

# FAITH AND REASON

## **An education is not successful if we do not know how to create poets:**

I offer you a warm greeting on the occasion of this Seminar promoted by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on “Education: The Global Compact”. I am pleased that you are reflecting on this theme, since today there is a need to join forces in order to achieve a broad educational covenant aimed at forming mature persons capable of mending, mending the fabric of human relationships and creating a more fraternal world. An integrated and quality education, and the standards set for graduation, continue to represent a global challenge. Despite the objectives formulated by the United Nations Organization and other bodies (cf. Goal 4), and the important efforts made by some countries, equality of education has not yet been achieved in our world. Poverty, discrimination, climate change, the globalization of indifference and the exploitation of human beings all prevent the flourishing of millions of children. Indeed, for many, these are an almost insurmountable wall preventing the attainment of the goals of sustainable and guaranteed development proposed by the world’s peoples.

Basic education today is a normative ideal throughout the world. The empirical data in your possession show that much progress has been made in giving boys and girls access to schooling. Today, the enrolment of young people in primary education is almost universal and it is clear that the gender gap has been narrowed. This is a praiseworthy achievement. Nonetheless, each generation needs to consider how best to hand on its knowledge and its values to the next, since it is through education that men and women attain their maximum potential and become conscious, free and responsible. Concern for education is concern for future generations and for the future of humanity. It is a concern profoundly rooted in hope and it calls for generosity and courage.

Education is not merely about transmitting concepts; that would be a legacy of the learning that has to be overcome, that is, it is not only the transmission of concepts. Education is an enterprise that demands cooperation on the part of all involved – the family, the school and social, cultural and religious institutions. In this sense, in some countries it is said that the educational compact is broken because this social participation in education is lacking. In order to educate, one has to be able to combine the language of the head with the language of the heart and the language of the hands. In this way, the student can think what he or she feels and does, can feel what he or she thinks and does, and can do what he or she feels and thinks. A total integration. By encouraging this training of the head, the heart and the hands, intellectual and socio-emotional education, the transmission of individual and societal values and virtues, the teaching of a committed citizenship concerned for justice, and by imparting the abilities and knowledge that can prepare young people for the world of work and society, families, schools and institutions become essential vehicles for the empowerment of future generations. [If it is so] We can’t speak, though, of a broken educational compact. This is the compact.

Today what I have called the “educational compact” between families, schools, nations and the world, culture and cultures, is in crisis, and indeed in a state of breakdown. That breakdown is serious, and it can only be fixed through a renewed universal effort of generosity and cooperation. This breakdown in the educational compact means that society, the family and the different institutions called to educate, have all delegated the decisive task of education to others. In this way, the various basic institutions and the states themselves have evaded their responsibilities and faltered in this educational compact.

Today we are called in some way to renew and consolidate the dedication of all – individuals and institutions – in favor of education, in order to forge a new educational compact, because only thus will education be able to change. To achieve this, there has to be an integration of disciplines, culture, sports, science, relaxation and recreation; for this reason, bridges have to be built to “jump over” (if you allow me that word) the forms of enclosure that trap us in our little world and to launch into the global open seas in respect for all traditions. Future generations must have a clear understanding of their own tradition and culture – this is non-negotiable – in relation to other traditions, in such a way that they can develop their own self-understanding by encountering and appropriating cultural diversity and change. This will enable the promotion of a culture of dialogue, a culture of encounter and mutual understanding, in a spirit of serenity and tolerance. An education that enables young people to identify and foster true human values from an intercultural and interreligious perspective.

I spoke of three languages: the mind, the heart and the hands. When we speak of roots and values, we can speak of truth, goodness and creativity. Yet I do not want to finish these words without speaking of beauty. We cannot educate without leading a person to beauty, without leading the heart to beauty. Forcing my talk a little, I would say that an education is not successful if you do not know how to create poets. The path of beauty is a challenge that must be addressed. I encourage you in the important and exciting task that is yours: to cooperate in the education of future generations. What you seek to accomplish has to do, not with the future, but with the present, here and now. Go forward, and may God bless you. I pray for you, and I ask you to pray for me. Thank you very much.

