

SIESC - TODAY

English Edition

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ÉDITORIAL

Education and diversity

Educating is thrilling. Isn't the teacher responsible for the cultural, moral and civic growth of his/her pupils, whom he/she attempts to lead to their comprehensive development? By the way, education is not an exclusively individual fact, it is a means of social integration. The contribution of school to integration into society is irreplaceable for the children who need special support, which is particularly the case with children of migrants. Not mastering the language of the receiving country – that doesn't allow their success at school and entails a delay in their formation which can hardly be made up. Intensive language training prepares them for being able to follow the teaching well as soon as possible.

Our world of diverse languages needs translation. Yet in spite of the reader's confidence in the translation, the question of a reliable and correct interpretation of the message remains, because you can present things differently by mentioning the whole complexity of the facts or not. Thus it is urgent to build bridges in order to avoid divisions. We must be capable of admitting convictions that are strange to us, of taking into consideration every single person in his/her dignity and capacity for the truth, however absurd his/her opinions may be. In education it is, according to the Pope, fundamental to accept diversity, for the differences are resources and not problems. The educator will therefore be audacious and creative in order to confront the anthropological challenge which education is.

One can put oneself questions about political ideas which demand too much from school and expect of it to solve all problems of society. But it is good to apply attentive and sensitive vigilance about the concrete school reality in all its fundamental aspects and to contribute to construing a more efficient and more just school. The state must guarantee the right of the parents to educate their children in respect to their convictions and in respect to the principles of neutrality, plurality, and equality. One can therefore make the parents much more responsible as partners of the school and intensify the esteem which they hold for a good formation and education of their children.

Agnès ROSE

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Bildung und Verschiedenheit

Bilden und Erziehen ist spannend. Ist der/die Lehrer/in nicht verantwortlich für das kulturelle, moralische und staatsbürgerliche Wachsen der Schüler/innen, die er/sie zu ihrer umfassenden Entwicklung zu führen sucht? Außerdem ist Bildung nicht nur ein ausschließlich individueller Vorgang, sie ist auch ein Mittel der gesellschaftlichen Integration. Der Beitrag der Schule zur Integration in die Gesellschaft ist unersetzlich für die Schüler/innen, die eine besondere Förderung benötigen, was besonders bei Kindern von Einwanderern der Fall ist. Die Sprache des Aufnahmelandes nicht zu beherrschen macht ihren schulischen Erfolg unmöglich und zieht einen Rückstand in ihrer Bildung nach sich, der kaum aufgeholt werden kann. Intensives Sprachtraining bereitet sie darauf vor, dem Unterricht so früh wie möglich zu folgen.

Unsere Welt mit ihren verschiedenen Sprachen braucht Übersetzung. Doch trotz des Vertrauens des Lesers auf die Übersetzung bleibt die Frage einer verlässlichen und richtigen Interpretation der Botschaft, weil man die Dinge anders darstellen kann, indem man die ganze Komplexität der Tatsachen erwähnt oder nicht. Also ist es dringend notwendig, Brücken zu bauen, um Spaltungen zu vermeiden. Wir müssen fähig sein, Überzeugungen zuzulassen, die uns fremd sind, jeden Einzelnen in seiner Würde und seiner Fähigkeit zur Wahrheit zu berücksichtigen, wie abwegig auch seine Meinungen sein mögen. In der Erziehung ist es nach Meinung des Papstes grundlegend, die Verschiedenheit anzunehmen, weil die Unterschiede Ressourcen seien und nicht Probleme. Der/Die Erzieher/in wird also mutig und kreativ sein, um sich der anthropologischen Herausforderung zu stellen, die die Erziehung ist.

