

SIESC - TODAY

English Edition

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EDITORIAL

For every human being

In our globalised and multicultural world in constant change, where everything is accelerated, economic life demands of the school to provide it with as many qualified people as possible in a minimum of time. Thus a purely functional concept of education loses sight of its subject: the human being. Formation needs time and leisure. Educating means enriching a person by everything he/she needs in order to live and to live together, in order to get to know truth and to enjoy the truth thus known.

So you will make the youth capable of mastering the challenges of life and discerning the meaning of their lives. That's the responsibility of the educator to accompany them on the path of liberty, to guide towards responsible choices. Indeed there will always be a possibility of choice for him/her whose personal capacities have been developed and who has been motivated to learn all through his/her life.

Let's prove our determination full of hope to answer to the expectancies

of today. When a wall in the middle of society separates cultural identities confronting one another, you must know how to build bridges, how to listen to the other attentively, how to dialogue with him in respect. Helping those who are in need of it, respecting the dignity of every human being, that means being an artist of peace in a world where minorities are too often oppressed.

One will work for a school where disadvantaged children are supported, whether they are handicapped or speak a mother tongue different from the one of the country in which they live. In this school every child will have free access to the most appropriate institutions of formation and will have the same chances of developing its personal interests and talents. Thus we will work in order to "construe a space in which there is room and respect for every human being".

Agnès Rose

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SIESC–European Federation of Christian Teachers

Editeur : SIESC, association loi 1901, siège social : 20, rue Mégevand, F-25000 Besançon, représentant légal : Wolfgang RANK, parmi les principaux associés : Nicole BALU, Darja MAZI-LESKOVAR, Agnès ROSE.

Directeur de la publication : Wolfgang RANK

Responsable de la rédaction : Agnès ROSE

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Für jeden Menschen

In unserer globalisierten und multikulturellen Welt in ständiger Veränderung, wo alles sich beschleunigt, verlangt das wirtschaftliche Leben von der Schule, ihm in einem Minimum an Zeit möglichst viele qualifizierte Leute zur Verfügung zu stellen. So verliert ein rein funktionaler Begriff von Bildung sein Subjekt aus den Augen: den Menschen. Bildung braucht Zeit und Freizeit. Erziehen heißt eine Person mit allem bereichern, was sie braucht, um zu leben und um gemeinsam zu leben, um die Wahrheit kennen zu lernen und sich dann an dieser Wahrheit zu erfreuen.

So wird man die Jugend fähig machen, die Herausforderungen des Lebens zu meistern und den Sinn ihres Lebens zu erkennen. Das ist die Verantwortung der Erziehenden, sie auf dem Weg der Freiheit zu begleiten, sie zu verantwortungsvollen Entscheidungen zu führen. In der Tat wird es immer eine Möglichkeit der Wahl für den/die geben, dessen/deren persönliche Fähigkeiten entwickelt worden sind und der/die dazu motiviert worden ist, das ganze Leben lang zu lernen.

Beweisen wir eine hoffnungsvolle Entschlossenheit, den heutigen Erwartungen zu entsprechen! Wenn eine Mauer inmitten der Gesellschaft kulturelle Identitäten trennt, die einander entgegen treten, muss man Brücken bauen können, dem anderen aufmerksam zuhören, mit ihm in Achtung einen Dialog führen. Denen helfen, die es brauchen, die Würde jedes menschlichen Wesens achten, das heißt ein Künstler des Friedens in einer Welt sein, wo Minderheiten allzu oft unterdrückt werden.

Man wird für eine Schule arbeiten, wo man benachteiligte Kinder unterstützt, ob es behinderte Kinder sind oder eine andere Muttersprache als die des Landes sprechen, in dem sie leben. In dieser Schule wird jedes Kind freien Zugang zu den am besten geeigneten Bildungseinrichtungen haben und wird dieselbe Chance haben, seine persönlichen Interessen und Begabungen zu entwickeln. So werden wir dafür arbeiten, „einen Platz zu schaffen, in dem es Raum und Achtung für jeden Menschen gibt“.

Agnès Rose

Pour chaque homme

Dans notre monde globalisé et pluriculturel en mutation continue, où tout s'accélère, la vie économique demande à l'école de lui fournir en un minimum de temps le plus possible de gens qualifiés. Or une conception purement fonctionnelle de l'éducation perd de vue son sujet : l'homme. La formation a besoin de temps et de loisirs. Eduquer c'est enrichir une personne de tout ce qu'il lui faut pour vivre et pour vivre ensemble, pour connaître et pour jouir de la vérité ainsi connue.

