the subject of the image of humanity. St. Thomas Aquinas says that when we consider the teacher, we always also consider the image of God and, above all, the relationship between God and humankind. *De magistro* is a *quaestio* of St. Thomas in the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, wherein he asks a classic question: what is the role of the teacher? Thomas addresses this question in a *disputatio publica* in Paris as *magister in sacra*, in *sacra pagina* or *sacra doctrina*. And the way medieval academic discussions happened was like a tournament – just as you had jousting tournaments, so also you had academic ones. And for such a tournament, you could formulate all kinds of objections, which the students did eagerly. So, for this *disputatio publica*, they collected eighteen objections against the proposition that teachers are necessary, that is, the question “Why do you even need teachers at all?” And the objections, of course, were based in the words of the Gospel itself. At that time, Thomas Aquinas was a *magister* at the University of Paris, the highest position one could attain, and the students were excited to be able to say to him, „Dear Magister, the Bible says not to call yourselves ‘masters,’ because only one is your *magister*: God.“

The position of teacher is not an honor, but a service

The Magister Interior is Christ Himself

How will Thomas extricate himself from this snare? How will he answer this question? To begin with, he will say: „Dear students, you have a false image of the teacher. For you understand the teacher as



His Eminence Cardinal Schönborn frequently gives guest lectures at the ITI on St. Thomas Aquinas

a *dignitas* and not as a *servitio*, a service. You see in *magister*, in ‘master,’ an honorable position, in reality he is a servant.“ And then Thomas goes into the question that Augustine has already dealt with in grand fashion in Augustine’s own *De magistro*. Augustine actually proceeds from the premise that there is only one teacher, that is, the *magister interior*, the inner master, who causes the truth to shine in our hearts. And this *magister interior* is the Logos, the Verbum, that is, Christ himself: Christ, the *magister interior*. Now, of course, this Augustinian approach contains a wonderful truth, that “to know” is in fact an inner illumination. But the question is, where does this light come from? This *magister interior*, how does he teach? In the Platonic tradition, there is the conviction that learning is actually remembering – remembering the things that we all already carry within us, the things that are, so to speak, embedded in all of us from our origins, that is this inner recognition. And from that point of view, the teacher is actually superfluous.

The Teacher is First of All a Learner Himself

Thomas does not reject the concept of the *magister interior* - quite the contrary! - but he clarifies it. And he clarifies it, not by criticizing Augustine—there is a big discussion: did Thomas criticize Augustine or not? Thomas never explicitly criticized him, but he did further develop him. And we can definitely say that, by going deeper, he also corrected him. The radical Augustinian approach in the Middle



Ages is not criticized by Thomas in that he criticizes *Augustine*, but in that he criticizes *Averroes*, the great Muslim Islamic teacher, who assumes that everything in reality is wrought by God, that He is the only cause, the *intellectus agens*. The only *intellectus agens* is God himself. That sounds incredibly pious, and throughout his work, Thomas grappled intensely with this strain of philosophy and also with the doctrine, and he has shown again and again that this view actually does not magnify God, but rather does not magnify God enough. And the heart of Thomistic teaching is that God is so great that He not only grants us to be, but He also grants us to be *causes*. That is, He gives his creatures propriety, agency—and this agency reveals itself in all areas, including in knowledge. And Thomas has this basic conviction, this theologically-founded metaphysical conviction, that the first cause is truly the first cause of all things, but the greatness of the first cause consists in the fact that

it empowers secondary causes. Thomas also applies this metaphysical-theological view to the question of the teacher. The teacher is first of all a learner himself. So Thomas proceeds on the assumption that learning exists. And the first question will be: what is learning, anyway? Or rather, what is learning *not*?

Learning is a Discovery

Learning is not the Nuremberg Funnel, not something being funneled or poured into the brain of the learner—rather it is a discovery. Learning is a discovery that happens in a twofold movement. On the one hand, learning needs the perception of reality, the perception of things. This is St. Thomas' Aristotelian approach, *per sensibilia ad intelligibilia*, „through the sensible to the spiritual realities.“ Perceiving reality through the senses constitutes the indispensable path of learning, but—and here the Augustinian strand converges with the Aristotelian one—this is possible only because of the *lumen interior* of truth. Knowledge is only possible when what is perceived by the senses begins — through contemplation and reflection—to shine, to become insightful. And that is an experience that all educators know. I was privileged to be a university instructor for sixteen years, and for a teacher, there is nothing like the gratification of watching the light of understanding emerge in the face of the learner: „Ah! Yes, that's how it is!“ Yet St. Thomas says—and this is quite crucial for understanding the learner and the teacher—the teacher can only impart knowledge if something happens in the reception of the learner that is true cognition. The teacher can't transmit that.

God is so great that He not only grants us to be, but He also grants us to be causes



St. Thomas Aquinas; Reading and discussing the texts of the great masters and saints

Thomas illustrates this point using an analogy with the doctor. A doctor cannot transmit health. He can only strengthen or stimulate the power of health, the *virtus sanativa*, in a person. He can assist this power to a certain extent, but he cannot create it. After my own two serious illnesses, I can say from personal experience that it is quite an exhilarating experience when one feels health returning to the body. The doctor does not create health, but without the doctor health is often lost—health is lost because the person does not receive assistance. So, St. Thomas compares the teacher with the doctor. The *virtus sanativa*, however, he compares with the inherent *prima principia*, the first foundations of truth,



because the *prima principia* are present in every person, but they also need to be stimulated.

Learning is a Process of Illuminating the Truth

So: Is it possible for us to learn? First of all, learning is a process of illuminating the truth. This illumination occurs with the help of the perceived reality which the teacher can transmit. Then, there is much more to say about what Thomas thinks about language. Thomas, of course, is always engaging Augustine, and Augustine, the great orator, was

rather skeptical of language. Augustine actually trusted the power of language less than he practiced it in his life—because Augustinian formulations are simply of incomparable potency. But the word, says Thomas, has a similar effect to that of the doctor's medicine. And if the word is clear and distinct and is spoken by the teacher himself in view of the truth—that is, if it is not a falsifying word, but a word born from vision of reality—then this word can also effect access to reality, to truth, in the learner. But this requires of the teacher that he is selfless, that his rhetoric is not deceptive, that his pedagogy is not seductive, but humble, leading to reality. And this, of course, presupposes that the teacher himself remains a lifelong learner.

There is nothing like the gratification of watching the light of understanding emerge in the face of the learner: „Ah! Yes, that's how it is!“

The Ministry of the ITI

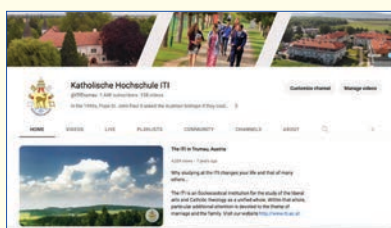
Lastly, what does this mean for the ministry of the ITI? What has been our objective at this small academic institution founded by a saint (Pope John Paul II) over the past 25 years? The ITI was very dear to John Paul's heart, so much so that he gave the ITI pontifical rights from the very first day, which was not always welcomed by his administrative staff. The ITI is an *institutum pontificium*, that is,

endowed with pontifical right. This was a great act of trust. And we try to live up to it with a ministry that—even without having reflected on it very systematically—corresponds exactly to what Thomas Aquinas teaches about teachers. We do not want to dazzle our students with great academic splendor. Instead, we want to lead them towards the *magistri*, the great masters, through whom we ourselves grow and in relation to whom we selflessly strive to put ourselves into service: the service of our students, and also the service of the knowledge of the great masters. We do this because we are convinced that the best service to young people is to give them, through the *manuductio* to the great masters, also the best *manuductio* to that which is essential. This enables the young people who study here to see what is essential in an undistorted way, and it protects them from ideological aberrations.