Man kann sich über politische Ideen Fragen stellen, die zu viel von der Schule verlangen und von ihr erwarten, dass sie alle Probleme der Gesellschaft löst. Aber es ist gut, aufmerksame und einfühlsame Wachsamkeit für die konkrete schulische Wirklichkeit in allen ihren grundlegenden Aspekten zu aufzubringen und dazu beizutragen, eine wirksamere und gerechtere Schule zu schaffen. Der Staat muss das Recht der Eltern garantieren, ihre Kinder in der Achtung ihrer Überzeugungen und in der Achtung der Grundsätze der Neutralität, der Pluralität und der Gleichheit zu erziehen. Man wird daher die Eltern viel mehr als Partner der Schule verantwortlich machen und die Wertschätzung verstärken können, die sie einer guten Bildung und Erziehung ihrer Kinder beimessen.

Agnès ROSE

Education et diversité

Eduquer est passionnant. L'enseignant n'est-il pas responsable de la croissance culturelle, morale et civique de ses élèves qu'il cherche à emmener à leur complet développement? En outre l'éducation n'est pas un fait exclusivement individuel, elle est un moyen d'intégration sociale. La contribution de l'école à l'intégration dans la société est irremplaçable pour les élèves qui ont besoin d'un soutien spécial, ce qui est notamment le cas des enfants de migrants. Ne pas maîtriser la langue du pays d'accueil ne permet pas leur réussite scolaire et entraîne un retard dans leur

formation qui ne peut guère être rattrapé. Un entraînement intensif de la langue les prépare à pouvoir bien suivre l'enseignement le plus tôt possible.

Notre monde aux langues diverses a besoin de traductions. Cependant malgré la confiance du lecteur dans la traduction, la question d'une interprétation fidèle et correcte du message demeure car on peut présenter les choses autrement en mentionnant ou non toute la complexité des faits. Or il y a urgence à établir des ponts pour éviter les divisions.. Il faut être capable d'admettre des convictions qui nous sont étrangères, prendre en considération tout un chacun dans sa dignité et sa capacité de vérité, si aberrantes que soient ses opinions. Dans l'éducation selon le pape il est fondamental d'accueillir la diversité car les différences sont des ressources et non des problèmes. L'éducateur sera donc audacieux et créatif pour faire face au défi anthropologique qu'est l'éducation.

On peut s'interroger sur des idées politiques qui exigent trop de l'école, attendent d'elle qu'elle résolve tous les problèmes de la société. Mais il est bon d'exercer une vigilance attentive et sensible à la réalité scolaire concrète sous tous ses aspects fondamentaux et de contribuer à construire une école plus efficace et plus juste. L'Etat doit garantir le droit des parents à éduquer leurs enfants dans le respect de leurs convictions et dans le respect des principes de neutralité, de pluralité et d'égalité. On pourra alors rendre les parents beaucoup plus responsables en tant que partenaires de l'école et intensifier l'estime qu'ils portent à une bonne formation et éducation de leurs enfants.

Agnès ROSE

SIESC'S LIFE

SIESC In Trier July 2018

July 2018, TRIER, Germany. The 63rd SIESC meeting takes place with about 60 participants from 12 different countries. The theme is 'LAW, LIBERTY & RESPONSIBILITY' and is illustrated by 3 very different conferences which allow for the following debates in the linguistic groups.

The first conference by Hans-Gerhard NEUGEBAUER, a lecturer at KOELN University, titled 'The power of State and individual freedom', means to show the stages and reflexions which enabled to clarify the relationship between the power of State and individual freedom. This relationship has evolved from Greek times to nowadays.

The second conference by Wolfgang OELSNER, titled 'A pedagogy based on diagnosis to work with very special children & teenagers', was inspired by the professional experience of Mr. Oelsner. He worked with students with special behaviours. He illustrates Goethe's words: 'Law and only law can bring us freedom'. This conference had a very important impact on teachers from different countries who have to deal with the problematics of children with special needs.



Photo Bistum Trier

The third conference by Georg RUBEL who heads the chair of Biblical theology at the Luxemburg School of Religion & Society, -titled 'Reflexions of Biblical Theology about the link between Law & Freedom in the Old & New Testaments' enlightens us about the Thora which presents a liberating God leading his people out of Egypt. The conference also illustrates the fact that Jesus came to accomplish the Law, and shows how Law & Freedom are present in St Paul's epistles.