On rendra le jeune capable de maîtriser les défis de la vie et de discerner le sens de sa vie. C'est la responsabilité de l'éducateur de l'accompagner sur la voie de la liberté, de le guider vers des choix responsables. En effet il y aura toujours une possibilité de choix pour celui dont les capacités personnelles ont été développées et qui a été motivé à apprendre tout au long de sa vie.

Faisons preuve d'une détermination pleine d'espérance pour répondre aux attentes d'aujourd'hui. Alors qu'un mur au

milieu de la société sépare des identités culturelles qui s'affrontent, il faut savoir construire des ponts, écouter attentivement l'autre, dialoguer avec lui dans le respect. Aider ceux qui en ont besoin, respecter la dignité de chaque être humain, c'est être un artisan de paix dans un monde où les minorités sont trop souvent opprimées.

On oeuvrera pour une école où l'on soutient les enfants désavantagés, qu'ils soient handicapés ou qu'ils parlent une langue maternelle autre que celle du pays où ils vivent. Dans cette école, chaque enfant aura un libre accès aux institutions de formation les plus appropriées et aura la même chance de développer ses intérêts et talents personnels. Ainsi nous travaillerons à « construire un espace dans lequel il y a place et respect pour chaque homme ».

Agnès Rose

SIESC'S LIFE

56th International Meeting Warsaw, July 23rd to 28th/29th, 2011

For the first time our international meeting took us to Poland. The organisation by our Polish colleagues of KIK has impressed us by its effectivity as well as its warmth.

They received us in a beautiful house of the diocese, built in a clearing not far from the Vistula in the north of Warsaw, 10 minutes by foot to the trams et buses to the town centre. It was a very good place for working, out of which you could discover the capital and a small part of Poland; we were 63 participants of 13 countries, in the alphabetic order of the Polish names Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Luxemburg, Germany, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Italy; the colleagues from Ukraine hadn't been able to get their visas.

The topic proposed by the Poles referred more particularly to a problem of countries marked by years of authoritarian government and a police state; but you saw quickly that it was a problem which concerns us all directly: "Spirit of community versus spectres of the past: the role of teachers, especially Christian teachers, in "purifying" recent history."





The three talks and the language groups

First of all **the talk by Ms Katarina KRUHONJA**, responsible for *the Centre for peace, non-violence and human rights at Osijek in Croatia*.

She shared with us a reflection totally founded on her practice in a country torn by war. "The lesson I have learnt was that there is always a possibility of choice."

If you refrain from "dealing with the past" on different levels, the "demons of the past" always come back and traumatize. Therefore it is important that the public institutions and the actors of social life contribute to a "healing reconstruction". "A repairing justice and a social consensus are necessary. The most powerful source of motivating oneself is solidarity with all victims."

In that complex process the school system was neglected in Croatia. The handbooks have hardly integrated the ethical demands of the European Union. The structures of schools have not been adapted to the necessary cultural exchanges between Croats and Serbs.

To answer to contemporary violence, Ms Kruhonja works to find other ways. What can "Love your enemy!" mean in a logic of mutual violence? The key is "respect of the dignity of every human being, enemy included". Concretely speaking, that means helping those who are in need of it, opposing oneself to violations of the human rights and persisting in pleading for a peaceful solution to the conflict. "Sustainable peace moves bottom up to the top, is lived before it is instituted."

After that **the talk by Mr Marcin KULA**, professor at Warsaw University, who presents himself as a non-believer interested in our concerns and our freedom of speech.

As a historian he interrogates great events showing that history written down is the history of social groups, then in the 19th century the history of national groups; so within those history is most often edited "in order to strengthen the national communities". "The acknowledgment of regions and minorities", "the increasing interdependence of the world" direct our attention to other problems which make those enter into history who were not there.

The task of teachers is "to provide knowledge of multiple facets of the human condition to allow acquiring a deeper understanding of others, considered quite simply as persons". And he gives examples of that for Poland and for the world. That view modifies the formation for teaching history which becomes a history of people. That teaching would also have to "take into consideration the limits of tolerance towards aims which are not acceptable in one's own value system".

The third day, **Mr Krzysztof CZYZEWSKI** of *the Centre at the border - art, culture, nations in the borderland of Poland and Lithuania*.

He, too, is a man of practice; his reflection is based on three pillars.

– "The stranger, the other, one of us". Behind the appearance of manifold relations "the wall of today crosses through the middle of society and serves to separate cultural identities confronting each other".

– "The encounter of the other" imposes "transcending oneself" in order to react to situations and needs, even to "violating rules", to risking "confronting the accusation of treason by ourselves and by our community". He recalls that taking in emigrants is one of the directions of the Bible.

