Religious Education in Catholic Schools to Educate for Living Faith

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Abstract

The central proposal of this essay is that religious education in Catholic schools is to educate for living faith and not simply for instruction about Catholic or other religious traditions. For long this claim was taken for granted. Now, however, and for various reasons, there is growing sentiment that formation in faith is exclusively the work of family and parish, whereas religious education in Catholic schools is to proceed solely as an academic discipline, teaching religion as one might teach mathematics or science or any other subject. This essay proposes that we resist this diminution of religious education in Catholic schools (hereafter RECS) and precisely to honor the nature, purpose, and ways of knowing that are inherent to Christian faith, and likewise to reflect the Christian intellectual tradition.

Keywords

Religious education, Living faith, Instruction, Religious tradition, Diminution, Catholic schools

I. Educating for Faith as Common Ground
The central proposal of this essay is that religious education in Catholic schools is to educate for living faith and not simply for instruction about Catholic or other religious traditions. For long this claim was taken for granted. Now, however, and for various reasons, there is growing sentiment that formation in faith is exclusively the work of family and parish, whereas religious education in Catholic schools is to proceed solely as an academic discipline, teaching religion as one might teach mathematics or science or any other subject. This essay proposes that we resist this diminution of religious education in Catholic schools (hereafter RECS) and precisely to honor the nature, purpose, and ways of knowing that are inherent to Catholic faith, and likewise to reflect the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Our post-modern era has clarified like never before that we now have two fundamental options regarding life in the world. One proposes that human meaning and authenticity is forged within a purely immanent frame of “exclusive (of God) humanism” and pursued by “buffered selves” who see no more to life than what we make of it, by and for oneself alone. The other is a Transcendent stance whereby we are conscious of and live into an ultimate horizon to forge meaning, find purpose, ground an ethic, and experience grace - help beyond our own efforts - and this for others as well as for oneself(Taylor, 2007). At a minimum, RECS must encourage students to embrace and live with a Transcendent perspective on life - must educate for living faith.

Catholic education is now realized in a great variety of socio-cultural contexts, from schools managed by the Church and funded by student tuition to ones sponsored by gover
nments and receiving public funding. Likewise, the student population of Catholic schools is increasingly diverse. A significant number come from families that are culturally Catholic but not active in ecclesial practice, and yet desire a Catholic education for their children. Add, too, the growing percentage from backgrounds of other or no religious tradition (now at 20% in US Catholic schools). To proselytize non-Catholic students to Catholic faith would be highly inappropriate.

Yet, even with such diversity, every expression of RECS is to educate for living faith, to encourage all students to embrace and let their lives be shaped by faith in the Transcendent ground of their being. Curriculum wise, this requires a pedagogy that moves beyond teaching about Catholic faith - or any other tradition - to encourage all participants to learn from its spiritual wisdom for life and disposes Catholic students to learn into Catholicism as their religious identity (Grimmitt, 1987; Lane, 2013).

II. RECS To Honor the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

There was a tension in the early Church as to whether to evangelize for Gospel faith alone or also to engage in general education and interchange with the surrounding culture as the context of its evangelizing. The threefold “great commission” that the Risen Christ gave to disciples on a hillside in Galilee (Mt 28:18-20) directed them to “make disciples,” to “baptize” into a Trinity-owned community, and to “teach” as
Jesus taught. It soon faced the question, should the community's evangelizing be located within general education and in conversation with the surrounding culture, or conversely, should it conduct general education - reading, writing, arithmetic - as the context for educating-in-faith,

Tertullian (160-240), for example, argued that “Jerusalem” (i.e. the Gospel) has no need of “Athens” (secular learning), likening a partnership between “the academy and the Church” as a dangerous bonding of “heretics and Christians” (Tertullian, 1994, Ch. 7). Wiser voices prevailed, however, insisting that general education is an aspect of God’s saving work in Jesus Christ and promotes the needed dialectic between faith and its surrounding culture. For example, Clement of Alexandria (150-215) well argued that “Christ the educator” taught “body, mind, and soul,” and the Church should do likewise (Clement, 17-24).