The linguistic groups enable us as usual to talk about the conferences and what is done in each country. We realize that democracy is fragile in European countries and doesn't exist in all of them. Also, from what the participants declare, we realize that including children which special needs causes issues in all represented countries.

Mornings were very busy working, but afternoons enabled us to visit TRIER, the oldest town in Germany. From Roman times with the Porta Nigra and the remains of Baths to the Christian era with the grave of Apostle Mathias who succeeded Judas, we were delighted to discover this catholic city. An organ concert in the huge protestant basilica delighted us.

We hugely enjoyed the city because we were wonderfully hosted at the 'Tagungs und Gaestehaus der Barmherzigen Brue-der', a hostel inside the hospital belonging to the Augustinian Brothers.

To get to our bedrooms, we had to cross some hospital halls, a means to keep in touch with the realities of life.

The optional tour to LUXEMBURG City enabled some of us to discover this Grand Duchy and the riches of the city & ECHE-

NACH, to the north-east of the country. The guided tour organized by Hanna & André (many thanks to them!) made us feel like going there again! We also enjoyed the organ & singing concert before our picnic.

The life of SIESC goes on and the Board has elected a new president, Alin Tat from RUMANIA. It's the first time we have a president from Eastern Europe. We thank him for accepting this responsibility and we are also deeply thankful to Wolfgang RANK who was our president for 15 years and who maintained links with colleagues & associations in many countries.

Our thanks also go to our German colleagues Gisela, Luise, Hannelore, Jens and Sabine, who never counted their time and masterfully organized our meeting.

Next year we'll enjoy meeting again in Tainach, Austria, not too far from Slovenia.

Catherine LE COZ

64th SIESC Meeting in Tainach, Carinthia

The VCL Austria and SIESC cordially invite you to the 64th Annual Meeting of SIESC from 22 - 27/28 July 2019 in Tainach/Tinje in Carinthia, Austria. The formation house «Sodalitas» awaits us, a friendly house with modern single and double rooms as well as lecture and group rooms and a chapel with mosaics by P. Rupnik (www.sodalitas.at).

We have chosen the topic: «The contribution of schools to integration through reasonable inclusion». The contribution of schools for integration into society is irreplaceable: for pupils who need special support because of disabilities, for pupils who as (children of) refugees or migrants have to acquire the linguistic and content prerequisites for school attendance and vocational training, for pu-

pils who bring back educational backlogs from an educationally disadvantaged environment. The attempts to find solutions for this difficult but unavoidable task of today's school differ in European countries and are ideologically and educationally controversial. There are political ideas that demand too much from schools, that expect schools to solve all of society's problems. It will be interesting to get to know and compare the situation in different European countries on the basis of Austrian and Slovenian solutions.

Tainach/Tinje is a small town in the common area of German-speaking and Slovenian-speaking Carinthians. We will visit Klagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia, about 20 km away, with about 100.000 inhabitants. Carinthia has not only many well-known lakes, but also old churches, castles and palaces, excavations of a Celtic-Roman city and interesting museums. During the excursion on the last day we will get to know an impressive castle and the Romanesque cathedral of Gurk, the origin of the diocese.

Wolfgang RANK



Pax Romana

The need of translation and the call for interpretation

A few words from the president

The challenge of education according to Pope Francis

In these lines I would like to propose some short reflections on “the challenge of education” following Pope Francis. According to him the seven pillars of education are: 1. integrating, 2. welcoming and celebrating the diversity, 3. facing the anthropological change, 4. disquiet as a motor of education, 5. a pedagogy of the question, 6. not maltreating the limits, 7. living a fruitfulness between the generations and within the family.

According to a Jesuit commentator, one must also think of three “keywords” which give connotations to education with Pope Francis: choice, exigence and passion. Indeed, for the pope educating is “one of the most passionate arts of our existence” and “incessantly demands that horizons be enlarged”. Moreover, “education is not an exclusively individual fact, but one referring to the people” and it is “a means of social integration”.

In education according to Pope Francis one of the fundamental points is “welcoming diversity”, for the differences are “resources” and not “problems”. By the way, the pope encourages educators to be “audacious” and “creative”, for education is “an anthropological challenge”.