– "The time of coexistence" is lived first of all in the "borderlands", the regions at the borders, which are the place of actions of his Centre. By means of "good remembrances" he shows that it is a question of an effective coexistence, the fact of existing together, and not a wary juxtaposition; it's always necessary to construe bridges and to preserve them constantly. The process opens long-term perspectives which our future will depend on.

A summary of the conclusions of the groupwork was presented by Marie-Thérèse DROUILLON on the last day.

There you first of all realize the attention in which the participants followed the work of the international groups, in each of which two languages were used. The personal testimonies were very important, on World War II, the war in Algeria, in Cambodia, in Bolivia and in Europe in the last twenty years.

With some these statements provoke pessimism in front of the violence, but optimism and hope prevail.

What to do? The school system is very much concerned about the teaching of history, but also about the teaching of law and the manifold encounters in the course of school attendance. Other institutions are also concerned about their role in attempts of reconciliation, such as UNESCO, the French-German Office for youth and above all the Church. Religious instruction contributes to an understanding between the cultures.

The optimism is also founded on the progress accomplished in the last half-century in very diverse domains, the emancipation of women, medical treatments, the end of ideologies, the role of international courts, the consciousness of formerly ignored problems etc..

But a lot questions remain, on the role of the media, on the importance of changes of mentality with their necessary sacrifices and efforts, on the humility and the tenacious patience to be developed. All that should be deepened: it's also a success of a meeting to set to work.

Visits. Conviviality and prayer

The studious meeting was also a meeting of discoveries for those who did not know Poland, the town of Warsaw, so well

reconstructed that you forgot its dreadful destruction, its lively streets and its contemporary buildings, its churches full during all the services, its beautiful university library. We went to Chopin's birthplace, to the garden city Zelazowa Wola and its school dedicated to Saint Teresa of Lisieux. In all churches statues or portraits celebrated John Paul II. The optional excursion took us to Lublin, near to Ukraine and some kilometres from the concentration camp of Majdanek. Some of us prolonged their stay for some days for other visits and discoveries.

The conviviality of the meeting was easy in the house, in the language groups, in the dining-hall, between the participants and with Ms Kruhonja, who stayed till the last day. There were even contacts with inhabitants of Warsaw in the means of public transport and at Sunday mass.

Many thanks indeed to the Polish colleagues who organised a successful meeting – and even administered the budget very economically.

You will find the talks and the summary (and some photos) on the website of SIESC [www.siesc.eu].

Yves Calais

Welcome to Brussels 2012 Religions and Europe

Dear friends, members of SIESC-EFCT and guests,

We will rejoice in welcoming you in a large number in Brussels, the town chosen for the 57th Annual Meeting of SIESC.

We will be accommodated at Woluwe, a quarter of Brussels, in the House NOTRE-DAME DU CHANT D'OISEAU from July 25th to 30th, 2012. (www.chant-oiseau.be)

It's the main aim at Brussels to continue, from a more specific point of view, the reflections already started in our previous meetings on the present and the future of teaching, a teaching based on spiritual and human values which pervade all cultures, religions and convictions.

In a globalised, multinational and multicultural world, in continuous changes and movements, it seemed interesting to us actors on the spot to do research by means of talks and testimonies on what the religions expect of the political institutions and what these expect of religions.

We know well that any change which influences the structures of social and church life, begins by a personal «conversion» by means of listening attentively to that «different other» with which I live together. The respectful dialogue with «the others» favours mutual understanding and the pos-

sibility of internal changes, first of all in ourselves, which are sometimes difficult and painful, but better adapted to the reality we live in.

Every time we demand something inhuman from others, we lose part of the human essence we have received from that «Other», the creator.

Come in a large number to this 57th Meeting. We will offer you visits to the very beautiful town of Brussels, the capital of Europe with its numerous European institutions. During the excursion you will be able to discover the magnificent Gothic town of Leuven, rich in centuries of university traditions, seat of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL), and the modern and dynamic town of Louvain-la-Neuve in the community of Ottignies, seat of the *Université Catholique de Louvain* (UCL).

In order to give you a foretaste of that event, I announce the talk of Father Henri Madelin, Jesuit and expert on European questions: «Europe: the religious EXCEPTIONALITY».

And you will taste the Belgian conviviality ...

Ana María SERRANO BASCOPE

More Europe – less Europe Is there a “common history of Europe”?