Thereafter, the Church forged a Christian paideia that united faith formation and education, teaching the secular subjects as “ladders to reach the sky” of Gospel faith (attributed to Origen). Great church-sponsored schools soon emerged in Alexandria, Rome, Antioch and other cities. This Christian paideia was augmented with the emergence of Benedictine and Celtic monastic schools in the sixth century, continued on into the great cathedral schools of the ninth century and after, and led to the foundation of the first universities, beginning in the eleventh century. All of the great universities (Bologna, Salamanca, Oxford, Paris) were established by papal charter and staffed by the emerging religious orders.

A defining aspect that emerged of this Catholic education was a “both/and” epistemology. So it promoted a partnership
between God and the person, faith and reason, revelation and science, wisdom and knowledge, formation and education, tradition and discovery, desires of the heart and critical thinking. In sum, it honored both Transcendent and immanent perspectives, and proposed a spirituality that shaped peoples’ personal and social ethic. The intended learning outcome of this Catholic intellectual tradition (hereafter CIT) was the integration of life and faith into living faith (Imbelli, 2013).

Those CIT partnerships prevailed unchallenged until the time of the Reformation. Luther recognized that for his reform movement to succeed would require taking education out of the hands of the Church and into the hands of the governing princes instead. His request of 1520 to the German nobles that they found and fund schools marked the beginning in the West of what is commonly called “public education” (Luther, 1960). Though Luther never intended as much, the defining characteristic for education to be public was that it take God, faith, revelation, spirituality, etc. out of its curriculum.

The “Enlightenment” era that followed made the de-faith- ing of education an explicit agenda, beginning with the modern universities and trickling down into all public schooling. It erased the both/and partnerships of the CIT, declining the first and favoring only the latter. So the Enlightenment took God out of the curriculum, focusing exclusively on the person; likewise schools set faith aside to favor reason alone, science was to flourish without the perceived limits of tradition and revelation, knowledge and information was favored to the neglect of spiritual wisdom and formation, empirical research
and the mind were totally preferred, excluding experiential and emotive ways of knowing.

By contrast and when faithful to its spiritual foundations, the CIT resisted the Enlightenment's impoverished epistemology and its de-ontologizing of education as if it is not to shape the being of people - who they are and how they live. It continued to insist on both/and ways of knowing, seeing the partnerships of faith and reason, revelation and science, etc. as mutually enhancing rather than limiting, and as essential for education to humanize and promote a responsible ethic for life.

It would be most unfortunate for Catholic educators to abandon this rich CIT heritage. Regardless of its social context, surely all CSRE must educate from and for faith, privileging our own and, as appropriate, teaching other religious traditions in ways that encourage students to learn from them and, if they so choose, learn into them for their identity in faith. To do less is to settle for an impoverished epistemology and the de-ontologizing of Catholic education.

III. Signs of Hope for a New Day

The Enlightenment movement unfolded with all the more emphasis on critical reasoning about empirical data as the primary way of knowing. It embraced Kant's separating of theoretical from practical reason (relegating faith to the latter), and likewise his battle cry of "dare to think" - for and by oneself alone. This modernity was biased against both common sense knowing from daily life and the wisdom of
tradition, especially of religious traditions - as Gadamer well argued (Gadamer, 1975). Such critical reasoning is inimical to any sense of an enchanted world (Weber, 1971); it discounts people’s encounter with the Creator in the created order and likewise the mystical as mediated through experience - its favored mode.

Though such modernity also has its assets for CRE (more below), its negativity toward religious faith spawned the secularization (Taylor, 2007) and detraditionalization (Boeve, 2005) that now marks our age, at least in Western cultures. Its influence has been pervasive and largely unchallenged - until recently. Now there are growing signs of disenchantment with modernity’s purely immanent frame, its exclusive humanism, and its encouraging of the “buffered self”. As Taylor argues, these postures cause “a malaise” and “a terrible flatness in the everyday” (Taylor, 2007, 299-309). Increasingly, it seems, postmodern people are reconsidering a Transcendent take on life as far more life-giving than a purely immanent one.