It’s not always easy to let oneself be provoked by new situations, by challenges at school that are due to differences in families, education, culture, social status and diverse affiliations, the mixture of our societies. But that is part of our vocation as teachers in the world of today. Without forgetting the lessons of the past and the wisdom of history, we perhaps ought, as the Gospel says, search for the new things in our teaching, for “every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” (Mt 13, 52).

And I hope that our exchange of experiences and our communication in the frame of SIESC contribute to that impetus, to be renewed again and again.

Alin TAT

Translation and interpretation have been recognised as the answers to the requirements of a world in which communication is an urgent necessity - not only in the international linguistic context but also in other settings where it is imperative to bridge divides.

Consequently Kevin Aher’s headline A world in need of translation, published on the Pax Romana interactive website¹, echoes the demands for new connections between the local and the global, between religions and regions². New links are established also via articles on PRw, addressing issues from all over the world and presented in five languages. However, despite the reader’s trust in translation the question about the reliability and the correct interpretation of the messages may arise. On the other hand, the credibility of any media message is increased when the text presents facts and various standpoints³. Hans-Gerhard Neugebauer’s article on The power of the state and the freedom of the individual thus clearly contributes to the reliability of PRw. By presenting historical facts and commenting them, it raises the awareness of the development of the ideas of liberties and social interdependence and helps readers to form their own conclusions about the importance of the state in the life of citizens.

That this issue is highly significant is proved also by the contribution of Giuseppe Elia, Another narrative is possible. This article is informative as far as Italian situation is concerned, but the reliability of the discussion of some European countries may be questioned. Eg, Hungary’s efforts to alleviate the catastrophic situation of prosecuted Christians in their countries of origin are not mentioned. A complementary perspective on international assistance can be gained from Ndundu Jean’s text, explaining why Christian professionals need support in an endeavour to become fully engaged » in building the social transformation« in their original country. Presenting the challenges of the electoral process in Congo, he wishes that »the seed for the improvement of the living conditions of the populations in Africa be thrown.« Also the report on the Latin American Chillian encounter brings an encouraging message: the development which is not reduced to economic growth but it incorporates the blossoming of all people’s capabilities can be achieved even in conditions of insufficient income or economic crises »since the richest countries do not necessarily achieve the greatest human development«.

Such statements, read in five languages of PRw, may be interpreted not only as positions of individual associations in Latin America and Africa but also as a call to the rest of the world to reconsider or even reinterpret our view of development and to act in local, national and international contexts.

Darja Mazi-Leskovar

¹ Later referred to as PRw.

² All quotes refer to <https://www.icmica-miic.org/index.php?lang=en>

³ <http://www.journalism.org/2016/07/07/trust-and-accuracy/>

NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

GERMANY - VkdL

Truth and Tolerance Instead of Indifference

122nd General Assembly of the VkdL, June 22 - 24, 2018, in Mainz

The focus of the general assembly was put on the topic "truth and tolerance" and the conference took place in the FAVORITE Park Hotel in Mainz from June 22nd to 24th, 2018. The members and delegates discussed the topic in a constructive way.

VkdL pleads for more differentiation and appreciation

In his lecture on June 23rd, 2018, Prof. Dr. Christoph Boehr points out how fatal it is if a person does not hold anything to be true, does not accept binding truths, but at the same time calls for tolerance of his own opinion. "He who does not have any convictions he believes to be true, deprives himself of the capability to tolerate differing convictions of others. He is not capable of tolerance as tolerance is not the same as indifference. Tolerance is a form of respect for others. Only if one knows and accepts a binding truth, can he tolerate other convictions, which means to accept them in full and discuss them without any contempt. But if somebody does not accept any truths for himself, he cannot accept differing opinions as these are as invalid as his own. In such cases we talk of a multitude of equally valid opinions: **reciprocal indifference**. In case these equally valid opinions do not lay claim to truth, they can exist side by side, they can be discussed and they can fight one another. In a democracy the majority then decides what is accepted as the truth. This of course implies that this present truth can soon become supported only by a minority. Tolerance means something completely different: **It means to accept every human being in his dignity and his quest for truth, even if his opinions are somewhat unreasonable**. To deprive someone of his right to truth, however, would mean to despise his being different and to regard his opinion as a mere spleen." (cit. Dr. Christoph Boehr)

Roswitha Fischer, chairwoman of the VkdL, stresses the importance of binding truths especially in the field of education: "A teacher swimming with the tide and tolerating everything will not earn the pupils' respect nor will he be up to the standards of his profession".