Some thoughts following a talk given by the president of ComECE, Bishop Adrianus van Luyn, at Schloss Seggau near Graz:

In that talk the phrase of the “common history” of Europe is called a “misunderstanding”. The peoples of Europe have lived through a lot together, but they judge all that from their own points of view and with a look at their own histories, e.g. the end of World War II, the great year 1989, the enlargement of the EU in 2004. There does not (yet) exist a common “European narrative”. In order to get nearer to that “common narrative”, it is necessary not to forget, but rather “deal with” history, as we tried to do for some examples at the SIESC meeting in Warsaw. Only by means of knowledge of the truth and the other points of view we can succeed in overcoming prejudices and achieving a common “narrated remembrance”. But even that will not be uniform in every respect, but will demand of us the respect of “unity in diversity” which is a constituent of Europe.

And also in the continuing discussion if we need “more Europe” or “less Europe” in the EU, it should not be a question of slogans, but of questions of solidarity and subsidiarity within that construction still in development. If peoples and states expect and hope for help from the European institutions (e.g. in

the financial and bank crises) and if great challenges can only be met on the European or world level (e.g. problems of the environment, climate crisis), European institutions must also be able to apply relevant instruments and national states must for that aim be willing to renounce to parts of their sovereignty. On the other hand it must be allowed to question on principle or when the occasion arises, if in certain spheres states or regions are not better equipped to deal with and solve pending questions. In that case the EU ought to be willing to hand back rights of decision. Europe is “progress in work” and here, too, the right relationship between “unity” and “diversity” must be searched for again and again.

The EU will soon welcome Croatia as a new member. Again we see that SIESC is ahead of the political development in its efforts to facilitate contacts and conversations between colleagues of a lot of European countries. The Croatian HKDPD has been a member of SIESC for some time and has already organized an annual meeting for SIESC, which we remember gratefully.

Since its foundation SIESC has, by its modest means, spoken up for a good living together in a larger Europe and for the unification of Europe, has been a co-writer of the “common European narrative” and contributed its small part to the common future. That’s what SIESC will do in future, too, and the meeting in Brussels in 2012 fits excellently into that concern.

Wolfgang Rank

IN MEMORIAM

Carmen BARCELO MARGINET from Barcelona has for years taken part in the joy at seeing each other again and the reflection of the international meetings, as long as her heart allowed it to her. She often prolonged them together with friends and maintained quite a correspondence. She was one of our oldest participants. She died at the beginning of July, when she was preparing to come to the meeting at Warsaw.

May she together with all those who have left us live in the joy of God !

INTERNATIONAL LIFE

PAX ROMANA

Rights of minorities

The last PAX ROMANA NEWSLETTER refers to the Final Declaration of the workshop on the Synod for the Middle East.

Lawrencia Kwark, the author of the article, visited Pax Romana movements in India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia, where there are Christian minorities, whose rights are often threatened.

That’s why the Council of Human Rights proclaimed that it is important to defend them. But it seems that it isn’t only the fate of Christians, but of all minorities. They are too often oppressed by undemocratic states or by an intolerant majority population. These conflicts have been caused by an undemocratic society.

But these problems have often been oversimplified, being presented as the conflicts between Muslims and the rest of the world, which isn’t completely in accordance with reality. However, the ten-years lasting war of these two parts of the population tokens that there are Muslim branches which tend to be extremely intolerant.

Islamic and other non-democratic states should become rule-of-the-law states, which consider all citizens equal in rights and dignity, all free to express and live their cultural identity, nationality or religion, Christian and non-Christian alike.

She expresses the hope that the democratic revolution in the Middle East might bring that gradually and that the New World of 7 billion citizens could be born.

Dagmar Parohová

PAX ROMANA EUROPE

Pax Romana Europe communicates numerous pieces of information, which you can find in the English newsletter. Ask Wolfgang Rank by e-mail to pass it on to you [w.rank@gmx.at].

One should mention the FORUM OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY "Living together. Conciliating diversity and freedom in the Europe of the 21st century" at Strasbourg on November 13th and 14th. It was organised by the Conference of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) as a continuation of the Forum on "New intercultural challenges. What's the role of the NGOs?" of last March at Istanbul.

The problems of living together will come up in an even more urgent form in a Europe in a grave financial and economic crisis. Even if they depend on political and economic situations, too, they have first of all effects on what you call civil society. The Forum wants to register the best practice measures of NGOs, so that they can react to political decisions.

All that is everyday life.

Yves Calais

25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MEETING OF ASSISI

On October 27th, 2011, the event of the day was the meeting of nearly 300 representatives of the world religions and some agnostics at Assisi, 25 years after the first meeting launched by John Paul II.. Then the Pope had had to explain himself in front of those who had been surprised by that innovation.