Thus, we give the young people who study here confidence: confidence in reverence for the truth, in trust in the great masters (mostly saints or important personalities). Then, when they become ITI graduates, they are enabled to pass on what they have experienced here: i.e., the true service of the most learned Teacher. And I believe I can say—after 25 years and some 500 graduates, who are active all over the world in many countries—that they have learned something here, that they were allowed to experience something here, even in their common life together on campus, in the ITI's intensive spiritual and liturgical life. I believe that they have experienced that they themselves could, and can, become something like *magistri*. Teachers not in the sense of being dazzling or intellectually imposing, but in humility and in the joy of having experienced the light of truth and then also passing it on.

In this lecture I wanted to convey, with the help of St. Thomas, something of what we are trying to live out here in this blessed little ITI. ✂

Translated by Elizabeth Schick



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“Is Study Conducive to Eternal Life?”

Reflections on the Question Together with St. Thomas Aquinas



Dr. Mortensen talks about the relationship between study and eternal life

Dr. John Mortensen has doctorates in philosophy and theology, and is the 2010 winner of the Vatican Prize of the Pontifical Academies. He received this honor in recognition of his doctoral dissertation “Understanding St. Thomas on Analogy”. In 2016 he and his wife began working full time publishing the Opera Omnia of St. Thomas Aquinas. Dr. Mortensen is an ITI graduate and currently President of the Aquinas Institute in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

In reflecting on whether study leads us to eternal life, Dr. Mortensen addresses the following subquestions: If prayer is more important than study, why shouldn't we just pray all the time? If study isn't at the heart of what leads to eternal life, why study? And if some people are even lead astray by study, is study dangerous? Dr. Mortensen presented a Summa-style reflection – complete with objections, sed contra (“on the contrary”), and replies to objections - at the ITI on 2 March 2023 on the question “Is study conducive to eternal life?”. His conclusion on the matter is found in the body of the article, the respondeo (“I answer that”):

This is one of those articles in which the answer is not ‘yes’ or ‘no’, but rather, in a way ‘yes’ and in a way ‘no’. St. Thomas gives us an entrance into the answer when he discusses what the vision of eternal life is. “Among those who see God through His

essence, one will see Him more perfectly than another. To be sure, this will not be because there is a more perfect likeness of God in the one than in the other, since, as has been shown (a.2), this vision will not occur by means of any likeness.”¹ I read this text, I taught it, and I remember the day when I realized that Saint Thomas was saying that nothing we know in this life is the vision of God, or even a part of the beatific vision. We do not see God through our knowledge in this life. What do we see God with or through? What makes the difference in the beatific vision? Saint Thomas teaches: “Rather it will be because the intellect of the one has a greater power or capacity to see God than the intellect of the other does. Now the capacity to see God belongs to a created intellect not by its nature, but rather through the light of glory, which, as is clear from what was said above (a.5), gives the intellect a certain deiformity – godlikeness.”²

If you have no charity, you get no vision of God

A Gift from God Enables Us to Enter the Beatific Vision

What causes the beatific vision in us or what counts in the beatific vision is a gift from God that draws us up into himself, making us godlike. This gift, this light of glory, is not given according to how

¹ST I.12.6.C.

²Ibid.





Because of what charity is, it is impossible for human beings to cause or produce charity. It has to be a gift

much we know by our natural capacities. St. Thomas continues: *“Hence, an intellect that has a greater share in the light of glory will see God more perfectly. But the one who will have a greater share in the light of glory is the one who has greater charity. For where there is a greater charity, there is a greater desire, and it is the desire that in some sense makes the one who desires disposed and prepared to receive that which is desired. Hence, it is the one who has greater charity who will see God more perfectly and be more beatified.”*³

And if you have no charity, you get no vision of God. It is charity, not knowledge, that determines vision. What we need to see is not how study leads to vision, but how study leads to charity. What is the relationship between study and charity? When I was thirty, I thought I had arrived at an answer to that question: knowledge causes love. Therefore, study will cause knowledge and knowledge will cause love, and that is how study is related to eternal life. But that is not true.

Charity is a Divine Gift

Charity is a divine gift. It can't be true that knowledge causes charity. St. Thomas teaches that charity is friendship, a friendship made possible because God communicates his life to us – God raises us up, even in this life, so that we can be friends with him. This being raised up is due to something given to us, something that makes it

so that we are the ones doing the loving, we are the ones who merit, we are the ones who are made godlike. Here is the part of that text again: *“Therefore it is most necessary that, for us to perform the act of charity, there should be in us some habitual form superadded to the natural power, inclining that power to the act of charity, and causing it to act with ease and pleasure.”*⁴ Charity is something in us, something added to our natural power. Can we bring about that form, or help coax it into being in any way? St. Thomas says: *“Charity cannot exist naturally in us and is not acquired by our natural powers. Instead, it is acquired by an infusion of the Holy Spirit, who is the love of the Father and the Son; and, as was explained above, created charity is itself our participation in that love.”*⁵

Because of what charity is, because of who charity participates in, it is impossible for human beings to cause or produce charity. Our knowledge does not cause the participation: it has to be a gift. Charity is not grown in us by our knowledge. It is a gift completely surpassing our nature. But what if we can dispose ourselves, prepare ourselves to receive charity? Disposing ourselves to receive charity would be like drying out a wet log so that you can light it on fire. Disposing does not mean to cause something to burst into flames. No matter how much we can dry out the log of our heart, we can't get it to burst into flames.

So, does study dispose us to receive charity? St. Thomas says: *“The virtue in accord with which God gives His gifts to everyone is the preceding disposition*

³Ibid.
⁴ST II-II.23.2.C.
⁵ST II-II.24.2.C.



or preparation, the effort of the one who is receiving the grace. But the Holy Spirit likewise initiates this disposition or effort as well, moving the man's mind either more or less according to His will. Hence, in Colossians 1:12 the Apostle also says, "He has made us worthy to participate in the lot of the saints in light."⁶

Even the disposition in us is a gift formed in us for the sake of the next gift. It is still true that this disposition does not cause the gift. The disposition is rather a gift in itself. What is the connection between study and charity? We can't cause charity, so study does not cause charity. If study disposes us to receive charity, that is merely another gift.