Only clear points of view promote discussion. Even if it is heated, it practices tolerance actively. Without meaningful discussions this goal cannot be achieved. Education cannot be established without proper content.

AUSTRIA - VCL

Migration and integration by means of schools

In her editorial in VCL-NEWS 3/2018 the president of VCL deals with questions of integration by means of schools, particularly with regard to children with migration background.

The questions and problems which arise especially in the sphere of formation and education concerning the topics of migration and integration, therefore, are on the one hand caused by the large number of asylum-seekers during the last years (sc. 2015 88.340, 2016 42.285, 2017 24.735), most asylum claimants coming from Syria, as can be ascertained from the integration report just published. The countries of origin following in numbers are Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Iraq, and Nigeria.

On the other hand particularly those people with migration background who live in Austria as second or third generation immigrants often cause urgent questions of integration, as these people obviously couldn't successfully be integrated (or were not ready to be integrated) and "land" in Austria completely.

Readiness for formation and education and knowledge of German

Mastering the language of teaching is indispensable for the success of a child at school. Thus it is more dramatic when the percentage of children speaking some other colloquial language than German is above 50 % in Vienna and above 25 % in Austria.

In Vienna there are New Middle Schools in which their percentage is above 80 %, sometimes even above 90 %. Already in the kindergarten there exist possibilities to promote the children's knowledge of German which can be built up. The special German classes introduced from the school year 2018/19 onwards are meant to make these children by means of intensive training in German fit to follow the regular teaching well as soon as possible.

It's however sobering that the delay in formation and learning which the children with migration background already have when entering school can hardly be made up. "Very many children with Turkish migration background have already been left behind in their educational career before they make their first steps in a school." That's what Gerhard Riegler explains in an article which is especially dedicated to children showing particularly great delays in performance at national and international tests.

It must be an objective to heighten the parents' appreciation of good education and formation of their children and to make them much more responsible as partners of the schools. Moreover, it is "very obvious that youngsters with migration background are grossly underrepresented in higher secondary schools and essentially more often leave the education system already after their obligation for school attendance has ended" (National Report on Education in Austria 2015).

The “duty to education up to 18” introduced in the meantime also tries to meet the fact that about 6 % of the pupils after their obligatory school attendance don’t attend any higher secondary school or training. With youngsters with migration background that number is almost double as high, 11,2 %.

Gertraud SALZMANN

FRANCE- CdEP

Learning in France in the 21th century

In 2018, school currently deals with many subjects/

– Senior high school reformation and specialized teaching: a modified final exam (‘baccalaureat’) to valorize non-stop working and lead towards success at university level. A high school which offers closer support and more choices. A final high school exam made of sustained checking (40%) and final exams (60%).

– in junior high school learning better in order to succeed better by creating moments of personalized tutoring for each pupil, so that social inequalities are lessened.

– And in primary school, which comes first for the ministry, many measures are taken: first grade with 12 pupils, national evaluations in first and 2nd grade, compulsory schooling at age 3, revised programmes framed by progressivity reference marks..., - teachers’ trainings about cycle 3 (4th & 5th grade and junior high school 1st grade), trainings for all teachers in cycles 2&3 about basic subjects (maths & French).

Reports given to the minister in November 2017 and February 2018 brought these upheavals up.

• «The learning society»¹, by F.TADDEI, C.BECCHETTI-BIZOT, G.HOUZE, which advocates to intensify research to make education progress, to promote professional development inside a cultural change, a numerical ecosystem to learn, progress & share and to cooperate on all scales to learn better (collective brainpower).