Benedict XVI., who had not come in 1986, in his turn invited the representatives of religions and humanisms to give testimony in front of the world that the religions are not the warmongers that they are accused of being globally. On the contrary the Pope affirms, "In the name of God every religion should bring justice and peace, pardon and life, love to the earth!"

Locally, you could perhaps participate in interreligious encounters which have renewed the relations between responsible persons and members of religious communities. There you have lived moments of peace which referred to the 7th of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called sons of God."

Yves Calais

NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Germany VkDL

Formation needs time and leisure

Federal General Assembly of the VkDL at Karlsruhe (July 8th – 10th, 2011) reminded of the origin of "School".

Complex processes of information and rapid acceleration of the increase of knowledge don't stop in front of schools. Pieces of information must be received, understood and worked up more and more quickly – no time being left for critical analysis, one's own thoughts, the formation of personal positions. Schools should "provide" the economy with as many comprehensively trained human beings as possible in a time as short as possible. But will that calculation come true? And does the young generation agree to being designed like that? That was the topic of current interest which the Verein katholischer deutscher Lehrerinnen e.V. (VkDL) dealt with at its **115th Federal General Assembly at Karlsruhe from July 8th to 10th, 2011.**

The main speaker Prof. Dr. Berthold Wald, Rector of the Theological Faculty at Paderborn, pointed out : Considering formation in a purely functional way means losing sight of its subject – the human being. Formation instrumentalised by the state, only serving the purpose of training and intended to save the social security systems, misses its true sense: Formation is "meaningful in itself" and it is important for our all-embracing

humanity. Thus formation is more than knowledge and needs time! (**Whole text of the talk in: "Katholische Bildung", Nr. 9/2011**)

The Members' Assembly passed three important resolutions on school politics :

–The declaration **School must be allowed to work in quiet !** is an appeal to school and education politicians, but also to economic organisations, to refrain from interventions in work at school, so that schools can work in quiet. "School concepts", "school experiments" and "reforms" dictated by party politics impede the pedagogical work of schools and make "guinea pigs" out of pupils.

– The resolution "*Special schools necessary in future, too, – enlarge centres of competence for the development of integration measures!*" published in 2010 was supplemented by the VkDL by another resolution on the topic: In its paper "**Re-thinking inclusion**" the VkDL demands a fundamental change of consciousness in society. It calls architects, employers and all persons responsible in politics, economy and administration to assure larger participation in schools, leisure and occupation for handicapped persons. Differentiated and variable measures of integration are required, for there are a lot of kinds of handicaps. Only a precise factual knowledge about the kind of handicap and its effects leads to correct decisions.

– The third resolution of the VkDL is a critical answer to the

restructuring of the North Rhine-Westphalia school system towards a uniform school type. For years the VkdL has spoken up consequently for the tried and tested differentiated school system and for maintaining the school types. In the resolution in the form of a commentary **Hauptschule – an act of illusion** the VkdL unmasks the blinding tactics of school politicians: A school type is abolished, but its leaving certificate is conjured out of the hat – for it is still demanded.

VkdL, October 2011

Austria VCL

How school can be “just” ?

Due to the intensive discussion about the quality and reforms of the Austrian educational system a platform “Performance & Diversity” was founded consisting of teachers, parents, pupils and theoreticians of formation. VCL supports the aims of that platform. The question how school can be “just” is answered by the platform in the following way :

School is just ...

- if on principle every child is granted unhindered access to the best suited public educational institutions.
- if a public educational system partitioned as widely as possible provides manifold offers, adapted to the various talents, interests and dispositions.
- if the state guarantees every human being the chance of formation and development of personal interests and talents.
- if access to education is guaranteed irrespective of social or geographical origin, religious adherence, language, sex etc..
- if performance counts and not the fortune of the parents.
- if the state cares for just chances by promoting consciousness of the value of education in society, supporting families in their task of education and especially investing in early development programmes, of course in additional offers of support on all levels of the school system as well.
- if there exist no dead ends in the system and if people are motivated to lifelong learning by their home and the schools.
- if human beings are enabled to master the challenges of life in occupation and society.
- if leaving certificates are valuable, i.e. if they are accepted by those receiving the pupils (enterprises, secondary and tertiary institutions of formation).
- In short because of a manifold school system, development programmes as early as possible, additional offers of support on all levels.

And for the single school amongst others the following claims are listed :

- Every single school must be granted the right to decide about its own pedagogical model itself.
- Every school which fulfils certain minimum demands (amongst others public avowal to the constitution and the basic rights, qualification and number of teachers, stan-

dards of the building and sanitary conditions, controlling of quality, institutionalised feedback culture) and which – besides a wide range of individual specialisation – has decided on a certain type out of a wide range of possibilities is on principle equipped financially in the same way. That applies to public and private schools alike.

