

Father Barnes' bulletin article regarding Catholic Education

In America today, there is some confusion about what it means to be truly free and about how to live a meaningful life. The reality of the matter is that human nature is fallen and there is need for education and formation and there is need for God. While we are created good and in the image and likeness of God, not every urge is to be pursued. This is where solid education and formation in faith and reason are so important, to help us know how to act.

"As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute" (GE, #3).¹

"The task of imparting education belongs primarily to the family, but it requires the help of society as a whole" (ibid. #2). Pastors of souls have a "...very grave obligation to do all in their power to ensure that this Christian education is enjoyed by all the faithful and especially by the young who are the hope of the church" (ibid. #2).

Note well that: **"Catholic parents are reminded of their duty to send their children to Catholic schools wherever this is possible, to give Catholic schools all the support in their power, and to cooperate with them in their work for the good of their children"** (ibid. #8).

My dear brothers and sisters, the young are the future and the hope of the church. This is the reality and it is of highest importance. The youth are being educated in something, and it is either authentic education and formation as a disciple of Jesus Christ or it is something else.

"True education is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share" (ibid. #1).

There is an invitation for families to discern seriously what God is asking in regard to the education of children in the home and how this works in accord with the pastor's responsibility in the matter. We are blessed to have a Catholic school in Webster, *Holy Cross Catholic School*: <http://www.holycrossschool.net>. In a day in age when some of the laws in our great nation will dictate what teachers in public schools can and cannot say about what it means to be free and to be truly human and about what marriage is, we have not only a school that can teach the truth in love in *Holy Cross Catholic School*, but also a beautiful community rooted in Jesus Christ where we can grow in our knowledge and love for God openly and freely.

Gravissimum Educationis. Vatican Council II — Volume 1 The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents. Austin Flannery, O.P. Costello Publishing Company, New York 2004.

In the Catholic setting, children can ask questions daily about the Faith, and teachers can write questions down that may be more difficult to answer, questions that are then posed to the priests when we make our classroom visits. A Catholic school is a setting where the Word of God can be sown on a deeper level, so that children can grow in their understanding of the Faith and bear fruit as a result!