Following on, the modernist assumption was that education would “subtract” faith out of people’s lives, recognizing it simply as an old superstition. But some 85% of people throughout the world still claim to be people of faith, with many of the rest claiming to be “spiritual but not religious.” In contrast to the leading voices of modernity (Marx, Nietzsche, Freud), many postmodern authors now identify themselves as people of faith (Gadamer, Ricoeur, Levinas), seeing belief and unbelief as equally “reasonable” postures. In sum, postmodernity has far greater openness to the spiritual than modernity had: Taylor (2007, 727) is convinced that
we are merging into a spiritual super nova.

Likewise, many postmodern authors are recognizing the need for a “reasoned religion,” one that subsumes “the cognitive achievements of modernity” (Habermas, 2007, 78) and yet is a posture of faith, and this being needed for the effective functioning of contemporary democracy. Such religious faith can provide a deeper grounding of both a personal and public ethic and a higher motivation for people to fulfill their social responsibilities. Further, postmodernity appreciates that religious faith can provide more holistic and humanizing ways of knowing that respond more effectively than the purely scientific to the deepened hungers in our time for purpose and meaning, for responsible agency and authenticity as persons (Lane, 2013, 13-18). This fresh openness of postmodern people to a Transcendent frame of life lends new opportunity for CSRE to educate for faith: how sad if we were to miss the boat!

"The Nature, Purpose and Epistemology of Catholic School Religious Education"

To develop the proposal that all CSRE is to educate from and for faith requires clarification of three central issues: 1. the kind of religious faith that all Catholic religious education is to teach; 2. with what effect on people’s lives and world; and 3. the ways of knowing that can promote the desired learning outcomes. Responses to these three crucial issues, then, will suggest an appropriate pedagogy.

1. The nature of catholic faith.
To begin with the obvious, every religious faith has recognizable phenomena: creeds and teachings, values and virtues, prayer practices and rituals, sacred times and places, communal and leadership structures, etc. We could teach about all these aspects (as in religious studies) and yet fall short of what “the faith” could mean existentially for people’s lives. Beyond their realia, the horizon of all the great religious faiths is spiritual wisdom for life to be lived in covenant with the Transcendent (however understood), with this divine/human partnership shaping every aspect of people’s being in the world. In sum, all the great faiths are fountains of spiritual wisdom for living a worthy and responsible way of life.

That all faiths are ontological – to shape who people are and how they live – is writ large in Christian faith, and maybe all the more in Catholicism. The faith that Jesus embodied, with all the truths and values that he lived and taught, is to become incarnate in would-be disciples. The purpose of every aspect of Christian faith is to propose a way of life, a living faith that is to be lived and life-giving for oneself and “for the life of the world” (Jn 6:51). As in its greatest commandment, Christian faith engages all of people’s minds, hearts, and strengths – their souls (Mk 12:30). To teach it as anything less than a way of life is akin to swim instruction that teaches the theory of flotation but never puts people into the pool.

We hinted above that Catholicism places particular emphasis on faith as a way of life. In the Reformation debate regarding being saved by faith or good works, the classic Catholic position was that faith must be realized in good
works: our favorite quote was “faith without good works is dead” (James 2:26). Likewise, in the contentious issue of the relationship between grace and nature (God’s help and human effort) Catholics agreed with the Reformers that God’s grace is gratuitous - given out of love - but insisted that every grace comes to us as a responsibility, or better a responseability.

This centrality of living faith has clarified all the more of late for Catholics with our rediscovery of the historical Jesus and that the core of Christian faith is to live as his disciples toward the reign of God - the central purpose of Jesus’ life. For long, Catholics readily embraced the Risen Christ of faith but paid scant attention to the historical Jesus. One reason was that the doctrine in all the traditional catechisms was structured around the precepts of the Apostles Creed. However, “born of the virgin Mary” is followed immediately by “suffered under Pontius Pilate” - skipping over Jesus’ public life. In consequence, the catechisms did likewise, and Catholics, typicall, knew little about the public ministry, teaching, and historical praxis of Jesus.