Additional help should, however, be provided

- for the promotion of disadvantaged children (i.e. especially children of non-German mother tongue or handicapped children),
- for the promotion of technical and scientific formation,
- for all-day schooling, whose development should be forced, without making it obligatory for everybody,
- for an increased employment of school psychologists, school social workers and for possibilities of supervision for teachers,
- for schools providing their teachers with workplaces of sufficient quality and quantity.

France - ACMEC (catholic schools)

Encouraging steps

ACMEC, together with the Enseignement catholique (E.C.), has published a special issue to transmit its mission by means of a historical survey, a few accounts and ways for the future. Here is Claude Berruer's conclusion. He is deputy of the secretary general of the E.C.

There isn't a hint of bitterness or nostalgia in this retrospect of ACMEC's activity. Its history speaks more of a successful venture and of hopeful men and women dedicated to find the best means to answer a calling while facing the deeply changing demands of education and institution. Instead of stressing the end of a structure, the tale of ACMEC's adventure invites us to the challenge of new beginnings. Times have always been changing and, no doubt, the speed is increasing. The E.C. is deeply changing in order to be faithful to its mission while working with the church and working as partners with the French teaching organization. The profession has to adapt to radical changes and surely needs a completely new foundation.

The training of teachers is now firmly structured by different master degrees, which are mostly delivered by the Catholic universities, which are linked to our institutions of higher education, following requisite standards. The institution insists on being guided by a careful reference to the Gospel and to Christian anthropology. ACMEC has taken steps that are still promising.

ACMEC, moving in the circles of the Catholic Action, has always developed the life revision based on the Gospel, thus giving testimony that God speaks to the world through the Scriptures but also through the worldly commitments of Christians. The statements given by teachers working in Catholic schools stress how it can lead them to undertake some political or social responsibility in their community ... The aim is to be consistent with one's professional and personal commitments in life. This is still a highly regarded approach

today. More than ever, Christian teachers and educators need to value the sense of their professional practice and, to a larger extent, the sense of their lives.

Taking into account the need for a new approach to commitment, we really have to find new ways of meeting, getting together and thinking. An organization disappears but the founding insights remain. As we are responsible today, we must appreciate and welcome the existing initiatives and, no doubt, we shall have to promote new ones ... As soon as possible, we are going to propose to young teachers and educators to meet for a few days in a place of high spirituality and take time for a break, make a detour and set the basis for renewed ways to experience life revision ...

With great humility, the ACMEC members give thanks and say: "We have carried out our mission". They are leaving us a heritage which cannot leave us indifferent. From now on, there is the challenge to renew with the founders' energy and answer today's expectations.

France - CdEP (State Education)

The school in the world. The world in our classrooms.

This year, one of the strong moments of CdEP was the meeting at Orsay at the end of August, dedicated to the topic "The school in the world. The world in our classrooms."

This is what we experienced :

Times of presentation of diverse spheres of the international in our association :

- The articles in our magazine *Lignes de crêtes*.
- The meetings of SIESC-EFCT (among them the last one in Warsaw) and *SIESC-Today*.
- The Équipes Enseignantes in the world.
- The International Bureau in connection with "Dialogue et Coopération" and its magazine, *Entre Nous*, translated into several languages.
- CCFD – Terre Solidaire*, to whose circle of friends we belong.

But also two other forms of access:

- What represents the international to each of us: bringing along a personal object symbolising it.
- Our questions concerning those problems: a tree received our leaves, symbols of our questioning.

Times of prayer and celebration:

- Deuteronomy (extracts visualized by photos).
- Morning prayers (stations of the Cross by CCFD with the themes: badly acquired goods, poverty and richness, the burden of debt, hospitality...) as well as songs.
- A celebration of the Eucharist where posters and objects found their places at the offertory.
- The mission celebration with the transmission of the Light by means of our small lighted candles and by means of listening to the text on Pentecost.

Times of listening and discussions around our various speakers :

- **Nico Hirtt**, trade union trainer, researcher, teacher of physics and mathematics at Brabant (Wallony) University (at Charleroi, Belgium), founding member of AED (Appel pour une École Démocratique): "School and economy: education politics and the crisis of capitalism".
- **Étienne Gille**, president of AFRANE (Amitié France-Afghane), publishing director of *Nouvelles d'Afghanistan*, former professor of mathematics at Kabul: "Being a pupil, being a teacher in a country at war: Afghanistan".
- **The speaker of the "City of immigration"**: "Glimpses at immigration in general and Polish immigration since 1830 in particular".
- **Antoine Martin**, former inspector of national education: "European programmes and comparisons of educational tests"... After that international evaluation (PISA) provoked a discussion.
- **Nina Marx**, in charge of mission at CCFD: "The commitment of CCFD vis-à-vis migrants".
- **Jean-Claude Sauzet**, national chaplain of CCFD: "The spirituality of solidarity" according to seven principles: common weal and universal destination of goods, subsidiarity, participation, solidarity, laicity, freedom of conscience and religious freedom ...