Perhaps study does not cause charity, perhaps study was never meant to cause charity – perhaps, instead, charity was meant to cause study. St. Thomas gives us an indication of this in his question on the contemplative life: "... *The contemplative life, as regards the essence of the action, pertains to the intellect, but as regards the motive cause of the exercise of that action it belongs to the will, which moves all the other powers, even the intellect, to their actions.*"⁷ And a little further, he says: "*Since God's effects show us the way to the contemplation of God Himself, according to Rom. 1:20, the invisible things of God... are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, it follows that the contemplation of the divine effects also belongs to the contemplative life, inasmuch as man*



Exercising friendship while studying together

is guided thereby to the knowledge of God. Hence Augustine says (*De Vera Relig. xxix*) that in the study of creatures we must not exercise an empty and futile curiosity, but should make them the stepping-stone to things unperishable and everlasting."⁸



Study is Conducive to Eternal Life if Study Is from Charity

It is not in this case that study leads to knowledge, and knowledge leads to charity. Rather, charity leads to study, and study, when performed out of charity, leads to more charity. Study is conducive to eternal life if study is from charity. I want to go a step further and say that study can be an act of charity, in the sense of being an act of friendship. St. Thomas says: "*Charity signifies not only the love of God, but also a certain friendship with Him; which implies, besides love, a certain mutual return of love, together with mutual communion, as stated in Ethic. viii, 2. Now this fellowship of man with God, which consists in a certain familiar conversation with Him, is begun here, in this life, by grace, but will be perfected in the future life, by glory; each of which things we hold by faith and hope.*"⁹

This phrase – familiar conversation – is what I want to focus on. You can make your study a familiar conversation with God, just as St. Thomas made his study a familiar conversation with God and with St. Paul, St. John, St. Matthew, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. If you can do that, you will be right in the center of exercising friendship with God in your study. It is the same kind of thing as talking to your friends about what you are studying. When you talk with your friends about what you are studying, you are exercising friendship and studying at the same time. Make your study be like that with God. Talk to Him, and listen to Him. ✂

Study can be an act of charity, in the sense of being an act of friendship

⁶ST II-II.24.3.ad1.

⁷ST II-II.180.1.C

⁸ST II-II.180.4.C

⁹ST I-II.65.5.C.





Reflecting on Education with St. Teresa Benedicta a Cruce

Robert McNamara is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Associate Member of Faculty at the Maryvale Institute, Associate Scholar of the Hildebrand Project, and founding Member of the Aquinas Institute of Ireland. He is an ITI graduate and a former visiting professor of theology at ITI. Speaking from his own experience of the ITI's academic life, he shares his reflection on the goal of education as followed and cherished by his Alma Mater.

In *De veritate*, St. Thomas says that ‘all human learning can be effective only in virtue of the light of reason’, as ‘a kind of reflected likeness of uncreated truth’, which ultimately means that ‘God alone teaches inwardly and principally’. This high view of education is also held by St. Teresa Benedicta a Cruce, better known as Edith Stein, the 20th century philosopher, Carmelite, and saint, martyred at the hands of Nazi Socialism in 1942. In an early public talk given not long after her conversion to Catholicism, Stein elucidates the presence of the divine hand in pedagogy: ‘God leads the human being in such a way that he becomes a true human being’. This understanding of education shared by Aquinas and Stein, which acknowledges the primacy of God and sees truth as its vital goal, has guided the ITI since its inception; this is the very reason many of us began studies at the ITI and the reason many alumni remember it as a place of authentic personal growth. In this brief reflection, I wish to outline Stein’s path toward this understanding of the goal of education as an image of the path typically followed by the ITI in its seminar sessions under the patronage of Aquinas.

Truth is Grounded in Attention to Reality

Stein begins with truth and clarity. Truth is grounded in attention to reality, when the learner turns to the world and progressively encounters its meaningfulness, its λόγος. All subsequent intellectual development depends on this first act of the mind, an act that must be open and searching

if reality is to unveil itself to the learner. Yet this basis in attention bears fruit in truth only when complemented by intellectual judgment, when the first act of the mind is completed in the formation of concepts and propositions that bear correct judgements. Such judgements bring the learner into accord with reality in a movement toward the equation of the mind with the real—the Thomistic (and more generally Scholastic) *adaequatio rei et intellectus*. But truth requires clarity. The world is brimming with meaning, meaning far beyond the mind’s apprehensive capability, and the gaze of the learner must be keen and contemplative if it is to adequately sift the true from the merely apparent, as well as from the unreal and illusory. Focused attention enables the learner to make incisive judgements and form concepts and propositions with definition and subtlety, that is, *clear* and *precise* concepts and propositions. Thus, clarity both conditions the possibility of truth and, conversely, truth is fittingly attained only together with clarity.



St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein), Virgin and Martyr



Upon this foundation in true and clear premises, the learner can then proceed to shape valid arguments that lead to higher truths, and ultimately to truths of God, the Λόγος, through which the intellectual life attains its proper completion.

Truth is Had by the Individual and Only by the Individual

From all this we see that the learner is *personally engaged* in gleaning truth from reality. Since attention requires a pure gaze, judgment requires intellectual submission, and argument requires careful reasoning, the will of the learner is intensely implicated in truth. That is to say: truth is had by the individual and only by the individual. It is the individual that stands or falls before the question of truth, and truth is had only by those individuals who search out the λόγος perseveringly. Yet, in this effort the learner does not stand alone; rather, the educator enters the picture as a guide to the life of the mind, as one who mediates the learner's engagement with reality, pointing out its salient features and assisting him in the formation of true concepts, propositions, and arguments. The educator leads by exposing his own mind and reasoning, and simultaneously thereby the path the learner must follow in his own pursuit. First amongst educators are the great masters of the Western tradition—the Ancient Greeks, the Church Fathers, the Medieval Philosophers and Theologians, and all modern and contemporary thinkers that follow in this tradition—the traditions of the *philosophia perennis* and orthodox Christian belief. The texts of these masters open the eyes of the learner, better enabling him to see keenly and enter into contemplation, to make insightful judgments and form clear concepts and propositions, and to reason toward ever higher truths. Next among educators are the tutors and teachers who guide learners through the texts of the masters, who themselves remain learners before this great tradition and model for their students how to navigate the path forward.

The Human Educator Stands Before the Learner as One Who Collaborates with God

In this way, the one who seeks truth receives the education necessary to attain intellectual insight

into the structure of reality; this is the foundational mission of education. Yet the educational venture is completed only when the learner is formed holistically, when he becomes 'a *true human being*'.

Education requires the properly personal formation of the learner in 'true humanity and true individuality'. For this particular task only God is capable of bringing it to conclusion, since, according to Stein, 'the true human being is the one who corresponds with the divine prototype of the human being', and indeed 'the divine prototype of the human individual', both of which reside only in the mind of God. The human

educator then stands before the learner as the one who collaborates with God and must refer all his pedagogical intervention to the divine idea of the human individual, first through recourse to the image of the human being provided by Revelation—fully realized in the image of man found in Jesus Christ, the Λόγος incarnate—then through humble submission to God's creative, providential, and redemptive activity in the life of the individual and the community. Thus, the educator perpetually gives way to God's action in the holistic personal formation of the learner, cooperatively accompanying divine activity with his own gentle hand so that what the good that God has begun will be brought to its proper completion in eternity. ✂

[For references, see Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (Rome: Sanctae Sabina, 1970–76); and Edith Stein, 'Wahrheit und Klarheit im Unterricht und in der Erziehung', in *Bildung und Entfaltung der Individualität*, eds. Maria Amata Neyer and Beate Beckmann-Zöller, ESGA 16 (Freiburg: Herder, 2001), pp. 1–8.]