Again, there are signs of hope for a rebalance of the Jesus of history with the Christ of faith, with Jesus being the model for how to live and the Risen Christ as the source of God’s “abundant grace”(Rms 5:19) that empowers us to follow the way. Defining this core, the Catechism of the Catholic Church summarizes: “At the heart we find a person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father”(1993, para. 426). So this incarnate Son of God is indeed the carpenter from Nazareth who walked the roads of Galilee, preaching the radical love, mercy, justice and compassion of God’s reign. Who worked miracles to feed
the hungry, cure the sick, comfort the suffering, and drive out evil. Based on his conviction of God’s unconditional love, Jesus made the greatest commandment that we love God and neighbor as ourselves - even enemies.

And disciples will be judged on whether we live the way that Jesus lived, showing compassion to all in need (Mt 25:31-46).

Note, too, that Christian faith as discipleship to Jesus encourages all who would learn from it or learn into it to bond with a faith community. From the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus called people into community, knowing that this “Gospel of God’s reign” (Mk 1:14-20) could never be lived as a private affair. Jesus went out into the highways and byways seeking disciples, welcoming all to the table. In consequence, the first Christians used only communal metaphors to describe themselves, with Paul’s “body of Christ” having pride of place. An aspect of teaching people to learn from or learn into the wisdom of Christian faith is encouraging them to bond with a faith community.

Pope Francis is refocusing Catholics on the core of their faith as discipleship to Jesus - as belonging to the way (see Acts 9:2). He is convinced that all Catholic religious education can mount an “apologetics of persuasion” for Christian faith by making Jesus the interpretive lens for every other aspect. In Jesus “we have a treasure of life and love which cannot deceive, and a message which cannot mislead or disappoint” (Pope Francis, 2013, para. 88 and 265). Regardless of a student’s religious identity or lack of it, CSRE can inspire all toward living with authenticity and integrity by exposure to the life-giving way of the historical Jesus and the hope
for all creation reflected in the Risen Christ.

2. The purposes of catholic religious education.

Building on Christian faith as spiritual wisdom for life after the way of Jesus, we well ask, what is the intent of lending people persuasive access to its Story and Vision? Parenthetically, I suggest Story as a metaphor of the whole corpus of Christian faith - all of its scriptures and traditions and their spiritual wisdom for life. Vision is likewise a metaphor for what the Story brings to and asks of people’s lives now, the faith’s invitations, implications, and ethical responsibilities. This being said, what are our intended learning outcomes for teaching people about Christian Story/Vision in ways that dispose them to learn from it for their lives and perhaps learn into it as their faith identity? Our purposes are at least twofold: 1) to shape the very being of people with the wisdom and ethic of Christian faith; and 2) to promote the social commitments that such faith demands in the public realm. Of course, these dual purposes - ontological and sociological - are two sides of the same coin.

1) Educating who people become

First, to propose that the intent of CSRE is deeply ontological - from the Greek ontos meaning “being” - is simply to place it within the tradition of Western education that began in ancient Greece and was carried forward and augmented by the CIT. This classic education taught a core curriculum of seven great arts of learning (the quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, and the triv-
ium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and called them “liberal” precisely because they were taught as sources of human liberation. From Plato and Aristotle down to contemporary educators like Dewey, Montessori, and Freire, there is an enduring conviction that education is to form the being of students and in humanizing ways, enabling them to become agents of their own wellbeing and that of others.

Much of contemporary education has lost this humanizing and ethical purpose, focusing instead on training and technical skills that may prepare people to make a living but not to have a life. In words attributed to William Butler Yeats, “education is not about filling a bucket but lighting a fire.” Catholic education should do no less. Embedded within the CIT, surely the intent of CSRE is to set people’s souls on fire with the spiritual wisdom of living Christian faith. Every instance should have a life-giving influence on student’s personhood and values, resourcing them, in the oft-cited phrase of St. Irenaeus (130-202), “to become fully alive to the glory of God.”