Times of conviviality :

- Folk dances.
- Interactive games and discussions in small groups.
- Performance of our reflections starting from acted, mimed or danced scenes.
- Songs about the topic of the session.

Times of partaking:

- Wherein does what we have seen in the "City of immigration" question or strengthen us in our convictions?
 - Exchange about words and images proposed by CCFD to be summed up in one sentence.
- Have we at the end of the meeting answered to certain ones of our questions? ... Our leaves have been transformed into flowers and decorate the tree of remembrance.
- Thus a brotherly session and rich from all points of view !

Nicole Morin (condensed text)
September 2011

* CCFD, the Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development, created in 1961, with a mandate by the French Bishops' Conference, today comprising 28 movements and services of the Church, having consultative status at the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Educational emergency and responsibility of the educator

A significant barrier that can limit the damage of the educational emergency is definitely a sense of responsibility of the educator.

The responsibility of a person is challenged when he/she has to act: «I am the author of this action» means «I am responsible» for this action, and since education and relation are intentional acts, they primarily involve the educator's responsibility, which is based on the principle: I - as educator, as I put in place an educational process - am responsible. The responsibility that an educator has for a person requires that he must behave in the right way, appropriate to his nature as a human person, commensurate with his dignity, function and value.

Answering the multiple needs of the others is the foundation of civilized life, of the institution family, of school organization, of the ecclesial community. Human needs are vast and varied. Nourishing biological life, knowing how to live and how to "live together" in society, satisfying the curiosity and the desire to know and to discover are **needs** that become **rights**, also sanctioned by the Italian Constitution. They manifest themselves in concrete actions involving **duties** to oneself and to others. It is necessary that man must «learn» all that, and education is, indeed, the help given to the person so that he/she may grow and learn.

Educating means enriching the person with all that is necessary to live and to live together, to learn and enjoy the truth known. This is the responsibility of the educator to the person who is to be educated; and giving this legacy is primarily a «heart affair», which implies a «responsibility» that manifests itself in «love». What the parents do, who turn to the needs of their children with love, is what the teacher lives towards those he encounters in his professional career, a particular experience of relationship and love, which becomes concrete because he/she answers their deepest needs of being *true* men, of living a good life, of living it *happily*.

The tragedy of the «educational emergency», yet repeatedly condemned by Pope Benedict XVI, is generated when the educator, who may be in a human desert, is satisfied by remaining «close» to those who are educated, by limiting his/her action to equipping the man with means for life, without bothering to convey to him *the project of a good life*, without accompanying him *on the path to freedom*, without leading him to making *responsible decisions*. But we cannot reduce education to instruction with impunity.

The form of the educational relationship is *the testimony of the educator*. When the educator's behaviour contradicts what the educator proposes, his/her proposal has no strength, and the cause of many social harms is to be found precisely in the lack of examples and of educational models.

The statement «the problem of young people are the adults» highlights a real, serious cause of the educational emergency, therefore each «adult», in his/her own way and in his/her role, must be «responsible» and, as a consequence, committed to acting and to testifying what is truly good.

Giuseppe Adernò
President UCIM Catania

Man for others – voluntary work programme

Voluntary work gives young people new knowledge, experience and opportunity to develop personal capacities, respect and tolerance to the full and use their free time usefully.

On the other hand there are the users (the receivers of help), who need help at learning, company for walks, communication, somebody who will read a fairy-tale or a newspaper, accompany them to the cinema, play with them or help them with daily chores. By organizing voluntary work we can connect these wishes and needs and consequently maintain and strengthen human values such as care for the others, serving and the sense of community.

In the year 2000 DKPS united the needs and time young people were willing to offer to people in need and started the voluntary work programme "Man for Others". In that programme students from secondary to university level, young employees, and in recent time more and more older people, take part. Each year about 80 volunteers offer their help to more than 300 people in need. The voluntary work programme is organized together with Jesuits' Refugee Service and Slovenian Paraplegic Organisation.

Before starting voluntary work volunteers express their wishes, which we try to adjust to our possibilities, get acquainted with their obligations and rights and have two sessions of basic education. Later they are assigned to the work according to their wishes, which influences their work a lot.

