

(Commencement Address delivered by the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame, at Rosary College Commencement, River Forest, Illinois, Friday, May 31, 1963)

### THE THEOLOGY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

If there is any single topic that has captured the attention of our times, it is education. Everybody today has an opinion on what is happening or should be happening to education in America. Even the cold war has taken an educational turn, so that the remarkable assault of space by a new generation of cosmonauts and astronauts has led to an unprecedented interpretation of these accomplishments in terms of the Soviet and American educational systems. In the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, education is being viewed as the key to the Pandora box of rising expectations.

In our own country, the debate has taken several courses. There have been lively discussions on the content of American education: how poorly science and mathematics are taught, if at all; whether or not religion and moral truths have any place in the curriculum; the seeming conflict between technical and vocational education that prepares the student to do some specific thing, and humanistic or liberal or general education that purports to educate man as man. Then there have been the embarrassing questions: why so many teachers have been

taught how to teach without learning what they are going to teach; why we spend more on comic books than on textbooks; why our teachers are paid and esteemed so much less than our entertainers; why so many of our most talented high school students receive no college education at all. Through all of this discussion there has been a rising emphasis on quality of performance. It has been rightly said that what happens to education happens to America.

It was inevitable that Catholic education should have become involved in this discussion. Nowhere in the world does there exist a Catholic educational system as extensive as in America. Never before in the history of the world has the Church in a single country undertaken to educate formally as many students as are educated today under Catholic auspices in the United States. And never before have so many Catholic priests, religious sisters, brothers, lay faculty, and administrators, parents and benefactors become so deeply involved in a Catholic educational endeavor in any one country. There are, for example, more Catholic institutions of higher learning in this country than in all the other countries of the world put together.

Nothing this large can exist without being highly visible to the world about it. Nothing this significant can continue without friend and enemy alike

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searching for the depth of its significance. And certainly, nothing this wide-spread can increase and multiply as it should without a continual consciousness of its special contribution, its inspirational motivation, and the inner dynamic spirit that must guide all organic growth, in unity, symmetry, and coherence.

I have often thought that our own understanding and discussion of our Catholic educational system has been too statistical, pedestrian, and uninspiring. We think too often in terms of brick and mortar, speak too exclusively of financial considerations, measure too much in numbers and percentages, and thus miss the inner reality that should make of our endeavor one of the most divinely romantic activities of which men and women are capable, either as teachers or as students.

I have the impression that if we could drink more deeply and meditatively of the great and divine inspiration that is ours, we might devote ourselves more wholeheartedly to the perfection of our educational endeavors, as indeed we should. I would like, therefore, today to cast the discussion on the highest possible plane, and to compare our educational efforts with God's own divine communications of creation, incarnation, sanctification, and glory. These are deepest fonts of inspiration available to man in the face of God. If we can find in them some analogies that liken our educative efforts to these great divine realities, then indeed we shall not lack inspiration to make our total efforts not only widely

spread, but deeply penetrating.

The first divine communication is creation. There is no need that it ever should have taken place, for God had no need for the world or for man. If it had not taken place, there would have been no man to educate, or no vast creation about which he could be educated. By creation, God brought into being both the subject and the subject matter of education, and bequeathed us in this wonderful expanse of beauty, order and symmetry, so many clues to find our way to Him. We can say from theology that all of this came to be out of nothingness by a divinely creative act. We can say from science that our own earth began to be about four or five billion years ago and that the universe is so far flung, that light traveling 186,000 miles a second all of these billions of years has not yet come to us from the galaxies at its outer reaches. Education can claim all of this as its subject matter, from the tiniest particle at the heart of the atom to the uttermost star.

Catholic education can embrace the unseen universe as well, the universe beyond science and the scientific method, the universe of the deeper realities of the human spirit, the world of divine reality in theology, the world of human ideas in philosophy, the touching world of human insight in literature and poetry, the world of human aspiration, success and failure in history and the social sciences.