2) Christian faith for liberating salvation

From the beginning, Christians have been convinced that God’s intervention in human history through Jesus Christ and continuing now through the Holy Spirit has momentous positive consequences for the course of human history. To cite Yeats again, Christians can say of Easter, “All changed, changed utterly. A terrible beauty is born.” Or as St. Paul put it, through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection all of creation has been “set free from its bondage to decay” and is to en-
joy “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

From the beginning, then, Christians have been convinced that God’s intent in Jesus Christ was literally to save the world. For our time and cultures, the metaphor proposed by Pope Paul VI in “The Evangelization of Peoples” (1976) can have deep resonance and appeal: “liberating salvation.” It echoes both the personal and social purposes of what God did in Jesus, and what CSRE should educate for now. As the Holy Spirit continues God’s work of liberating salvation, CSRE is to be among the Spirit’s most effective instruments.

The whole curriculum of CSRE should aim to promote God’s liberating salvation in Jesus Christ (Groome, 1980). It must encourage students to engage in the public-realm with compassion for all in need and to live with and for all forms of justice, disposing them to at least learn from and perhaps embrace as their own the values of Catholic social teaching.

3. The ways of knowing for CSRE

The impoverished epistemology bequeathed by modernity and still reigning in many classrooms - even religious education ones - needs to be greatly expanded if CSRE is to honor the CIT and to educate for a living faith that shapes people’s being and helps to save the world. To begin with, we need to engage people’s hearts as well as their heads, their emotive as well as rational ways of knowing; both are needed for teaching Catholicism’s spiritual wisdom and ethic for life.

Then, the paradigm of such education needs to be con-
conversation within a learning community. A purely didactic mode—teaching as telling—might be effective in learning about but is unlikely to encourage people to learn from and learn into the spiritual wisdom of any faith. This is much more likely as participants speak their own word and are enriched by communal conversation. Of course there is room for presentation and lending ready access to traditions of faith but the overall paradigm must be conversation and appropriation by learners rather than receiving and repeating what the teacher says—what Freire well described as “banking education” (Freire, 1970, 72).

Following on, the epistemology of CRSE must expand beyond the scientific reasoning of modernity and engage peoples’ whole being in the world. Dewey said that humanizing education must begin with people’s own experience, Freire with their historical praxis, and Montessori with their sensory activities; I say simply, begin with and engage people’s lives. We can do so by turning them to “generative themes,” (Freire, 1970, Ch. 3), to real issues, concerns, and desires that arise from their historical praxis and that can be an entrée into the Story and Vision of Christian faith.

Then, our epistemology must encourage participants’ own critical reflection on their lives in the world. Such reflection engages reason, memory, and imagination—all of their capacities for knowing. It is critical in that it encourages people to think and to think about their thinking, both personally and socially—a positive asset of modernity. Such reflection raises consciousness of how their cultural contexts are shaping their present praxis. It also amounts to participants sharing their own stories and visions, thus engaging
their hearts as well as their heads. That the focus of reflection include people’s lives in the world insures that their desires are engaged; we cannot reflect upon ourselves dispassionately.

Following on, the epistemology employed must lend ready and persuasive access to the Story and Vision of Christian faith, what it means for and asks of people’s lives. This dual emphasis – on Story and Vision – can mediate Christian faith so that people encounter it as proposing a way of life to be lived rather than simply a body of knowledge to know about. Such accessing should be persuasive and enticing in that it highlights the spiritual wisdom for life of Christian faith (or whatever tradition is being taught). Far from proselytizing, persuasion simply reflects how this faith makes sense and why good and intelligent people for thousands of years have found it an enriching and responsible way to live their lives.

Having accessed their own stories and visions and the Story/Vision of Christian faith, needed then is to integrate these two sources, with students taking the spiritual wisdom and values of the faith into their lives according to their own discernment. Such personal appropriation and integration needs to be approached as a dialectical hermeneutic. This is essential if CSRE is to avoid proselytizing and yet encourage people to learn from and possibly learn into the spiritual wisdom of the tradition being studied.