Voluntary work takes place at 10 different institutions at Ljubljana and Postojna, in kindergartens, primary schools, hospitals, retreats for older people, rehabilitation centres and refugee services. Before starting volunteer work a contract is signed by which the volunteer guarantees to undertake the work responsibly. Volunteers work two hours per week. Once a month they have supervision, which strengthens them and gives them an opportunity to learn from experience.

During the year we try to organize other meetings (social-educational weekend, social evenings, final excursion) by which we strengthen a close link-up and friendship between volunteers.

At the end of the school year when we finish the programme of voluntary work, we have evaluation. Volunteers fill in the questionnaire. They discuss the work done together with users and responsible persons of the institutions.

Taking the programme once, many volunteers continue volunteer work the following year. There are some who have been in the programme for five years.

Parallel monthly weekends and education is offered to mentors of volunteers. At the meetings we value each volunteer work, organize the course of monthly supervision and learn different methods of supervision.

Our magazine *Vzgoja*, issued by DKPS, regularly writes about volunteer work in order to present the importance of volunteer work to many people, especially those who work with the youth, teachers, parents and others.

“Man for Others” is one form of voluntary work in which we try to use total approach. Consequently, we take into consideration other fields of life. Volunteers are besides being volunteers also growing young people, future parents, experts, employees ... and we wish they will become men and women for others in all fields of their lives.

Kristina Lepen

NEWS FROM PARTNER ASSOCIATIONS

Poland (KIK)

“Together in Father Boniecki’s defence, for the good of the Church” – The leaders of the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia stand up for the priest.

The beginning of November 2011 brought an event which deeply moved Polish Catholic intellectuals. The responsible superiors of the Congregation of Marian Fathers (MIC) have forbidden one of the most renowned Polish priests, Father Adam Boniecki, to express his opinions in the media. (...)

Since 1964 this priest is connected with *Tygodnik Powszechny*, a weekly magazine edited in Cracow, which represents an ecumenical variant of Polish Catholicism, open to the dialogue with others, including non-Catholics. One of the most important authors connected with *Tygodnik* was the simple priest, the bishop, cardinal and pope Karol Wojtyła. From the moment of his election the magazine became the most popular platform for his teachings in Poland. In 1979 the Pope named Father Boniecki chief editor of the Polish edition of *Osservatore Romano*, where he worked till 1991. In the years from 1993 to 2000 he took the function of Father General of the Congregation of Marian Fathers. Afterwards he was ecclesiastical assistant of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and in 1999 he was

chosen its chief editor. Since 2007 he has also worked together with the television channel Religia.tv.

The Catholic Church in Poland is going through difficult times. The division is becoming visible. One of the reasons for this state of affairs is the involvement of some of the Polish bishops and many priests in current politics. (I already wrote about that in the January 2005 edition of *SIESC-Today*.) The situation has not improved. Those members of the clergy are involved against the official position of the Polish Catholic Church, supporting the biggest right wing party (*Law and Justice*, or *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* in Polish). That has caused reactions and at the last elections in October 2011 the creation of a new, strongly anticlerical party, which openly attacks the position of the Catholic Church in Poland. It obtained more than 10 %.

Asked by journalists for commentaries on current affairs, Father Boniecki was, according to his superiors, not critical enough, and as a monk he should have “limited himself to spreading the teachings of Christ, rather than his own opinions”. After one interview he was forbidden to voice his opinions in the media (apart from *Tygodnik Powszechny*). This decision was contested by many intellectuals, most notably those who have an open view of Catholicism. Among those intellectuals the board of KIK wrote an appeal to the head of the Marian Fathers in Poland to change that decision, expressing their fear that it will strengthen “a false image of a Church which puts obedience and enslavement above the power of truth, responsibility and the word. ... Father Boniecki is a guide for a great many people, old and young ones, who seriously search for God in their lives, ask questions which have no easy answers, and who want to create an environment, based on the commandment of love, where there is a place and respect for every human being.”

That appeal, published online, was signed by several thousand people in the first couple of days. We hope that this misunderstanding will be cleared up quickly and that a priest who is immensely valued by a great number of Polish Catholics will be able to voice his opinions in the public once more.

Małgorzata Wojciechowska

A note from the editor

SIESC-TODAY publishes articles of two types :

1 /It provides information concerning the life of SIESC and international affairs : for this SIESC governing body takes on full responsibility.

2/ On their authors' own responsibility, it publishes information coming from member and partner associations as well as from guests to allow them to put into dialogue their own positions and to lead readers to think about these positions which can not be shared by everybody.

OUR BEST THANKS TO OUR TRANSLATORS