Studying in silence is also essential to grasping the truth

They Bore Witness to the Truth

On the Nature of Education, Drawn from the Examples of the Lives and Teachings of Alexandr Solzhenitsyn and Alice von Hildebrand



*Dr. Nicholas J. Healy, Jr. is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Culture at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Catholic University of America. He has served as an editor of the North American edition of *Communio: International Catholic Review* since 2002. He is also a founding member of the Academy of Catholic Theology. Here are his thoughts on the nature of education.*

From 1941-1945 he served in the Soviet army, where he was decorated for bravery. Toward the end of the war, he made the mistake of writing a letter to a childhood friend with some remarks critical of Stalin. He was arrested for treason and sentenced to eight years in the Soviet labor camps, followed by forced exile to Kazakhstan. During his years in prison, Solzhenitsyn converted to Christianity and he began to gather material to write the untold history of the Soviet labor camps. In 1962, for political reasons, the Soviet authorities permitted the publication of Solzhenitsyn's novel *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. The publication of this book was a kind of watershed in Communist Russia. For the first time, someone was telling the truth about life in the system of arbitrary arrests and forced labor camps that had swallowed so many Russian citizens.

In response to your question about the nature of education, I would like to recall the life and teaching of two remarkable figures who devoted their lives to bearing witness to the truth. They were both born in Europe a few years apart; and they both suffered the evil effects of the Second World

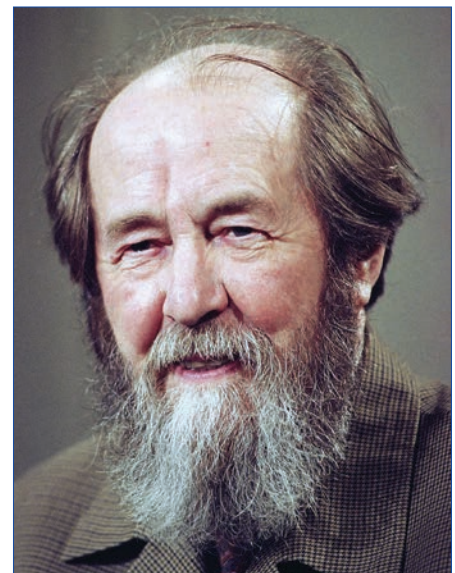
War, and they both emigrated to the United States. And yet they not often mentioned together. The authors I have in mind are the Belgian born philosopher, Alice von Hildebrand, who died on January 14, 2022 at the age of 98, and the great Russian writer Alexandr Solzhenitsyn. Despite their different life experiences and different vocations, these two figures have a common word to say that is important for our time.

By safeguarding the unity of truth and goodness, beauty is an indelible sign of the greater mystery of God, the source of being and its transcendental properties

The Unity of Transcendentals, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

Solzhenitsyn was born in a small town in southern Russia in 1918, shortly after the October Revolution of 1917. He received degrees in mathematics and physics from Rostov University while studying literature on the side through a correspondence course at the prestigious Moscow Institute of Philosophy, Literature, and History.

In the years that followed, as his literary fame grew both in Russia and abroad, Solzhenitsyn became a more and more outspoken critic of the Soviet regime. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature „for the ethical force with which he has pursued the indispensable traditions of Russian literature.“ Unable to travel to Sweden because of persecution by the Soviet regime, he submitted



Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, a writer, prominent Soviet dissident, and Noble-Prize winner



his acceptance speech in absentia. In this address Solzhenitsyn reflected on the enigmatic words of Dostoevsky, „beauty will save the world.“

How could this be possible? When in the bloodthirsty process of history did beauty ever save anyone, and from what? Granted, it ennobled, it elevated - but whom did it ever save?

In the course of answering this question, Solzhenitsyn recalls the ancient teaching on the unity of transcendentals, truth, goodness, and beauty. When truth is effaced with a lie, and when goodness is reduced to a materialistic seeking of pleasure, beauty has a particular responsibility for bearing witness to the meaningfulness of reality. And precisely by safeguarding the unity of truth and goodness, beauty is an indelible sign of the greater mystery of God, the source of being and its transcendental properties. Beauty will save the world, Solzhenitsyn teaches us, because it is a witness to the truth that the world is created by God.

Each Human Being is Created in the Image of God

In 1973, Solzhenitsyn authorized the publication abroad of his major work, *The Gulag Archipeligo 1918-1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation*.

Forged in the cruelty and inhumanity of the forced labor camps of the Soviet Union, *The Gulag Archipeligo*, exposed the true magnitude of the evil perpetrated by the Communist regime in Russia. The ideology of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin had led to the death of tens of millions. It was regime founded on lies and sustained only by the brutal methods of disinformation, arbitrary arrest, forced labor, and torture. More than a political tract, *The Gulag Archipeligo* bears witness to the transcendent origin and destiny of each human being as created in the image of God. „In prison it was disclosed to me,“ he writes, „that the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between

classes, nor between political parties either - but right through every human heart - and through all human hearts.“

The Soviet authorities responded to the book with denunciations, a campaign of slander, and forced exile from Russia. From 1975-1994, Solzhenitsyn lived in the United States in Cavendish, Vermont, where he continued his research and writing on the history of the Soviet Union. Although he was grateful to the United States for welcoming him during his period of exile, he also discerned a profound disorder in the liberal democratic culture of the West. In his famous 1978 Harvard Commencement Address he called attention to a lack of courage, a confusion between good and evil, a false notion of freedom unmoored from objective truth, and a materialistic notion of well-being or happiness. The root cause of these various symptoms was the eclipse of the sense of God, and of man as created in the image of God. The title of his address was “A World Split Apart”. According to Solzhenitsyn, the most serious crisis was not the cold war between East and West, but a crisis of truth about the human person as created by God and destined for eternal life. The path forward may be difficult, he suggests, but the mystery of our creation and redemption by God offers hope. The world is saved by beauty. And there is nothing more beautiful than God’s incarnate love.

The most serious crisis was not the cold war between East and West, but a crisis of truth about the human person as created by God and destined for eternal life



The Vocation of Philosophy is to Seek the Truth and to Live in Accord with the Highest Wisdom

Alice Jourdain von Hildebrand was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1923. When her country was invaded by Nazi Germany, she left her home and relocated to the United States as a refugee. She attended Manhattanville College and then Fordham University, where she earned a doctorate in philosophy. She was appointed professor of philosophy at Hunter College, a dogmatically secular school in New York. For thirty-seven years

she dedicated her life to teaching students about the importance of reason and about the objectivity of truth. She had a passion for Plato and St. Augustine and Kierkegaard. Without speaking directly of faith in the classroom, Prof. Jourdain brought dozens of young students to faith in Christ and the Church, becoming godparents to many, including figures as philosopher Rhonda Chervin and Dom Raphael Diamond, prior of the

Carthusian monks of Vermont. She wrote books about the nature of moral reasoning, the dignity of women, and the nature of love.