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All of this has come to us through creation. All of this is ours to know, to understand as best we can, to appreciate, and to love through education. Catholic means universal, and Catholic education should open the mind widely to all possible knowledge, available to man through whatever means of knowing. This divine communication of creation should teach us that education is least Catholic when it is tightly restricted to this or that specialty of knowledge or to this or that specific way of knowing. Education is most Catholic when in curiosity and wonderment it embraces all that is, the totality of creation, both spirit and matter.

The divine communication of creation has also given us the subject of all education: man. There are also animals who can be trained, but only man can be educated, for in all of visible creation, only man was made in the image and likeness of God, a person, an individual with a mind that can range the universe, and a will that can freely guide his own destiny. Any philosophy of Catholic education must begin with man as God has made him, not just a mass of humanity, not just a number on a registration card, but an individual person like to God in his capacity to know and to love and to live his own life. The really great teachers have been those who have had the capacity to sort out their students as individual persons, with individual talents and capacities, with individual aspirations and destinies. These great teachers have ever stood in awe at the

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task of opening young minds to the great realities that have inspired man, have always respected the freedom of the individual to develop uniquely and personally as he learns to make an intelligent use of his freedom. Mass education by mass methods is not Catholic because God created a man, and continues to create each individual soul, not a mass of men and souls. Persons are more unique than their fingerprints. Catholic teaching must somehow reckon with this uniqueness, for while we live and learn together, we learn each in his own way and we serve God uniquely by the development of our own unique capacities and talents. Catholic education must have this quality if no other, that we respect God's creation of man as he is, that we do not attempt to distort, by mass method, what God has created by a specific divine action. When education reduces students to ciphers, it is no longer catholic.

The second great divine communication that has great relevance for Catholic education is the Incarnation. Here we are at the heart of Christianity when we ponder that in the fullness of time, the Son of God who proceeds eternally from the Father, is born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, becomes man without ceasing to be God, or as St. John so clearly states it: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." Before Bethlehem, men could wonder at the vast creation of God, and in knowing its beauty and order, come to recognize at

least the faint shadow of God who created it. After Bethlehem, man can come to know God directly in Christ Jesus, Our Lord. What was before faint shadow, now becomes visible reality, the Way, the Truth, and the Life incarnate.

What does Catholic education learn from this second divine communication of the Incarnation? Obviously, we have in the human mind and will of Christ an eternal pattern for all mankind. The mind of Christ and the will of Christ are models for teacher and student alike, a pattern for growth in wisdom and age and grace, a prototype towards which all Catholic education must strive.

Less obviously, we have in this divine communication of the Incarnation an important lesson for all who aspire to teach. What we say is shadow, what we are and what we do is substance. The teacher must somehow make incarnate in his life all that he professes to teach: his respect for the mind and for truth, his own far-ranging intellectual curiosity, his sense of values, his sober judgment, his critical personal assessment of what is superficial, shoddy, and mediocre in life, his integrity of character, his deep respect and even love for those human persons whom he professes to teach. Other realities unworthy of the teaching profession are incarnate in the unfair tyrant who bullies a class, the unprepared professor who bores his students, the arrogant pedant, the dull and uninspiring purveyor of lifeless and unrelated information, those who substitute authority for knowledge.

The student, too, has much to learn from this divine communication of the Incarnation, for just as every teacher must remain a student, so, too, each student must in time become a teacher. Those of you who graduate today will, for good or for evil, be teaching your own children, your business or professional associates, all of those with whom you come in contact. You will not teach that which is most worthwhile teaching, unless somehow the truths that you have learned become the flesh and bone of your lives, incarnate in your daily living. This means that you, too, must exemplify the mind and the heart of Christ, that those about you "may have life and have it more abundantly." Catholic education has failed in your case if this work of incarnation has not taken place in your life, if you do not manifest to men everywhere the deep convictions about God, man, and the world that alone can give a Catholic meaning and purpose to your life.

