

**Title: The School and the Role of Education in the Full Development of Man**

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- Thematic Discussion -

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by

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R o m e

## The School and the Role of Education in the Full Development of Man

### 1. An Important Theme

The thematic discussion of this Assembly, "The School and the Role of Education in the Full Development of Man" is one of the most important subjects to be studied deeply not only for the life of the Church but also for the world. Because this is the subject of everyone's concern in the world today and because tomorrow's world depends on today's education.

Needless to say "Man can't live without education", "Nations can't develop without education", and "Education is the key for the full development of Man". Isn't this true that these are some points that everyone believes in the need of school and the importance of the role of Education.

### 2. My Children

I am a family man and the father of four boys. Two of them are in a public high school and the other two are in a public middle school at present. Like other parents, my wife and I discuss about our children's future educational problems almost everyday.

In Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, for example, there are nearly seven and half a million people but we have only one Catholic high school and one middle school for boys.

Because of this reality, the teaching of the faith is done not at school but at each parish and home. This seems to me to be one of the common problems in the full development of man in those countries where Catholics are a minority.

### 3. Third World

In the case of the third world, especially after the independence of each country, there has been a tremendous expansion of schools, from primary schools up to universities after the World War II.

Education has been the priority for the national development and has contributed greatly in the elimination of illiteracy, promotion of national culture and education of responsible citizens.

Under the fashion slogans of "modernization", "industrialization", "green revolution" and "economic development" emphasis on education in the recent decade was given in human resource development, especially with regard to natural science and engineering, to meet the each country's manpower need.

Adult education, non formal school education also played an important role, too. As a result, the highly educated manpower contributed to the country's economic growth.

### 4. University Education

It is characteristic of the capitalistic-world that those who can enter the university are nearly all from wealthy families who can afford additional education such as private tutorship besides schooling, while there are a lot of young people who must labour as soon as they finish compulsory education because of economic reasons.

Universities have been turned into places for training of the white-collar workers and the purpose of education appears to be to enter so called "first class university" hoping to secure a white-collar job, a high position in the society and a fairly good income to enjoy life.

It is becoming more and more materialistic and selfish. It also creates an elite class leaving the great mass of the people to serve the few who have the university education.

In order to enter such a university to achieve their wrongly conceived purpose of education students, together with their parents, must pass through the "examination-hell" and the "competition of brain and money". As a result, students have so little time or almost none to receive spiritual education which is so much needed at their age and this is detrimental to human nature and human formation.

→ Case Study of Korea  
5. What to do ?

Then what shall be the role of the school and education ?

Now, we have to search how the school and the role of education can be of benefit for the full development of man.

Unfortunately, the true meaning and the concept of development is misunderstood by many people even among the leaders in the responsible positions in many countries. Is economic development alone real development ?

Does economic development guarantee the peace of the world ?

Does the happiness of man depend only on the rise of GNP ? So many questions and problems are arising now.

It would be a big mistake if schools do not give some special attention and enough effort to the <sup>moral, mental and</sup> spiritual education for ~~the~~ our children and students.

This would be so if the role of education can't meet the spiritual needs of man.

We must, therefore, try to help our children and students to develop their own character and God given hidden talents and ability, to cultivate the creative power and the spirit of service for other people's happiness and the love of God. Schools should not be remained as the place just to cram the knowledge into children's and student's minds but the center for human formation and for the full development of man.

The Role of Education must be to serve and contribute to bring social reform for a more just society and we want the school system to become "an instrument to unlock life to all the people" as Dr. Coady said. Here, I want to stress the need of adult education for the great mass of the people who cannot continue school education and this is more serious problems of education today. Because we believe the dignity of every man.

Education should not be used as a tool for economic development only.

It is equally important to contribute to the social, cultural and spiritual development of our young people who sooner or later will be the masters of the tomorrow's world.

#### 6. Faith and Action needed

In countries such as Korea where the Catholic School is still at its beginning, Bishops, teachers of clergy, sisters and layman, the parish, missionaries, Religious societies of men and women, various Catholic institutions, lay organizations and Catholic masscommunication must actively participate to perform and to make a valuable contribution for the specific mission of education for the evangelization of the country especially for our children and youth who are in and out of the schools.

In countries where Catholics are a minority, we need to have strong and unchangeable faith, courage and enthusiasm in the work of evangelisation, the mission of church, and in the necessity and importance of an educational apostolate for our children and youth to educate and train them to live knowingly as children of God.

Parents who believe in Christ and who have a love for their children, who appreciate what children's' real problems in school education are, have to fulfil their duties and responsibilities in the promotion of the spiritual and moral qualities of their children and for the full development of their children,

Honestly, how much time, energy and money of the parents is spent for school education for our children, and how little we have invested for them in catholic education ! What a shame to excuse ourselves by giving all kinds of examples. To whom shall we blame but to ourselves.

We, the Catholics must awake and be rejuvenated to commit ourselves to follow and act according to the teaching of the church and the second Vatican Council to realize the God's plan until it reaches its fullness in Christ, the building of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Though there are many difficulties and problems relating to they school systems and education everywhere today just as it has always been throught the history of the Church, I belive strongly that the Church can play an important role for the improvement of education in each country's given situation and can perform an essential and unique service for the full development of man.

Thank you very much.