A key moment in her life occurred when she was student in New York during the Second World War. She was invited to attend a lecture by the German philosopher and exile from the Nazis, Dietrich von Hildebrand. The lecture was in his modest apartment near Harlem, and the theme of “Transformation in Christ.” Here is how she recounts the experience:

The moment that he spoke, something happened to me. I was so captivated by his words, by the ardor with which he spoke, that I made the discovery of what philosophy is. I had studied philosophy for two years in Belgium, and I was impressed by its clarity, but it was somewhat abstract, and I wasn't planning to major in philosophy. But when I left his apartment I knew that I was going to devote my life to philosophy.

Etymologically the term philosophy means love of wisdom. In her studies, her teaching, and her writing – she remained faithful to the original vocation of philosophy to seek the truth and to live in accord with the highest wisdom.

Gratitude: The Key to Happiness

Several years later, in 1959, she married Dietrich von Hildebrand, beginning a fruitful collaboration in writing and teaching philosophy. Following the death of

Dietrich von Hildebrand in 1977, Alice von Hildebrand continued to teach philosophy with a renewed devotion to sharing the thought of her late husband. She was fearless in defending the idea of objective truth and moral teaching of the Church. Among the many things she learned from her husband, she often returned to the words that he spoke to her shortly before his death: “Do you know what the key to happiness is? Gratitude.”



Alice von Hildebrand, a Catholic philosopher and theologian

For both Alice and Dietrich von Hildebrand, gratitude is the appropriate response to givenness of reality as true and good and beautiful. Here is how Dietrich von Hildebrand characterizes the meaning of

beauty and our response to beauty:

Every true value, such as the beauty of nature or of a masterpiece of art like Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, or the moral light of a generous act of forgiveness, or of an immovable fidelity, all these values that speak to us of God and touch our hearts, draw our spirit towards the true world of God, lead us before the face of God, and thanks to them, the barriers of pride, egotism, and self-assertion, which isolate us and make us look upon our fellow-men from the outside as adversaries and competitors, fall away.

Here we return to Solzhenitsyn's insight on the unity of the transcendentals. What unites these two figures is a profound sense of gratitude to God. Human life is gift from God, with this gift comes a responsibility to gratefully acknowledge the truth about God and the created order as a whole.

In this same spirit, the ITI Catholic University seeks to understand and hand on the faith of the Church. This education requires a formation in gratitude for the gifts of nature and grace. At the heart of this gratitude there is an opening that both Alexandr Solzhenitsyn and Alice von Hildebrand caught sight of: the mystery of God, who is our origin and end -- who is, as we read in the Letter to James, “the source of every good and perfect gift.” ✨



Transformation in Mind and Heart: The Goal of ITI's Approach to Education

Dr. Timothy Kelly is the BA&STM Program Director and Associate Professor for Dogmatic Theology at the ITI. He contributed significantly to the development of both of these study programs and their content. He himself is an ITI graduate, thus the ITI's mission and vision is close to his heart. Besides teaching at the ITI, he is also a Fellow of Blackfriars Hall, Oxford. In this interview, Dr. Kelly addresses the differences between Catholic and secular classical education and the particularities of ITI's specific approach to education, among other topics.



One normally expects to dissociate Catholic from secular education. But unusually for contemporary degree programs, the ITI's BA and STM degree programs combine both secular and Catholic disciplines, thinkers and texts. How can one account for this combination?

When distinguishing between secular and Catholic education, it's important to remember that our thirst for truth - what St Thomas Aquinas calls "the conformity of one's mind to reality" - is an inescapable and universal inclination that follows upon our nature. It is not the exclusive concern of either secular or Catholic academe. And the intellectual history of mankind, long before the light of Judeo-Christian Revelation, eloquently testifies to this elemental quest and trajectory of the human mind. Here at the ITI, the curriculum of our BA and STM programs testify to this truth. In both degrees we study a great diversity of texts and thinkers, both sacred and profane, philosophical and theological, pagan, Jewish and Christian. By this we are both manifesting the universal aspiration of humankind to know and to understand, and demonstrating the splendid catholicity of the Church's intellectual inheritance and tradition.

Can you say more about how the writings of secular thinkers can have a place in a Catholic college such as the ITI?

We must not forget how so many of the early Church Fathers recognized the wise and benevolent hand of divine providence in the work of the great

thinkers of pagan antiquity, in whose powers of reasoning and teachings could be discerned what they called the Logos spermatikos, "the seed of the Word". According to such early Christian thinkers as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, in the work and insights of the great pagan sages, there emerged an intellectual culture and context that would eventually come to be at the service of the faith. In other words, the process by which the Church would advance in her understanding of God's Revelation would be helped by the thought of those teachers who were not themselves blessed with this Revelation. This is one of the reasons why these ancient and classical authors feature so strongly in our curriculum. We read them not only due to the wisdom they impart, but also in light of the aids they provide us to understand the higher wisdom which they cannot possibly impart.

And so, to answer your question more directly, as St John Henry Newman recognized, a truly Catholic education cannot avoid also being "secular". For an authentic docility to God, to the light of the divine Intelligence, will have to include an openness to truth in all its contexts and at the various stages of its manifestation in human history (including, of course, the pre-Christian). Conversely, a secular education that is not also Catholic deprives itself of the highest light to which the "secular" is ultimately ordered and which it implicitly desires. As our Lord points out, "many teachers and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" (Matt 13: 17).

All students, in whatever discipline they happen to study, must endeavour to attain a certain conformity of their minds to the object of their study, and the extent to which they do so will determine its success

St Thomas Aquinas is one of the ITI's patron saints and is central to the STM curriculum. Can you explain how he fits in to the approach you just described?

One of the greatneses of St Thomas lies in the extent to which he exemplified the approach I have just described, where a trace of the divine wisdom is recognised in unlikely sources. St Thomas was distinctively fearless as a thinker, drawing upon voices from diverse epochs and traditions in a manner that was highly disconcerting to his contemporaries, and which got him into trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities. As Pope Leo XIII shows in his encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, in the sheer universality of his sources and the extent to which he unites what we moderns tend to divide up, Thomas is, intellectually speaking, the greatest exponent and exemplar of 'inclusivity'. Due to this committed openness to reality, Thomas' thought is characterised by an extreme openness to others, an eagerness to learn from all the intellectual endeavour that preceded him - not only Christian and Jewish but also pagan. Our BA and STM programs follow this approach too.

However, I should add immediately that this extraordinary academic range and erudition of St Thomas was not acquired by him for its own sake but was placed at the service of something higher: as he continually shows, the secular wisdom of antiquity finds its highest dignity when it helps us advance in our understanding of God's Word - that higher wisdom which is not the offspring of any human intelligence but a light imparted to our fallen intellects by God Himself. And so St Thomas deploys all the intellectual armoury at his disposal in helping the Church advance in her understanding of the great treasure entrusted to her. What we are doing at the ITI, in all the range and richness of our curriculum, both secular and sacred, is very much in accordance with St Thomas' approach.

What would you say are the main particularities of ITI's approach to education and its objectives?