• «21 measures to teach maths»

‘«21 measures to teach maths»² as well as the 2015 TIMSS³ inquiry which foreshadows the PISA⁴ study, and offers an outline of results in maths & science. Results in France are worrying, especially in 3rd grade, with pupils below the European average marks. In France this strongly criticizes our idealistic & intellectual teaching which develops ‘an access to abstraction, to symbolization, to rigour’, whereas it is teaching applied to reality and concrete situations which is used in other countries.

France is the country where pupils are the ‘most stressed’ and feel the least supported by their teachers (corpus attitudes towards school’ of the inquiry). The fear of a ‘wrong answer’ inhibits them & they’d rather not answer than make a mistake. The mistake status has to be revised!

They don’t trust themselves and the connection with what they have to learn is very little effective. Which is more, the French educational system is a champion as far as inequalities are concerned, meaning that the relationship between performance and the original social class of the pupils is part of the strongest in the OCDE. Succeeding becomes even less and less possible for the pupil who doesn’t come from a favoured social class.

Then the PISA report confirms it is necessary to raise the cultural level of the whole of the French population. Two plans of actions are supposed to answer this aim: ‘all mobilized for a country of readers’ and the ‘a choir in each school’ project. Each teacher sets his heart on restoring a confidence in school and in apprenticeship in all families who are the furthest from school culture.

How can we put up with a situation which makes French school an uneven school where social origin plays such an important part in educational success? We want to improve our school so that it can work more efficiently to help all pupils to succeed. It is because the fight against inequalities is an absolute priority that we must innovate and build a more efficient and fairer school. Our posted ambition ‘the school of confidence’ daily gathers all actors and users of the educational system in this dynamics.

Sylvie PAQUET,

Inspector of National Education

Notes :

¹ Report about research & development of education all along your life, presented on March 17th 2017 by Catherine Becchetti-Bizot, Guillaume Houzel, François Taddei

² Report presented on February 12th 2018 by Cedric villani, Es-sone representative, and Charles Torossian, Education General Inspector. http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/Fevrier/19/0/Rapport_Villani_Torossian_21_mesures_pour_enseignement_des_mathematiques_896190.pdf

³ TIMSS: Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study

⁴ PISA : Programme for International Student Assessment

Employability and Orientation. An idea of a University

On October 19, 2018, the National Congress of AIDU, the Italian Association of University Professors, was held at the Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies on the topic of "Employability and Orientation. An idea of a University". University professors gave orientation on the chosen topic taking into account the training urgencies to which the University tries to respond. Recall that AIDU is the largest Italian association of Catholic and non-Catholic university professors and researchers, belonging to more than 90 universities spread over all Italy.

The conference was opened by S.E. Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe, Archbishop of Naples, who showed ample willingness to assist and support the association initiatives. During the day, reflection focused on the need to redefine the role of university professors with a view to greater presence in society. The internal structure of the interventions has made it possible to highlight the relationship between university orientation and the world of work, with particular attention to both the problem of youth unemployment and the emergence of new types of work. What should be the role of the University at this time, and of Catholic teachers in particular? How can the university help to rethink the meaning of orientation for students in terms of employment? What new tools must universities and teachers have to adopt? These were the questions dealt with by the speakers: Monsignor Mariano Crociata, president of the Episcopal Commission for Catholic Education, School and University of the CEI, with a vivid recollection of the figures of John Henry Newman and Romano Guardini; Ernesto Diaco, director of the National Office for Catholic Education, School and University of the CEI, with a reference to the Synod of Bishops underway in the Vatican on «Youth, faith and vocational discernment»; Alin Tat, president of SIESC, with an enhancement of the relationship between AIDU and SIESC, with respect to the statutory association objectives.