This moment is hermeneutical in that it invites students to interpret and recognize for themselves the spiritual wisdom, truths and values they have encountered in Christian Story/Vision. It is dialectical – akin to the give-and-take of
good conversation - in that it invites students to come to their own opinions and positions. Instead of simply accepting what was taught, participants need to discern what they affirm, question, and imagine onward for their own lives. In sum, the teacher asks here: “what are you thinking or might want to decide,” rather than “what did I say” - for repeat back!

The great Catholic scholar Bernard Lonergan offers a helpful summary of the overall epistemology just outlined. Drawing upon the CIT, especially Aquinas, and reuniting the theoretical and practical reasoning that Kant separated, Lonergan(1972, Ch. 1) described “the dynamic structure of people’s cognitional and moral being” as fourfold. The four intentional activities for authentic cognition begin with attending to data, move to understand it, reach judgments about it, and make decisions in its light. Lonergan proposed that when enacted with “conscious intentionality,” this cumulative dynamic can encourage conversion that is intellectual, moral, and religious.

These four dynamics of authentic cognition and moral decision making gather up much of the epistemology outlined above: attending to and understanding one’s own story/vision, attending to and understanding the Story/Vision of Christian faith, to then judge and decide how to integrate and respond. Note well that religious education which settles for attending to data and understanding it reaches only half way to authentic cognition, settling for learning about. The pedagogy must invite onward to judgment and decision, uniting theoretical with practical reason, and thus to learn from and learn into the spiritual wisdom and truths, values
and ethic of Christian faith.

IV. So Much Depends on the Pedagogy

To effect the nature, purposes, and epistemology of CSRE outlined above requires an appropriate pedagogy. It must actively engage and connect with the generative themes reflected in the present praxis of peoples own lives, give them access to the truths, values, and spiritual wisdom of Catholic (or whatever) faith, and then encourage students to integrate their “life” and this “faith” into their own life-in-faith - honoring how ever they discern and decide.

For some forty years now, I have been attempting to develop, articulate, and practice such a life to Faith to life (in-faith) pedagogy for religious education. I have written about it more formally and comprehensively as a “shared Christian praxis approach” (Groome, 1991), though life to Faith to life is more user-friendly and explicitly reflects its dynamic (Groome, 2012). While I originally discovered the potential of such an approach in the work of Paulo Freire, one can readily detect its traces in the pedagogy of Jesus.

Jesus constantly began his teaching by turning people to look at their own lives in the world, be it fishing, farming, homemaking, working in vineyards, raising children, or just observing the birds of the air, the lilies of the field, and the list goes on. Then, he consistently invited people to reflect on their lives, and critically. In fact, he often turned their social perspectives upside down with prodigals welcomed home, Samaritans acting as neighbor, the eleventh-hour
workers being paid in full, etc. Third, from the beginning, Jesus preached his “good news” of the in-breaking of God’s reign and taught his gospel “with authority” (Mk 1:15 and 22); this was Jesus’ Story and Vision. Following on, he constantly invited to discipleship of living faith, presenting this as a personal choice to be made. Jesus wanted people to see for themselves the blessings that come when God reigns in their lives, and to freely choose to follow his way as disciples within a supporting community.

Pedagogical Movements of a Life to Faith to Life (in-faith) Approach. In an actual teaching-learning event, this approach can be enacted around a focusing activity and five pedagogical movements. Though the movements can occur, reoccur, combine, overlap, and vary in sequence (movements in a symphony), for the sake of clarity I lay them out sequentially here.

Focusing Activity: Establishing the Curriculum around a Life/Faith Theme. Here the intent is twofold: a) to engage people as active participants in the teaching/learning dynamic, and b) to focus them on a generative theme of life or of life-in-faith that they can recognize as significant to their being in the world.