The first characteristic of the education we wish our students to have is that it be a truly transformative one. Our intention is not simply that our students be edified, but that they be personally changed by

what they study: as St Paul puts it, "that the eyes of our heart be enlightened" (Eph. 1: 18). Such an outcome does not relate peripherally to what we are trying to achieve. We shouldn't forget that all students, in whatever discipline they happen to study, must endeavour to attain a certain conformity of their minds to the object of their study, and the extent to which they do so will determine its success. In the case of theological studies this presents an awesome but disconcerting challenge, since the primary object is no less God Himself. For students and professors alike, therefore, the living God is the exalted object to which our little and fallen minds are to be gradually and painstakingly conformed. As St Paul exhorts us, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom 12. 2).

How can this goal of education be achieved through one's studies at ITI?

Obviously, this is fundamentally a work of grace, but not as divorced from our own natural endeavours; for it is grace not as replacing but as presupposing and building upon our natures and our intellectual exertions. That is why what we study, and how we study it, is so vitally important; for the gracious process I described is not one which usurps our human intellects - with all our native talents, lights and blindnesses - but which heals and elevates what is found there. It gradually makes the human mind something more beautiful and dignified. Therefore, from our side, we can predispose ourselves to this transformative process by the conscientious manner with which we approach our studying and teaching. As I see it, this necessitates three conditions that accompany the ITI's specific approach to education: first, that our studies are not undertaken in isolation from prayer and divine worship, but that a life of prayer, a spirit of supplication and contemplation, is the very context in which we try to study. Secondly - and this is related to the first - that we approach our studies with a certain intellectual modesty and humility, a poverty of spirit that ensures that we are really open to receiving something greater than we ourselves can fabricate by our own native resources. We are thereby in a position where we can be formed and changed by means of what we read. The third characteristic of our approach involves our curriculum: for here we deliberately prioritise the





writings of those teachers and scholars who were also saints. These are the holy thinkers of the tradition, those whose minds had been conformed to that of the Master and who were inwardly irradiated by His wisdom: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2: 5). Spending time with such holy thinkers not only forms us doctrinally and morally, but helps us to be gradually conformed to their habits of mind and come to participate in the beauty and greatness of their contemplation.

What are your hopes and wishes for all students who study at the ITI?

As one can see from what I have just described, at the ITI we are not exactly training students for particular professions. Rather, we are trying to effect a formation that is deeper and more basic to them, and yet which ought to prepare a young man or woman fundamentally for any subsequent occupation or walk of life. I think there are two points to highlight here: first, from a practical perspective, our students’ engagement with the classical and Christian intellectual tradition is profoundly advantageous for their future lives in our post-Christian and, to some extent, post-rational world: for in a largely relativistic intellectual and moral context, their studies with us shape their ability to reason, to draw conclusions from immutable principles, and to live, work and help others according to an objective order of reality. This is a blessing at any time, but it is a particularly precious one in today’s cultural and social context.



Good debates in the classroom bear much fruit

Yet there is a still higher hope than this, and it is a supernatural one. And for this let me turn again to St Thomas: he recognized that theological studies were motivated by a burning desire in each of us, what he calls a “certain desire of promised good”. This “promised good” that impels us to study, to discuss and to debate, is something higher than mere erudition or scholarship –those mere earthly goods which “moth and rust destroy, and which thieves break in and steal” (Matt 6: 19); rather, Thomas is referring us to the blessed and incorruptible good of finally resting in what we now aspire to understand and love. For all the students of our past, present and future, one’s earnest hope is that the time they have spent with us will serve to set this blessed trajectory in motion, and to help them arrive at their ultimate peace. ✂

Conversation led by Oksana Stanishevskaya



The Task of a Catholic Educational Institution is to Become a Source of Hope

Dr. Sophia Opatska is the Vice-Rector of Strategic Development at the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU), the Founding Dean of UCU Business School (LvBS), and a member of the Board of European Federation of Catholic Universities (FUCE). In this conversation, she outlines the tasks of Catholic educational institutions and what is needed to be able to impact the world in a more profound way.

Over the decades Ukraine and its education system have suffered greatly as a result of the ideologies imposed on it by the Communist regime. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian Catholic University was revived. What was your vision and motivation in founding the Business School and becoming a part of the UCU?

UCU Business School (LvBS) was founded in Lviv in 2008. At that time, there were quite a lot of centralization processes happening in Ukraine, including in the field of business education. We did not understand why people from Western Ukraine had

to go to Kyiv to study in a business school. I have to confess that even now we are the only executive level business school which is not situated in the capital of the country.

The second reason for founding the school was that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the attitude towards entrepreneurs did not change much until 2008. An entrepreneur was considered in our society to be a smuggler, to be someone who is not acting in an honest way. Obviously, the experience of the '90s, when a lot of factories were corruptly privatized, had an influence on our society. But still, we

believe that small- and medium-size businesses, and business overall, are foundational players in society and in the economy of a state. One cannot build a prosperous state if there is no real business. Our vision was to change the negative attitude toward entrepreneurs and the Business School became one of the instruments to introduce those changes.

We became a part of the Ukrainian Catholic University, which was another step to show that business and

ethics are not incompatible, but rather can stand together. We wanted our Business School to have this idea from the very beginning and to communicate this idea of responsible, ethical business which plays an important role in a society, and this is a corner stone of our Business School.

Even though you have only come onto the educational formation scene relatively recently, you have been quite successful. What are the unique aspects of the LvBS that cause students to choose to study there?

Since we are an executive level business school, our students are already formed personalities, well-educated and quite successful. When we start our programs, I often say to our participants that we do not want them to become just better business people, but we would like them to become better people over all. And the two years they spend with us coming for modules once per month is an opportunity for them to step out of their regular environment, to think and see how they can become better persons.

The message itself that the school conveys to students - that you can become a better person here - is very important and vivid. I do not think that other schools are talking about this. We also have some elements of service-learning introduced in our curriculum and this is another option for them to step out of their regular business environment and to look at the society which is more diverse than they are typically used to seeing in everyday life. But also over last year, I think, there are so many changes in our country that it became very natural that everyone would like to become a better person.

Catholic universities are striving to provide a good education and this is something that is imperative. We cannot compromise on quality education



As a school, we are very clear in our messages. For us, it is very logical and natural to raise questions of values and moral principles. We talk a lot about Catholic social teaching, about solidarity and subsidiarity with our students. I do not think that this happens in other Ukrainian business schools. Of course they also care about the country, but they do it in a bit of a different way.

And how would you characterize the status of Catholic education in liberal Europe today? What do you think are the major areas of concern and challenge within Catholic education?

From my work in the European Federation of Catholic Universities, I can say that we have very different challenges. One of the issues is: do we know enough about the challenges each of us is facing – even across Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, Northern Europe? I would say that our societies are affected deeply by our different pasts and different current contexts. For example, the matter of migrants, questions of youth employment, and for Eastern Europe post-communist trauma are big issues. In a way, we all have a lot of peculiarities, but at the same time the way we try to guide students to become better people as a result of their education and growth in our institutions is very similar. For us, the respect for human dignity is important.

On one hand, Catholic universities are striving to provide a good education and this is something that is imperative. We cannot compromise on quality education. We ought to provide a good baseline education in Catholic universities, if we ever want to deliver bigger messages to students. Our universities should be known for good education, but at the same time it is important when students come to Catholic universities that they understand what makes a Catholic university different. It is not only about a good, high-quality education, but it is also about community which shares in our values.