The third great work of divine communication is sanctification. This work affected each one of us when we were baptized in water and the Holy Spirit, when we became a Temple of the Holy Spirit by reason of our rebirth to the divine life of sanctifying grace. We commemorate this communication of divine life each day in the Mass when we pray, as the priest mingles wine and water in the chalice: "O God who so wondrously created man, and more wondrously re-created him, grant



that through this mingling of water and wine, we may become partakers of His divinity, who deigned to partake of our humanity." This divine life is given that it might grow in us, that each human act of ours may have eternal value, that the presence of God may be within us through life as we seek His company forever in eternity.

How possibly can this divine communication of sanctification be relevant to the work of Catholic education? Again by analogy, I believe that each true Catholic teacher loves to teach because he sees something of himself, and of the truth he professes, come to life within his students. The teacher is engaged in a work of high dignity, because he is working with the elements of the soul that are eternal. His is no passing work. Great teachers live on in each one of us who has learned from them, for they have shaped in us that which is eternal.

How vastly different is this concept of the teacher from that of the colorless robot who merely passes out information to be memorized and recalled at examination time and then forgotten forever. Such a teacher lives a life narrowly circumscribed by the bells that open and close his class. But the Catholic teacher who understands the sanctifying power of truth will find in his profession an outlet for the continuously inspiring act of mediation between wisdom and ignorance. He is not dealing merely with facts and figures, but with

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minds that can be awakened to the awesome vision of truth. It will be his passion to inspire a curiosity for full knowledge, the search for wisdom in the ways of God and man, a deep commitment to personal and social justice, a profound compassion for human anguish in all its forms, a cherishing of goodness and beauty, and an instinctive disgust for that which is evil and ugly. It matters not what the precise subject matter is, for the human mind, once opened and working, will seek the heights if a true teacher is there to guide the way. And somehow, vital ideas have a way of infiltrating into all the corners of our life, to be our light in darkness, our hope in adversity, our strong staff when our steps falter.

The fourth great act of divine communication is glory. When at the end of our life, time is swallowed up in eternity, then the good God that we have known by faith and possessed by sanctifying grace, is ours to see, to know face to face, to possess and to love unendingly. In this light of glory, our only true graduation, we will know all things in God. All of creation will be seen as in its Creator, all the good persons and things that we have sought, cherished, and loved in life will be ours to know and love and to possess forever. This is the culmination of all of the communications of God to man, for it is in fact the eternal and full communication of Himself. This communication of glory is our

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true homecoming, prefigured now momentarily each day in Holy Communion, but then in an eternal moment of unspeakable happiness for: "eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath the mind of man imagined the wonderful things that God has prepared for those who love Him." What can Catholic education learn from this last of the divine communications?

First of all, it should remind us that we are educating for eternity as well as for time. We have not here a lasting city, and while we do educate for competence and excellence in the things of time, we do all of this in the context of eternity. The Catholic must have a foot in both worlds, without substituting competence for piety, or piety for competence. We serve God in time, and in doing so, scale the ramparts of eternity. Christian humanism, patterned after the incarnation, is able to live fully and competently and humanly in this world, as Christ did, to do the work of each day well, while still sanctifying the things of humanity and of time in the service of Christ, Our Lord.

Secondly, this vision of the glory to come should widen the horizons of the Catholic educator, should lift up his mind and heart, should keep him from capitulating to the depression and discouragement that so beset his path as he labors against the barriers that have ever faced the educative process:

the pettiness of narrow minds; the indolence of those who ultimately do not really want to learn; the intransigence of those who will settle for goodness alone, or intelligence alone, but not both together, as the goal of Catholic education.

