

Yamauchi Lecture
Education: Arenas of Responsibility
November 9, 2008

Introduction

I have a friend who talks about special moments in life as “the penny dropped” experiences. It is the “Aha” moment, the “I got it!” That happened to me several years ago when I attended a meeting at the UN. My religious community is an NGO member of the UN and chose me to be a delegate to the international UN-NGO meeting in New York. The more than 2,000 delegates from NGO groups all over the world were externally diverse: we spoke different languages and represented a multitude of countries with distinct cultures; each was dressed in their country’s attire. But, once we met in small groups, I discovered how very much alike we were in our aspirations and desires for our own people and the peoples of the world. Looking out over the Hudson River, the “penny dropped” when I realized how dissimilar we all were and yet how very much alike we were on a deep level. The meeting focused on the 8 Millennial Development Goals that UN member countries had adopted and promised to fulfill by 2015. This NGO meeting focused on the second goal to “achieve universal primary education” by 2015. The experience of sitting in the assembly hall of the UN where UN delegates sat, of using headsets for translations of each speaker’s talks, of learning more about the work of the UN and of its struggles, continues to broaden my views of education and global relationships even today. I would like to share the rich challenge it provided for me. My goal, then, is to take a new look at education in the light of our “globalized world.” To do this I intend to look at three arenas that influence education and intellectual development: Personal, Local, and International arenas.

First Arena: Personal Development through Education

For those of you who are students, I ask, “why are you here at Loyola University?” “Why are you spending thousands of dollars, years of your life-time, and semesters of struggle to get an education?” Oh, yes, you want to be educated, to get a good job, to learn something about yourself and life and maybe ten more reasons. I wonder how many of these answers primarily boil down to “making money.” I want to suggest there are both down-to-earth practical reasons for getting an education, and there are more lofty reasons that argue for education as an end in itself. What do I believe about education?

People are born learners and are naturally curious. From our earliest days we reach out to touch, to see, to explore our new universe; our reaching out never ceases because we want to know. Well known Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner, believed that God is in the questions. Questions are holy – they are holy movements for they disclose our desire to know more than is obvious, and they reveal our eternal desires, our inclination and drive for the eternal, our desire for the “more than” We can develop our questions about life and our desire to learn, or we can stifle our curiosity. Our drive to know, our curiosity, is a call from within ourselves reaching out for a response. Education is an

appropriate response to our curiosity driven nature. H. Richard Niebuhr wrote the classic text, The Responsible Self, to illustrate the need for responses that are morally appropriate for the person and society. Education can be an appropriate response to our nature.

1. Education That Forms Intelligence

“Educere” – to bring up, to lead out – is the Latin root word for Education. The purpose of education is to enable the learner to lead out his or her unique gifts of intellect, imagination, skill and inclination. The mental landscape of each individual is incomparable to any other person’s: what one person sees or hears is missed by another, what shines with possibility for one is viewed as an obstacle by another. Personal gifts lie in the very angle or perspective each person takes on an event, a news item, a relational encounter, or on a phenomenon of nature. We appreciate some of our personal gifts because they energize us and are valued by others, but they can also become our burden. We are driven by some intellectual curiosities and do not rest with answers accepted by society – we drive for deeper answers. Others may criticize us for our insights and we may be rejected for them. Our intellectual uniqueness can classify us as stupid, brilliant, simpletons, crazy or genius. Gifts are a responsibility to hold with care and appreciation by us first and foremost. In 1979, the psychologist, Jean Piaget, wrote, “If the aim of intellectual training is to form the intelligence rather than to stock the memory, and to produce intellectual explorers rather than mere erudition, then traditional education is manifestly guilty of a grave deficiency.”¹ I, as a teacher, and others schooled as I have been, are guilty of stocking students’ memories rather than encouraging questions. It is uncomfortable to have a student challenge institutions, concepts, and thought processes. Such challenges can feel like an affront to our authority or can present differences we do not appreciate. Interestingly, this is also true of fellow students who feel annoyed by questioners in their classes. The curious person is the mental explorer who lives with questions and seeks for new answers as learning and life experiences multiply.

2. Education That Pursues Truth

Critical education questions the knowledge, society, and experiences of students. “Education can socialize students into critical thought or into dependence on authority, that is, into autonomous habits of mind or into a passive habit of following authorities, waiting to be told what to do and what things mean.”² This is one route to education but there are other more profitable routes. One such route is the pursuit of truth.