I would say that the number one task for a Catholic educational institution is to provide a good quality education, but the task number zero is to be rooted in the values in which we believe so that we can propose those values to our students. Acceptance of the values should not be demanded, as we get different students from a variety of contexts, but the

values should be proposed and we should invite our students to share them.

What do you think needs to happen to solve the existing problems in education? How can we promote and strengthen education rooted in moral principles and values?

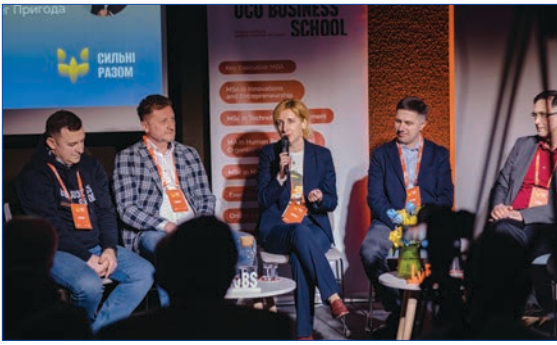
If we are speaking about education in Ukraine, first of all, we really need to remember that despite all of the horrors of war, our students and our children need education. We need to provide a basic level of safety and security, which will enable them to receive an education. The whole world went through the Covid crisis, now in Ukraine there is a war. Covid changed the model of education. It opened, on one hand, great opportunities for online learning and for hybrid education, but at the same time, it is especially important for Catholic universities to build community. For us it is very important that our students are part of the community, so that they learn how to communicate with others and learn how to build relationships. We, as the Ukrainian Catholic University, do whatever we can to keep having students on campus even in this difficult and complicated situation. We have invested a lot to have safe shelter and be able to work during blackouts. At the same time, the majority of Ukrainian higher education institutions are working online or in a hybrid mode. This is a short-term solution but it cannot be a long-term solution.

If you go to the website <https://saveschools.in.ua/en/>, you can see how many Ukrainian educational institutions have been destroyed. Currently, 2730 institutions have been damaged and 415 are totally destroyed. We are talking about more than 3000 educational institutions which suffered from the bombing and shelling in Ukraine. This is really a disaster for education. In the short term we are talking about the priority of defending the country, but if we look at the longer term, we really



Dr. Opatka participates in the General Assembly of European Federation of Catholic Universities in Tirana, October 2022

If we can provide different solutions to the challenges of the society, if we can work hard to find solutions at a top professional level, then more people will turn to Catholic education



Celebration of the 15th anniversary of the LvBS together with its founders

have to remember our human capital. We also have many people who fled Ukraine and became refugees in other countries - millions of well-educated women and children have left and it is a great task for Ukraine to figure out how to bring at least a large portion of them back home.

In this situation, the Ukrainian Catholic University is a great example for many institutions of how

being a small university can make a great impact in the country and in the society. It has a very solid foundation and stands very firmly on it. If we talk about education from a more international point of view, I think that universities and Catholic educational institutions should become a source of hope. If we, as Catholic universities, become this source of hope on a global scale, like the UCU in Ukraine, if we can provide different solutions to the challenges of the society, if we can work hard to find solutions at a top professional level, then more people will turn to Catholic education. I would say that blending our values with professionalism is very important and should be central to our activities. We have the privilege of believing in life after death and this is exactly what gives us hope and we can share this hope with many other people. ✂

Conversation led by Oksana Stanishevskya

Inspired by Our Graduates Who Have Chosen a Path in Education

One out of every five ITI graduates has found his or her vocation in the field of education. Our alumni hold teaching and leadership positions in educational institutions at various levels. They are founders and directors of private Catholic schools, teachers and lecturers at high schools and colleges, professors and deans at universities. The zeal and love for the truth that they cultivated at the ITI enable them to pass on the joy of discovering the beauty and goodness of life to their own students. They have much to say about what education means for them.

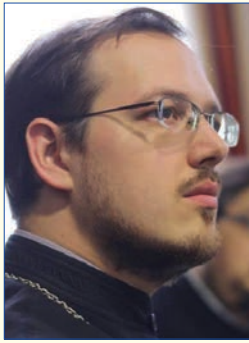


Education: From Darkness to Light

Dominic Nalpon (Singapore, STM 2021) is currently completing an STL in dogmatic theology at the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Angelicum) in Rome. While studying in Rome, he also sings at various liturgies around Rome with a small schola that aims to promote and revive the tradition of sacred music. He intends to continue his studies in order to contribute to the Church as a teacher and theologian.

The term “education” has its etymological roots in the Latin words *ex + ducere*, carrying the notion of leading or drawing out: to educate is to lead another out. But what is one being led out of? The obvious answer is that education leads one out of ignorance, from not knowing to knowing. A more philosophical and Christian understanding of education would be to lead one out of darkness and into light. Plato refers to this “leading-out” in his *Allegory of the Cave*: the philosopher, having himself been freed from the cave and the realm of shadows, now has the role of leading others out of the cave into the realm of reality. A Christian education must, therefore, ensure that the student comes into contact with what is true, and indeed, the Highest Truth. To educate a person is more than just to increase another’s knowledge, it is to change another’s life.





Education as Formation

Fr. Mikhail Samkou (STL 2017) returned to Belarus after graduating from the ITI, where he continues his ministry as an Orthodox priest and as a professor at the Minsk Theological Academy. Inspired by the principles of ITI, he organizes online groups reading the Great Books for people looking for the unique answers to the fundamental questions of human life contained therein.

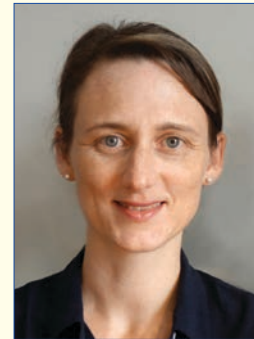
What and how well we do in the process of education depends on our understanding of the nature of man. We live in a world that J. Pieper called „the world of total work.“ This is a world of achievement, efficiency, and productivity, in which a man is seen as a *homo laborans*, an *economic force*, a *human resource*. In this case, education is the process of acquiring professional skills and knowledge. The result of such an education is, in the words of Ortega y Gasset, „the new barbarian, archaic and primitive,“ who is „the professional man, more learned than ever before, but at the same time more uncultured.”

If a man is understood as an embodied reflection of the Highest Truth, Good, and Beauty (the biblical “image and likeness of God”), then this means that he cannot be reduced to his function as a professional. In this case, education becomes a process of formation “according to the image of the One who created him” (Col 3:10). It is noteworthy that in Russian the word *education/obrazovanie* is etymologically connected with the word *image/obraz*.

The world needs an education centered on those noble qualities of the heart and mind known as virtues. Only such an education gives hope for the emergence of leaders for whom values will not be a spectacular decoration of correct speeches, but the starting point for decision-making and action.

Real Education Nourishes the Spirit

Jutta Graf (Austria, STM 2003) always had a strong sense that she should dedicate her time to children and young people. In 2018 she started a private Catholic school in Linz, “Privatschule Die Lerche,” that provides children with a good education and a strong foundation in their faith.