Thirdly, this divine communication of the Beatific Vision should remind us that what we seek to accomplish through education will, in fact, be fully realized some day in our own lives and in the minds of those we teach. By its commitment to the adequacy of knowledge, the knowledge of all that is, spiritual as well as material, Catholic education is most clearly differentiated from other kinds of education that restrict knowledge to that which can be seen, felt, or personally experienced, to that which can be established and validated experimentally by the scientific method and expressed in quantitative terms. We want to educate to the full range of knowledge, theological, philosophical, historical, poetic, literary, mathematical, and scientific, because this is the range of the mind of man, and the hope of his eternal vision in God. We need not, for example, feel disappointed if space travel is not possible in our day, for it will be possible to all of us in a few short years, in eternity, when we will indeed be able in spirit to travel to the ends of the universe with the

speed of thought, to see with the eye of God, so to speak, to understand the mysteries of the natural world, the seeming contradictions of justice in the world of man, to taste the fullness of truth, to glory in the vast and beautiful spectacle of all that is.

In the light of these divine communications of creation, incarnation, sanctification and glory, our own finite efforts may seem somewhat insignificant, but then everything human is insignificant when compared to the divine. What I have been endeavoring to say, however, is this: that of many possible human activities, outside of the priesthood, here in education is a human activity in which there is analogically a close kinship with divine activity. In this kinship, Catholic education has its greatest dignity and glory, the key to its unity and ultimate success.

Now what does all of this mean to those of you who graduate today from Rosary College. However beautiful theology is, however inspiring the ideal of Catholic education, the real test is the life of those who have known the theology and received the education. We will not be judged by our degrees, but by our lives.

Are you prepared, according to the ideal, to be as fully as possible what God created you to be: a person who uses her mind to acquire a conscious

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philosophy of life, a firm set of values that give ultimate meaning, direction, and purpose to the days ahead? Have you used your God-given freedom to choose for yourself what you will have faith in, hope for and love: ultimately to be open to the grace of God that you receive daily as a pure gift? God might have created you to be a geranium or a mouse, but He made you a human person. How you use this great gift of creation will be largely a matter of how, under God's grace, you use your intelligence and your freedom.

Incarnation is not something to be remembered only at Christmastime. It should somehow make you different, every day of your life. If somehow you do not each day personify Christ as your Way, your Truth, and your Life, Catholic education has not really been for you a divine communication.

Sanctification is a big word, but the reality is greater yet. If Catholic education leaves us with one deep conviction it should be this: that only by living daily with Christ, in the state of grace, can we make the dross of daily tasks become pure gold, of eternal value.

The Beatific Vision, our introduction to glory eternal, may seem far distant from the scene today - but whether in fact, near or distant, the Vision of God is all that ultimately matters to any of us. Nevertheless, glory for

most of you will involve long years ahead of rather pedestrian human experience: dishes and diapers, joys and sorrows, sickness and health, comings and goings, the sum of our strivings, all the range of success and failure that mark our passage through time to eternity.

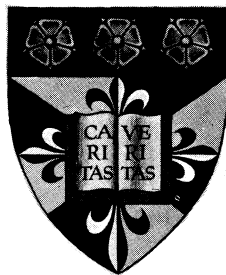
It would be preposterous to say that all of the good people of this world are produced exclusively by the Catholic educational system. I have seen Hindus and Moslems practice charity to a degree that would put us to shame, caring for the destitute and dying in a Calcutta hospital, working in 120° heat to raise better rice crops to feed the hungry in East Bengal. It would be equal folly to say that a Catholic education is a guarantee of the good life. I know a girl who, after 16 years of Catholic education, is preparing to give up her religion by marrying out of the Church.

But we do have a great vision. Devoted people, including the Dominican Sisters, your lay teachers, and your parents have sacrificed greatly to sustain an educational system that would mirror, however faintly, these great divine communications of Creation, Incarnation, Sanctification, and Glory. Inspiration is here, but its effects will come to pass only if you are inspired. Your lives are the acid test. You alone, in the long tomorrows, can make of this a day of great triumph, quiet joy, and peace at last.