## **A Prayer for those who are Afraid:**

May God's light encircle you. May God's love enfold you.

May God's peace encourage you. May God's presence enrich you.

**A Prayer for the Sick:** May Our Lord Jesus Christ surround you at this time, with his healing presence. May he support you with his protection and mercifully restore you to health.

**Little things mean a lot:** It only takes one smile to offer welcome, and blessed be the person who will share it.

It only takes one moment to be helpful, and blessed is that person who will spare it.

It only takes one joy to lift a spirit, and blessed is the person who will give it.

It only takes one life to make a difference and blessed is that person who will live it.....**Amanda Bradley**

### **A Thought for the Day During Lent**

**Sunday** Genuine love is demanding, but its beauty lies precisely in the demands it makes.

**Monday** God acts mercifully, not indeed by going against His justice, but by doing something more than justice.

**Tuesday** By turning your eyes on God in meditation, your whole soul will be filled with God.

**Wednesday** For you, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy to all who call on you.

**Thursday** You do not need to wallow in guilt. Wallow in the mercy of God.

**Friday** If I belong to Christ, obedience is a way of being at his disposal so that He is free to use me as he wills.

**Saturday** There is more value in a little study of humility and in a single act of it than in all the knowledge in the world.

**The Light of Conscience:** The words of Our Lord Jesus Christ guide man to God, by means of his own conscience. Conscience in man is like an inner source of light and an organ of sight. The Lord Jesus compares it to the sense of sight; "If your eye is diseased by our whole body will be in darkness". According to Christ's words, we must be very attentive to the promptings of our conscience, for on this depends on the inner truth of every man. Conscience first and foremost determines whether or not man lives in truth. Conscience like man's intellect is also fallible; it can sometimes make a mistake without knowing that it has done so. A man who is guided by such a conscience does not commit a sin... **St John Paul II**

**The Error of Conscience:** An error of conscience is one thing and negligence of truth is quite another. In this area we must be very strict with ourselves. For on occasion we take on occasion we take for the voice conscience a temporary mood of the state of our feelings. We consider that something is in accordance with our conscience if it matches with those feelings. We do not consider that moods, feelings, and passions may in fact be blocking the voice of conscience, preventing it from getting through to our souls. We lose detachment from our own actions and allow something evil to occur, saying "this is the dictate of my conscience". But this is not true. The voice of conscience could not make itself heard...**St John Paul II**

**The Strength of Conscience:** The season of Lent is meant to allow conscience to make its voice heard more effectively in each of us. Jesus Christ stands beside everyone in whom conscience begins to make itself heard, he desires and intends to help him regardless of how far the voice of conscience will accuse him. For he is the true Savior of souls. He has the power to put man right with God. Conscience, however, must do its work, for man can meet God only exclusively through the truth...**St John Paul II**

**Beyond Mercy:** You call me to repent, Lord. Even when I am not convinced, I did anything wrong. But, to keep on your good side, I give up and give in, and admit my guilt of sin. You shower me with mercy and forgiveness, refreshing my spirit, renewing my heart and restoring my joy. And still you refuse to leave me alone in my newfound peace. But rather call me yet again, to leave my comfort zone and seek out those who offended me, or whom I have offended and be reconciled. You are asking me to die to myself and nail my ego to the cross of humility. Not to prove my love for you but to appreciate your love for me, for whom forgiveness, love and mercy are only first steps along the way to following you.

**Lenten practices of giving up pleasures are good reminders that the purpose of life is not pleasure.** The purpose of life is to attain to perfect life, all truth and undying ecstatic love – which is the definition of God. In pursuing that goal we find happiness. Pleasure is not the purpose of anything; pleasure is a by-product resulting from doing something that is good. One of the best ways to get happiness and pleasure out of life is to ask ourselves, 'How can I please God?' and, 'Why am I not better?' It is the pleasure-seeker who is bored, for all pleasures diminish with repetition... **Fulton J. Sheen**

**In His Will is Our Peace**

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