The morning sessions, coordinated by Sandra Chistolini, gave ample space to great personalities of the Catholic world with three interventions on Pope Paul VI and Monsignor Oscar Romero, canonized on October 14, 2018 by Pope Francis, and on Aldo Moro. The moments of in-depth study were presented by Fr Angelo Maffei, president of the Paul VI Institute and teacher at the Theological Faculty of Northern Italy on «Paul VI and the University»; by the RAI journalist Giorgio Balzoni, who presented the experience of «Aldo Moro university professor»; by Alfonso Barbarisi, professor of the University of Naples, with «The testimony of Monsignor Romero».

The work of the afternoon, coordinated by Simona Arduini, welcomed the reports of professors Antonio La Spina on «Employability, Labor Policy and University», Gian Cesare Romagnoli

on «University Ordinances and Employability», Gilberto Antonelli on «Jobs for graduates and structural changes in the surveys of Alma Laurea and in comparative studies» examined scientific, political and social concepts and problems. Finally, Gabriella Serra, national female president of FUCI, the Italian Catholic University Federation, intervened on «Where? Let's build our future! ». From the conclusions of the outgoing president Roberto Cipriani and the new president Alfonso Barbarisi elements of appreciation for the AIDU activity emerged. During the Conference the «Humboldt-Newman» Award, Edition 2018, was awarded to Luciano Corradini, founder of AIDU, former vice-president of SIESC and a significant personality in the world of Italian and European universities.

Sandra CHISTOLINI

Professeure de Pédagogie générale et sociale,
Università degli Studi Roma Tre e
Vice Presidente Nazionale de l'AIDU - Italie

The UCIIM commitment to a School Pastoral

As part of the collaboration with the school office of the CEI, UCIIM has set up a commission with the aim of building Guidelines for School Pastoral Care and has set up a specific area on the national website, where it is possible to consult documents and interventions. Among these, some food for thought and suggestions from the chairman of the commission, the advisor emeritus Anna Bisazza Madeo, of which we present a brief excerpt.

1. What do we mean by pastoral care? A science or a practice?

The first term refers to pastoral theology, which is a scientific reflection on the processes of building up the Church within history; the second indicates the action of the ecclesial community for the realization of God's plan in time. It is in this sense that we are committed as secular Christifideles

2. Pastoral care «towards» the teachers or pastoral care for the students?

The school's pastoral care is primarily aimed at Catholic, secular teachers, above all at those in public schools.

These teachers are NOT catechists / evangelizers; they are obliged to fulfill their duty respecting the laws, the students and their colleagues, testifying the beauty of their faith with their high cultural, methodological and moral profile.

The teacher is responsible for the cultural, moral and civic growth of his pupils. Teachers have to offer the best of their educational art with the aim of bringing pupils to full development and directing them to the transcendent. The apostolate is exercised teaching the Truth, via the correctness of behavior, the use of empathy, dialogue, ...

Any aspect of knowledge can be deepened and presented in a Christian spirit so that it can promote intellectual, moral and critical growth, appropriately adapted to the age of the students. The apostolate to the students can also extend beyond the classrooms with speech, advice, organization or participation in student social activities.

One can also think of an apostolate to colleagues, with debates on social issues, on pedagogical, legislative and school life problems, with professional assistance to young colleagues.

Finally, we must not neglect action towards the legal systems and school politics with careful and sensitive supervision of the concrete reality of the school in all its fundamental, organizational, participatory aspects, in order to achieve an effective service for social growth.

The political aspect refers to the principles of justice, equality of opportunity, freedom, democracy, respect for the person, overcoming arid bureaucracies and technicalities.

ROMANIA - AGRU

Some information on education in Romania

In Romania, compulsory education from 6 to 16 years of age can be provided in public, private or religious institutions or even at home. Educational alternatives (Step by Step, Waldorf, Freinet, Montessori etc.) complete the classical education system.

General structures of Romanian education

Education is organized in levels and forms of education: normal frequency - daytime and evening classes - reduced frequency; in streams and profiles (general stream: humanistic and natural sciences profiles; technological stream: technical profile, services, natural resources and environment protection; vocational stream: military, theological, sports, arts, and pedagogical profiles).

The classes of about 30 students are formed according to their age.

The management team is led by a director assisted by one or two assistants.