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# COMMENCEMENT

*Rosary College*



RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS

MAY 31, 1963



# Commencement Day

## Processional

Fugue in E Flat ..... Bach

Were You There ..... Arr. Roy Ringwald

The Gate of Heaven ..... Randall Thompson

Rosary College Chorus  
Gregory Konold, Director

## Presentation of Candidates for Degrees

The Reverend William B. Murphy, O.P., S.T.Lr.  
Chaplain, Rosary College

## Conferring of Degrees

His Eminence Albert Cardinal Meyer  
Archbishop of Chicago

## Announcement of Honors and Awards

The Reverend William B. Murphy, O.P., S.T.Lr.

## Address

The Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., S.T.D.  
President, University of Notre Dame

Alma Mater ..... The Reverend David G. O'Connor, O.P.

## Recessional

Solemn March ..... Goemanne

## Graduates 1963

Mary Ellen Ahers  
Martha Julia Amen  
Sally Elizabeth Annas  
Pamela Kay Balow  
Margaret Mary Bartels  
Virginia Bazzachini  
Mary Ann Beuthin  
Rosemary Ann Bigham  
Constance Mary Bishart  
Rose Ann Blau  
Carol Anne Bondhus  
Marianne Helen Brabec  
Ruth Caryl Breed  
Carlotta Briggs  
Patricia Catherine Brinck  
Elizabeth Ann Brown  
Barbara Ann Bushnell  
Paula Catherine Butler  
Joanne Helen Byrnes  
Helen Callahan  
Ann Gerarda Carbis  
Mary Mc Cauley Carey  
Karen Christensen  
Stella Emelia Claes  
Carolyn Ann Clothier  
Kathleen Claire Coffee  
Mary Louise Cox  
Mary Ellen Creadon  
Donna Marie Curtin  
Mary Katherine Denman  
Janean Dick  
Mary Frances Donnelly  
Emily Joy Dougan  
Sylvia Simpson Dowling  
Donna Marie Duffney  
Kathryn Ann Earp  
Margaret Mary Favre

Susan Raymond Fillichio  
Noreen Finchum  
Sheila Ann Fitzgerald  
Anna Mae Flannery  
Anne Elizabeth Flynn  
Susan Margaret Flynn  
Helen Ann Foley  
Mary Elizabeth Gallagher  
Adrienne Lea Georgandas  
Jacqueline Ruth Ghera  
Mary Jane Gilligan  
Mary Ann Goethals  
Carol Ann Grachen  
Mary-Lee Graham  
Mary Linda Halpin  
Patricia Susan Hamilton  
Susan Virginia Hartnett  
Diane Jean Havel  
Diane Marie Hayes  
Deborah Mae Hegberg  
Joan Hennessy  
Gayle Gene Hilding  
Jane Patricia Hinton  
Patricia Marie Hogan  
Elaine Ann Horaz  
Cathleen Hosey  
Ruth Ann Hrachovec  
Margaret Cathrine Huffnus  
Kathleen Florence Hunt  
Judith Mary Jedlicka  
Eleanor Rigali Jones  
Suzanne Jordan  
Rosemary Frances Kamin  
Susan Mary Keefer  
Nancy Kathryn Keen  
Karin Margaret Kerz  
Catherine Patricia Kimmel

Bessemarie Lillian Kolar  
Margaret Lois Kowell  
Mary Ellen Kryda  
Elaine Laity  
Patricia Ruth Lane  
Joan Augusta Leonard  
Sallyann Lessner  
Mary Elaine Libovitz  
Mary Elizabeth Linskey  
Mary Ann McAllister  
Helen Mary Mc Causlin  
Helen Louise Mc Cormick  
Lynne Isabelle Mc Cracken  
Mary Kathleen McDermott  
Ann Cecilia McDonnell  
Dorothy Marie McDonnell  
Barbara Jean McGann  
Mary Lynn McGough  
Kathryn Ellen Markley  
Marlaine Louise Marzano  
Judith Marie May  
Margaret Ann Melancon  
Carol Anne Meyer  
Joan Eileen Miletto  
Marion Patricia Murphy  
Michele Mary Murray  
Nguyen-The-Loe  
Carol Marie Nicholson  
Mary McAuliffe Nigro  
Kathleen Nolan  
Jean Marie O'Brien  
Patricia Johnson O'Brien  
Anne Ellen O'Connor  
Jill Esther Ongemach  
Carolyn Marya Pekron  
Mary Ann Peticara  
Donna Rose Pongetti

