



S S P X

preserving  
*Catholic Tradition*



*Instaurare omnia in Christo  
— per educationem*

Dear Faithful,

As children of God, our goal in life is to find our way to heaven so we can live with Him for eternity. It is the job of every parent, every teacher, and every pastor of souls to help those in their care to find the path to heaven as well. As such, the main goal of Catholic education should be to equip each student with the tools to know Christ, to understand His plan for us, and to do His holy will.

Unfortunately, modern educators and educational theorists have deliberately perverted the proper understanding of the mission of education. In their worldview, there is no God, and no absolute truth—all truth is relative and, since there is no God, we should strive to create heaven on earth.

Often referred to as the Father of Modern American Education, John Dewey was professor of philosophy at Columbia University and its Teachers College. As an educational reformer in the early 20th century, Dewey is credit-

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ed with building the modern American education system. His theories also influenced the educational systems in Japan, China, the former Soviet Union, as well as my home country, Germany. Dewey was an avowed atheist and secular humanist as well as a co-writer and signatory to the Humanist Manifesto in the 1930s. One of the tenets of that manifesto stated,

*Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now.*

Steeped in humanism himself, this “Father of Education” considered it his mission to spread those same ideals to children all over the world. Even most modern Catholic schools—with the acceptance of the Common Core curriculum in many diocesan schools—have not escaped Dewey’s influence.

These goals of modern education are very different from the Catholic goal of knowing God and finding our way to heaven in the next life!

The Society of Saint Pius X rejects this modern philosophy of education. We realize that the mission of the Catholic school is to impart to youth a philosophy of life consistent with the true Faith. Catholic students must be Catholic both in worldview and in heart. They must learn to see as God sees, and love as God loves. They must be concerned, not only with their own lives, or even with their own salvation, but also with the lives and the salvation of others.

The students of our schools will be the priests and sisters, fathers and mothers, leaders of the society of tomorrow. The formation they receive in their tender years will be a deciding factor of whether they will be washed away in the current of our godless society or be able to stand firm and help rebuild that society on the truth of Jesus Christ.

## The SSPX and Education

When Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre founded the SSPX to defend the Catholic priesthood and the Mass, the western world was in the midst of a complete societal collapse. The enemies of Christ had set out to overturn Christian civilization and, to that end, had targeted the educational establishment even within the Church itself.

While not intended to be a teaching order, the Society of Saint Pius X, from its earliest years, has

seen the necessity of providing a solid Catholic education for those who will be the priests, religious, mothers, and fathers of the future. To avoid the modern soul-killing errors of John Dewey and his counterparts, the Society turned to time tested educational methods—such as those kept alive by the traditional Dominicans and based on the solid foundation of St. Thomas Aquinas.

In the 1980s and 90s a handful of small Society schools scattered across the country worked hard to make this ideal of traditional Catholic education a reality. The lay teachers and priests faced many uphill battles, but now the momentum is growing.

Beginning in 2009, Fr. Rostand, my predecessor as district superior, undertook to deepen and unify the curricula in the 26 Society schools around the country. He gathered a core group of dedicated teachers and turned for inspiration to the traditions of the great Catholic teaching orders. Knowing that the heart of Catholic civilization has always been formed by liturgy and literature, they began with a profound reworking of the Language Arts program in our schools. They developed a curriculum based on the kind of literature that formed the minds and hearts of the monks and saints of centuries past. In harmony with that tradition, the study of literature animates the program, as students receive the tools of precise and profound grammatical analysis and effective written expression. In this way do our schools pass on to the rising generation all the heritage of Christendom.

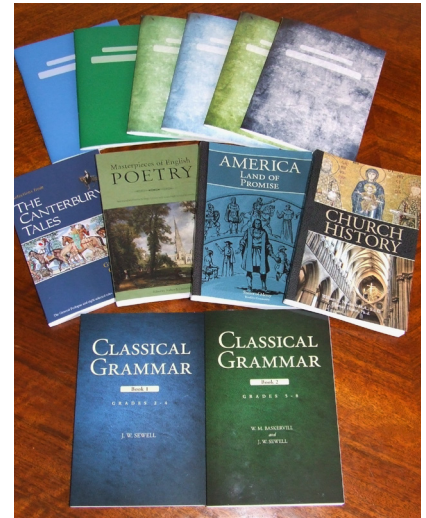
But creating a truly Catholic English curriculum was just the beginning. The hundreds of teachers that would use this method needed to be both instructed and inspired with a vision for the restoration of these timeless educational methods. The Catholic Teachers Seminars, held each summer in St. Marys, Kansas were the natural response to this need.

## Catholic Teachers’ Seminars

This past summer, over 35 men and women gathered in St. Mary’s, Kansas, for another 10 day seminar for teachers, the second round in a two-year cycle of studies. They were followed two weeks later by an even larger group of 65 “new hires”: some just out of St. Mary’s college, some seasoned teachers who have recently joined our schools, and a handful of priests who will be working as teachers or administrators in our schools. Conferences, seminars and work ses-



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sions sought to convey the wisdom of the Church in the formation of children, and in the continued formation of the teacher himself.

It is a concentrated 14 days filled with lofty ideals of the sources of education in philosophy, in Socratic reasoning, and in the challenge of preparing the child's nature for supernature. Participants were not left in the realm of theory, however. Seasoned educators tirelessly instructed younger teachers on how to make the Catholic educational ideal a reality in today's classrooms. And it doesn't end there. Less experienced teachers were then paired up with veterans in a mentoring relationship to ensure the proper implementation of these methods throughout the academic year.

In the nearly seven years since the language arts program has been adopted, and in the three years since these Catholic teacher seminars have been held, the results have been dramatic. The quality of education provided by Society schools has increased consistently as the seminars light a fire in the souls of teachers who then, in turn, ignite that same fire in their students.

## The Future

This exciting new era in Catholic education is really just a re-flowering from Catholic antiquity as we seek to restore all things in Christ by restoring the timeless educational methods that made the saints of ages past. But there is so much more to be done! The curricula for Latin, Religion, and History have begun to be revised along the same lines as the Language Arts program. Seeing the fruit from these seminars, more and more teachers as well as priests and lay helpers are seeking this formation that will increase their effectiveness in imparting true wisdom to their students.

We are only just beginning to reap the benefits flowing from these programs—and there is so much more that can be done! Regional seminars to make this training more accessible, the reprinting of textbooks to bring the classics to a new generation of Catholic students, scholarships to offer our teachers further training at a university level, and the reworking of curricula in more subject areas are just a few of the possibilities.

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As is so often the case, the primary roadblock to so many exciting projects is lack of sufficient funding.

This is where I need your help. It is the duty of Catholics to assist in the proper Catholic education of the next generation. This role falls not just to the parents of the children, but to all Catholics—even if your own children are not yet school age, or if they are fully grown. The standard has been raised; the goal is clearly in sight. What we need are generous partners to help provide our teachers with the training they need to really make a difference in the hearts and minds of the next generation.

Will you consider making a generous donation of \$50, \$100, \$200, or even more to help make our schools the truly top-notch Catholic educational institutions that they must become in this time of crisis?

Trusting in your continued generosity I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Father Jürgen Wegner  
United States District Superior



Catholic Teachers Seminars prepare teachers and priests to put educational theory into practice in the classroom.



Donate now to (re)build the church for a promising future.