

THE POPE

Families, Teachers Have True Apostolate

Following are excerpts from the NC News translation of Pope John Paul II's Spanish-language address to educators in Leon, Nicaragua.

Not in vain did the Second Vatican Council urge laity to live their responsibility as baptized to the full, giving fruitful testimony to their faith and impregnating all fields of the temporal order with the values of the Gospel.



Among these fields is the school, since "The function of teachers constitutes a true apostolate... as well as a true service done to society." Rightly, then, did the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education recently issue a document entitled, "The Lay Catholic, Witness to Faith in the School." I recommend that you read it, for it can be of great help to you.

It may be said that the educational task is con-natural to the laity, because it is intimately linked with conjugal and family responsibilities. Laity actually share in the educational, evangelizing and sanctifying mission of the Church by virtue of their right and duty, which is primary and original to educate their own children. And there is not the slightest doubt that the school is the complement of the educational upbringing received in the bosom of the family. The Church recognizes this when she emphasizes the primacy of the family in education. Therefore I myself, during my visit to UNESCO headquarters two-and-a-half years ago, reaffirmed the "right belonging to all

families to educate their children in schools corresponding to their vision of the world, in particular the strict right of believing parents not to see their children subjected, in the schools, to programs inspired by atheism."

But it is logical that parents have the right to transmit the faith also in the bosom of the family, above all if this could not be done adequately in the school. Moreover, every Catholic lay person must feel the responsibility to justify his faith and to be a bearer of it into all environments, with his example and his word.

The liberty of families and the liberty of teaching in the educational process has its base in the natural law of man, which no one may ignore. So it is not a matter either of a privilege claimed or a concession on the part of the state, but expression and guarantee of liberty, which is not disassociable from an overall context of duly institutionalized liberties. So, as Catholic educators, be collaborators and complementors of the family's mission in the integral formation of new generations. You will thus help to give shape to a fatherland of free men and women conscientiously responsible for their being and destiny.

Your Christian vocation and, deriving from it, your educational profession, have to lead you to the transmission of and the search after the truth, by means of responsible exercise of freedom. This inward demand for liberty, the center and horizon of all creation and communication of culture, is an exigency of the faith as well, which, when conscientiously accepted, deeply thought and faithfully lived, engenders and makes culture. Hence education is degraded when it is converted into mere "instruction," for the simple

accumulation of techniques, methods and information cannot satisfy man's hunger and thirst for truth. Instead of working in favor of what man ought to "be," it works then in favor of what serves man in the field of "having" and "possession."

The child to be educated thus finds himself before a contradictory and heterogeneous mixture of things, disconcerted, undecided and defenseless against possible political and ideological manipulations.

Passionate love for truth ought to animate the educational task beyond mere "scientific," "secularist" concepts. It ought to lead to teaching how to discern the true from the false, the just from the unjust, the moral from the immoral; what elevates a person from what manipulates him. These are the objective criteria which ought to guide education, and not extra-educational categories based on terms as tools for action, on power, on that which is subjectively useful or useless, on what is taught by friend or foe, by who is labeled as progressive or retrogressive. To educate authentically is the task of an adult, of a father and mother, of a schoolmaster, helping the pupil to discover and progressively make his own a unitarian sense of things, a global approach to reality, to resolve values for his own life, seen in its wholeness and integrity, from the point of view of liberty and truth.

If education is integral formation of the human — and every education implicitly or explicitly presupposes a certain concept of man — the Catholic educator will inspire his activity with a Christian vision of man, whose supreme dignity is revealed in Jesus Christ, Son of God, the model and goal of human growth in its fullness.

SUNY Brockport to Host Conference on the Aging

Donald F. Reilly, deputy director of the National Council on Aging, will deliver the keynote address at a conference analyzing the proposed action plan of the 1981 White House Conference on Aging as it involves Monroe County.

Among the speakers for the event is Maurice Tierney, diocesan director of Catholic Charities.

Father Walchars Returns

Father John Walchars, the well-known Jesuit retreat master, author and philosopher, will direct a retreat for men and women, May 20-22 at the Cenacle Renewal Center, 693 East Ave.

The theme of the event will be "Faith makes the unbearable bearable."

The agenda includes presentations, group sharing, time for quiet meditation, prayer and rest, opportunities for personal consultation with Father Walchars or a Cenacle Sister, and celebration of Mass.

The offering for the program is \$45. Further information is available by calling the Cenacle, (716) 271-8755.

In addition, Father Walchars will also direct two days of prayer, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., May 19 and 24. Participants are asked to bring their own lunches. Beverages will be provided.

The gathering, "Conference on Aging: Issues and Policies for the 80s," will run April 22-23 at State University of New York College at Brockport.

The program is billed as "an opportunity for residents of Monroe County, service professionals in the field of gerontology, educators and students, and those with an interest in the broad field of aging and social policy to assess the impact of the proposed action plan issued at the 1981 White House Conference on aging."

The program will feature analyses of those recommendations in five areas: economic security; physical and mental health; older Americans as a resource; housing, education and training; family, public and private support systems.

Other speakers at the event include Rep. Barber Conable; Thad Mirer, department of economics at SUNY Albany; Kathy Lewis, training coordinator for Gaining Resources for Older Workers, Rochester; Sherry Kermis, department of psychology, Canisius College; John Piscopo, department of physical education, SUNY Buffalo; Franklin Williams, director of Geriatric Medicine Unit at Monroe

Community Hospital, and director of the University of Rochester Center on Aging; Neal Bellos, director, Syracuse University All-University Gerontology Center; Sheldon Tobin, director, Ringel Institute of Gerontology, SUNY Albany.

And, Judy Lawrence, director, Monroe County Retired Senior Volunteer Program; Nancy Osgood, gerontology program, Medical College of Virginia; Bruce Jacobs, director of public policy analysis programs at the University of Rochester; Gary Merritt, director, Monroe County Office for the Aging; S. Robert Rutzen, department of sociology, SUNY Brockport; Russell Ward, department of sociology, SUNY Albany; and William Lane, department of sociology, SUNY Cortland.

Further information on the event is available from Adult and Continuing Education, Cooper Center, SUNY College at Brockport, Brockport, 14420; (716) 395-2755.

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