Jean Celeste Rackus  
Beatriz Rago  
Jacqueline Frances Raim  
Claire Marie Reid  
Antoinette Marie Roth  
Marie Ann Ruffolo  
Roberta Sarek  
Mary Ann Schaefer  
Susan Louise Schmitz  
Paula Marion Schutte  
Veneta Darden Scott  
Joan Stephanie Seidel  
Carolyn Ann Seitz  
Sharon Elaine Shields  
Patricia Ann Singelmann  
Carol Ann Smith  
Susan Priscilla Sobey  
Shelia Spaeth  
Mary Ellen Spellmire  
Josephine Stuker  
Mary Kathryn Sullivan  
Suzanne Marie Thorsen  
Ellen Tookill  
Margot Florence Trauten  
Judy Tse, Shiu Ngan  
Linda Mary Uhler  
Roberta Ann Walthers  
Helen Frances Weller  
Judith Williams  
Kathleen Agnes Zaher  
Valerie Ann Zatopa  
Sister Mary Josefitia, O.P.  
Sister Mary Joseph, O.S.M.  
Sister Mary Josine, O.S.F.  
Sister Mary Leon, C.S.J.  
Sister Marie Clarence, O.P.  
Sister Mary Stephanie, C.S.J.

### Master of Arts in Library Science

Wilma Barlow Gulstad  
Lucy Howden  
Mona Hsueh Chen Hsiao  
Margaret Mary Kimmel  
Utako Kimura

Rosemary O'Donnell  
Toshiko Osada  
Elaine Kirkpatrick Rast  
Lucille Reid  
Roman Sajewych

Jerry Scott  
Marjorie Wen-ru Sha  
Sister Mary Isabel, O.S.U.  
Sister Mary Philip, O.S.M.  
Sister Mary Rega, O.S.F.

### Degrees to be conferred at Pius XII Institute, Florence, Italy

#### Master of Arts

Marilyn Leslie Davidson  
Marie Teresa DiMestico

Celine Marie Farrell  
Marguerite Ann Kane

#### Master of Music

Sister M. Fidelis, R.S.M.

Sister M. Agnes Therese, Ad. PP.S.

Graduates wearing the Cord Fourragères are members of Theotokeion, the College Honor Society.

Thursday, May thirtieth  
FACULTY RECEPTION

For Graduates and Parents  
Five to seven o'clock

THE CANDLE AND ROSE CEREMONY

Eight o'clock

Friday, May thirty-first

BACCALAUREATE  
SOLEMN MASS

Half after ten o'clock

CELEBRANT

The Reverend William B. Murphy, O.P., S.T.Lr.  
Chaplain, Rosary College

DEACON

The Reverend Peter Martyr West, O.P., S.T.Lr.  
Department of Theology, Rosary College

SUBDEACON

The Reverend Louis B. Kroeger, O.P., Ph.Lic.  
Department of Theology, Rosary College

BACCALAUREATE SERMON

The Most Reverend Vincent S. Waters, D.D.  
Bishop of Raleigh

COMMENCEMENT

Friday, May thirty-first

Four o'clock

Presentation of

Candidates for Degrees

The Reverend William B. Murphy, O.P., S.T.Lr.

Conferring of Degrees

His Eminence

Albert Cardinal Meyer

Archbishop of Chicago

Address

The Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., S.T.D.

*President, University of Notre Dame*