Movement One (M1): Expressing the Theme in Present Praxis. The educator encourages participants to express themselves around the generative theme as reflected in their present lives and situations. They can name what they themselves do or see others doing, their own feelings or thoughts or interpretations, and their perception of what is going on around them in their sociocultural context apropos the theme.
Movement Two (M2): Reflecting Critically on the Theme of Life/Faith. The intent here is to encourage participants to reflect critically on the praxis they expressed in M1. Critical reflection can engage reason, memory, imagination, or a combination of them, and will be both personal and sociocultural.

Movement Three (M3): Accessing Christian Story and Vision: Here the pedagogical task is to teach persuasively the Christian Story/Vision around the particular theme of the occasion and this toward the students’ way of life-in-faith. Participants should have ready access to the truths, values and spiritual wisdom of Christian faith (or whatever tradition is being taught) around the theme and how it is relevant to their lives here and now – the Vision.

Movement Four (M4): Appropriating Christian Faith to Life: M4 begins the move back to life again, focusing precisely now on what students can learn from or learn into of Christian faith. The pedagogy of M4 is to encourage participants to discern for themselves what this aspect of Christian faith might mean for their everyday lives and according to their own perspectives. This is where dialectical hermeneutics is particularly at work, preventing proselytizing and enabling people to at least learn from and maybe learn into the spiritual wisdom of Christian faith by their own discernment.

Movement Five (M5): Making Decisions in Light of Christian Faith: Here participants are invited to discern and make decisions about the accessed truths, values, and spiritual wisdom of Christian faith. Decisions can be cognitive, affective, or behavioral, shaping what people believe, how they might relate with God or others, or the values they want to em-
brace and live.

V. Conclusion

For a brief example (from my own praxis), a CSRE unit on the Blessed Trinity with high school students might begin with a contemporary song or podcast that focuses on the theme of love, prompting them to recognize this as a major issue in their lives. Then follow on with M1 and M2 reflections about love, what it is, how we experience it, why we need it, the social context of how we understand it, etc. M3 could then review the inner and outgoing life of God as Triune Love (Story), highlighting what this might mean for people made in such divine likeness (Vision). M4 and M5 could invite students’ discernment of what the Trinity could mean for their lives and the kind of love to which God invites them.

Or imagining a high-school class on the Muslim tradition of Zakat (care for those in need and one of the five pillars of Islam), one could begin by focusing on the reality of poverty in our world (maybe some statistics or brief documentary). M1 and M2 could invite students to name and reflect critically upon the pervasive poverties of their lives, society and world, on their causes and consequences. M3 would teach persuasively the Muslim tradition of Zakat and how it encourages a spirit of dependence on God for everything and giving generously out of gratitude to those in need. M4 and M5 would invite students to discernment and decision about how Zakat might inspire them to respond to
the various poverties in their lives and world. Christian stu-
dents can be invited to learn from this rich spiritual prac-
tice, perhaps finding resonance in Christian tradition, and
Muslim participants to consider a personal commitment to
Zakat. Some such approach as life to Faith to life can en-
able Catholic school religious education to educate for liv-
ing faith in our postmodern world.
Bibliography


생동하는 신앙 교육을 위한 가톨릭 학교의 종교교육에 관한 연구

토마스 그름 (보스턴대학/ 교수/미국)

이 연구의 핵심은 가톨릭계 학교에서 생동하는 신앙을 가르치는 종교교육으로 그것은 단순히 종교와 신앙의 전통을 전수하는 그러한 형태의 수업과는 차이가 있다. 지금까지 종교교육의 형태는 가정과 교구에서는 배타적인 형태의 신앙으로 그 교육적 과업이 제한되어 왔다. 반면에 가톨릭 학교의 종교교육은 수학교과 혹은 과학교과와 같이 단지 학문 원리로 종교교육이 수행되어 왔다. 이 논문은 최근 현대 사회 속에서 가톨릭계 학교에서 이루어지는 종교교육의 축소에 주목하면서, 기독교의 신앙과 기독교의 지적 전통이 본래적으로 지니고 있은 본질, 목적, 임의 양식을 촉진하는 종교교육의 근간을 제안함에 연구의 목적이 있다.

《주제어》
종교교육, 생동하는 신앙, 수업, 종교적 전통, 가톨릭계 학교

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