I have studied at three different institutes, but by far the most education I have received has been at the ITI: the work with original texts, the close listening (including listening with the heart), and the discussions made me grow as a person. In contrast, memorizing and reproducing lecture notes, as was common elsewhere, was only ever a superficial encounter, quickly forgotten, that left me the same person as I was before. True education must nourish the spirit, it must bring about life and growth. Today, my mission is to lead children and young people *ad fontes*, as I myself have experienced it. In Charlotte Mason’s pedagogy, I have found just that: students gain access to original texts, the Bible, literature, poems, works of art, pieces of music, nature.... They read and observe carefully, retell in their own words what they have heard, and draw their own conclusions. In this way, they develop vital relationships with the things around them that keep their minds alert and set in motion a lifelong learning process.

For Charlotte Mason, the essential question of education is not how many facts a young person knows at the end of his educational journey. „Rather, the question is: How much does the topic matter to him or her? How many areas of knowledge are near to his or her heart? How broad is the ground on which he or she stands?“



Revisiting Education in the 21st Century

Monica Rapeanu (Romania, STL 2003) is a Lay Dominican of the Irish Province. She is co-founder and co-organizer of the *Theology of the Body International Symposia*. She is currently a columnist on education at the monthly Catholic magazine of the Archdiocese of Bucharest, Romania, and is also a regular contributor writing articles for the new Irish Catholic online apostolate *Paving The Way Home*.

What is most needed, especially in the midst of the prevailing diversity of opinion and action regarding the direction of the educational enterprise, is to understand that a major imperative of our times is ‘getting real’ once again about education. In these days, when utilitarianism is a pervasive climate leading to ‘the abolition of man’ and when universities are widely perceived as mere training grounds for the workplace, hardly anything can be imagined that is more fitting than reproposing a person-centered education.

Properly understood, education is an activity that human beings do *with* and *for* other human beings. It is an organic process which involves the expansion of mind, heart, and technical skill by giving and receiving knowledge, wisdom, and practical abilities while paying attention to the formation of the whole person. The key principle of education is the anthropological principle: education is made for the person, not the person for education! Education is, therefore, *of the person, for the person* and *by the person* and it is anthropology which should determine the aims of education.

One of the essential aims of an integral education of men and women is and ought to remain *the cultivation of wonder*. We cannot seek to establish an exclusive ‘knowledge culture’. Educators are not just called to train the intellect with the aim of enabling one to think clearly, ask the right questions, and communicate effectively. Education is also about teaching the importance of values and imparting wisdom that inspires daily concrete living. Furthermore, education has the task of studying and investigating all aspects of reality and it must not allow itself to be dominated by various ideologies that distort reality.

Led Out of Oneself and into Truth

Elizabeth Ielmini (USA, STM 2021) is currently the Latin teacher at St John Paul II High School in Windsor, Colorado spreading the rules, struggles, triumphs, and joys of this immortal language.



What is education? Look to the Latin! Education, from the *ex-ducere*, means literally to lead out from. This implies four major points: where one comes from, where one is going, who or what is leading one onward, and the “one” who is led.

Concerning the first two, a good education needs a goal—and that goal must be a good and achievable goal to boot. This goal must be above and beyond the starting point, i.e. oneself; it ought to be achieved by a movement from potency to actuality, not a regression. Thus the universal good, true, and beautiful, above and yet accessible to the self, are the natural end of education. This final end is the prime mover and yet, as the process of attaining this final end is a process that draws one out of oneself, it is not a process that an individual can begin, continue, or end in isolation. Rather one is led by another who prods and draws one out of oneself, that is: a teacher. And lastly this education ought to confront, to convict, to transform the “one” who is educated; to draw the heart out from within itself into the true good now known.

Education as the Nurturing of the Inner Self and the Outside Self

Fr. John Kiiza Akiki (Uganda, STL 2021) was called to start a new parish of Our Lady of Fatima in the Diocese of Fort Portal, East Africa. Fr. John is studying how to start an elementary school (beginning with kindergarten) using a new curriculum of studies emphasizing holistic education, with a particular accent on the Most High as “The Teacher.”



Only someone who has somehow already been nurtured in his inner self can effectively nurture the inner self of another. The inner self is the core of the human person, the soul. This way of education through nurturing the inner self is led by the Spirit of the Most High who Himself is Divine and the Truth, the source of all knowledge and wisdom.

For anyone deprived of His grace, what is perceived as education can be stained by selfishness and deception, leading to the darkening of the true light which would illuminate the soul to understand the inner self and the outside self.

The outside self is the physical world observed, appreciated, and loved by the person. The beauty of the physical world emanates from the beauty of the inner soul. When the soul is nurtured in love of the Most High and the self, the soul becomes able to appreciate the beauty of the physical world as a way of appreciating the Most High.

In this sense, the source of knowledge, that is, the teacher who is the source of wisdom, constantly guides the humble soul that seeks knowledge and truth toward the supreme purpose of life: loving the Most High and serving Him as well as his neighbor. This process is illuminated and guided by the teacher.

To me, education is the nurturing of the inner self and the outside self, inspired by love of the Most High and in union with Him. The first obligation of a teacher is to pursue the development of the spiritual nature of his own soul and the souls of those under his care, and then to seek the development of the outside self.



Teaching: Toward a Craft of Science and Discovery

Andrew Steele (USA, STL 2019) is Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), Adjunct Professor of Theology at the John Felice Rome Center of Loyola University Chicago, Dean of the Catholic Classical High School (Schola Alta) “Aquinas Vancouver”, and Rector of the Theological Institute of St. Thomas Aquinas “Thomisticum.”



The art of education, insofar as it is an *art*, provides man with a plethora of diversified forms of education that are adaptable to every venue in which there exists a teacher and a student. What, however, does it mean for there to be an *art* as it pertains to education? From an Aristotelian point of view, St. Thomas Aquinas proposed art as *ratio recta aliquorum operum faciendorum* (ST I-II, q. 57, a. 3, resp.) – the right reason about certain works to be made. Materially speaking, there exists general agreement within academia as to what subject matters should be unfolded within a curriculum, in order for students to reach a certain competency within their respective fields. But severely lacking in academia, I propose, is what may be understood as a two-fold problem.

First, there is a lack of action with regard to any serious consideration and implementation of the *right ordering* in which these matters should be presented. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, is the problem of the specific *manner* in which these

rightly-ordered subject matters are communicated to students. By this second problem, I speak with reference to the study of theology and philosophy insofar as they ought to be considered fields of a *scientific* nature (i.e., examining a problem, testing and articulating responses and intuitions, reasoning and deliberation, etc.), with a methodology that seeks to unfold its principles *slowly*, in a manner that is ever-focused on the *individual* student, and the intellectual and practical habits every student should learn from their teachers. This second problem, then, places a *grave* responsibility on teachers; namely, that by manifesting an authentic *curiosity* of their own at every lesson, teachers will be most apt and equipped to properly mentor their students to become truly active learners – true disciples in the art of *being educated* – by operating in a mode of constant *discovery* and *wonder*. What a masterpiece of art it would be, for both teacher and student to engage in such prudent action, toward a common goal of conformity and understanding in the Truth of all things!



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