Teachers teach everything in primary education, apart from foreign languages, religion and PES.

In middle school and high school the teachers give courses for one or more subjects.

Each teacher gives at least 18 lessons per week. Each class has a head teacher who accompanies the students in their educational development, organizes extracurricular activities, and is responsible for the relationship with parents.

a. **Pre-school education** is organized in three levels:

the small ones: 3-4 years old, the middle ones: 4-5 years old, the big ones: 5-6 years old.

b. **Compulsory education** is provided in secondary middle schools and lower grades of high schools. It consists of three levels:

- primary education from 6 to 11 years, from preparatory class to the 4th grade

- middle school from 11 to 15 years old, from the 5th to 8th grade

At the end of the lower grades of secondary education students take a national examination whose results and the marks obtained during the four school years determine the continuation of compulsory schooling, either in a high school/grammar school or in vocational education.

- lower secondary education in high schools/grammar schools, 9th and 10th grade

c. **Upper secondary education** is provided in high schools/grammar schools, 11th and 12th grade.

At the end of secondary schools, students take a single national exam, the baccalaureate, organized in two sessions (summer - autumn) and comprising two groups of tests (language and informatics skills, written tests). This diploma allows access to tertiary education or further studies in post-secondary schools for a professional vocation.

Vocational education is provided within the technological streams. Vocational training, which lasts 3 years and is an integral part of compulsory schooling, is provided to young people aged 14 to 17, who after exams obtain the Certificate of Professional Qualification, Level 3. They can then enter the world of work or continue their studies in high schools/grammar schools, evening classes, and then take the baccalaureate.

d. **Tertiary education** is since the academic year 2005/2006 organised according to the structure adopted in Bologna, 3-2-3: three years for the bachelor's degree, two years for the master's degree and three years for the doctorate.

Public and private universities co-exist in the Romanian education system. Private universities demand fees, in public universities there are both free and paid places.

Notes

In primary schools, the evaluation system uses qualifiers: Very Good/ Good/ Satisfactory/ Insufficient.

In middle schools and high schools/grammar schools, marks are between 1 and 10, the lowest mark is 1.

A class is repeated if in 3 subjects the averages are below 5.

The structure of the school year

The school year includes 168 school days (34 weeks), divided into 2 semesters.

Christmas holidays, semester holidays, spring holidays, great holidays.

Pupils in kindergartens and primary schools enjoy a one-week holiday around All Saints' Day.

Freedom of religion in state schools

A former judge of the Slovenian Constitutional Court, Mr Miroslav Mozetič, wrote an interesting article in the magazine called Vzgoja (Education). The main topic of his discussion is how the right to freedom of conscience (freedom of religion) in connection with the principle of separation of church and state in the state-funded Slovenian schools is presented.

In his opinion the articles of the Organisation and Financing of the Education Act (ZOFVI) on the autonomy of the school field that pertain to the ban of confessional activities in state-funded kindergartens and schools are a reflection of indifference and exclusion of the religious needs of citizens. This law also does not guarantee the right of parents to educate their children in accordance to their own religious beliefs and consequently it also does not provide plurality.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia does not guarantee public means neither to individuals nor religious groups for the realisation of their right of freedom of religion.

If the state takes into consideration the view that it will not make the school premises available to religious groups, this should be executed strictly and avoid all the programmes that are not involved with education. The principle of separation of church and state prohibits the state to identify with a single religion or other belief (atheism included) and commands equal relationship to all religions and beliefs.

Though the state does not deal with the questions of faith, it should never the less admit the importance of religion for individuals and consequently make active conditions for realisation of this human right.

Mr Mozetič is convinced that it is possible to organise religious education in school premises and in that way guarantee full realisation of freedom of conscience and the right of parents to educate children in accordance with their beliefs and at the same time be in accordance with the principles of neutrality, plurality and equality. At the same time the separation rule of religious neutrality of the state is not questioned.

Summary of the article »Freedom of Religion and State School« by Mr Miroslav Mozetič from the magazine Vzgoja (Education), March 2018, Nr 77

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.

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