In his recent visit to the US, Pope Benedict XVI spoke of truth when he addressed the administrators of Catholic educational institutions. The Pope told them that the Church’s mission involves her in humanity’s struggles to arrive at truth. We as human beings are not only curious, but we are driven by the desire to know truth, not half-truths, or temporary bits of knowledge that are true for now. No, we want ultimate, unchanging

¹ Piaget, Jean. 1979.

² Shor, Ira. Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 13.

truth. By articulating that kind of truth, the Church serves all members of society by purifying reason and ensuring that it remains open to ultimate truths. “Truth,” says the pope, “means more than knowledge: knowing the truth leads us to discover the good. Truth speaks to the individual in his or her entirety, inviting us to respond with our whole being.”³ The Pope believes we are facing a “crisis of truth” which is rooted in a “crisis of faith” that requires formation relevant to education on all levels. Benedict acknowledges that we have diligently engaged the intellect of the young but perhaps have neglected the will so that “freedom is being distorted. Freedom is not an opting out. It is an opting in – a participation in Being itself. Hence turning away from God can never attain authentic freedom. Such a choice would ultimately disregard the very truth we need in order to understand ourselves.”⁴ Education that leads to truth is a work of “intellectual charity.” The pursuit of truth leads to the pursuit of compassionate love. Another journey in education is to give more reins to the intellect’s gift of the imagination.

3. Education that Develops the Imagination

This summer I visited Disney World, a place I once spurned – I was never drawn to Mickey Mouse and Disney’s cast of characters. However, I needed a type of vacation that was less mentally structured so I settled on a child’s imaginary paradise: Disney World. There I soon learned how biased some of my views were. Disney’s massive excursion into mythical characters was more than a fascination with Mickey Mouse. I was struck by the sheer play of imagination in all aspects of the theme park. Besides finding Mickey and Minnie Mouse roving the grounds, I saw live animals from all over the world in the Animal Kingdom, rides that delighted people of all ages, and international arenas that took the visitor to a foreign country for a short time. Epcot featured the Innoventions exhibit, where a sign read, if your senses can take it in, your imagination can grow new ideas. That is what I would like to do in education! Imagination is a mental gift that thrives in children but too often gets curbed as they mature. I would guess Walt Disney’s imagination was not squelched, but was allowed to roam, jump, leap and dive all over the world! In coming back from Disney World to the university I had the other extreme of experiences! The university orders, files, categorizes, systematizes, and publishes proven and well-argued theses. However, I have experienced how exciting and energizing this learning can also be. I wondered if imagination is given enough play in academia, how our academic programs would change. The arts can release the imagination to open new perspectives and identify alternatives. “. . .With the arts, people can make a space for themselves and fill it with intimations of freedom and presence.”⁵ Maxine Greene writes,

To tap into imagination is to become able to break with what is supposedly fixed and finished, objectively and independently real. It is to see beyond what the imaginer has called normal or ‘common-sensible’ and to carve out new orders in experience. Doing so, a person may become freed to glimpse what might be, to

³ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Administrators

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ ?Greene, p. 28 (1983, p. 129).

form notions of what should be and what is not yet. And the same person may, at the same time, remain in touch with what presumably *is*.⁶

Since I teach theology, I let my imagination ramble and I wondered what the Church would look like if we really imagined the presence of the Kingdom. Who would be in the Kingdom? Would some of those folks we dislike be in the Kingdom? Would all of the Church institutions and structures exist, or would there be others that show a shift of emphasis? What would our well-argued doctrines from centuries past sound like if today's generation applied them to contemporary life? Or, would these questions be futile because we are afraid to imagine how the Kingdom, our churches, doctrines and truth could be viewed? Is fear stifling imagination in academia and in ecclesial structures?

The argument for free flowing imagination must be countered by reality: education should prepare people for life. Schools are, after all, places, however, where each generation is socialized into the life and values of the nation. David Trend believes that education is a profoundly political process through which citizens are socialized to recognize and validate state power.⁷ In this process, students learn about differences and democracy, experience the force of culture and learn to be contributors to culture. Education is a socializing experience that helps make the people who make society. This is achieved through the subject matter, learning process, classroom discourse, governance structure, and the environment of the school. John Gardner said, "Education that is minimally adequate has to teach students the knowledge, values, and skills they need to function effectively as citizens of the pluralistic U.S. society. There are requirements, not voluntary choices, for all students."⁸ To this end, students are pressured to learn and be receptive to what is presented by professors, textbooks, and educational media. They are to copy an external model and be intellectually obedient. Ira Shor says, "Education can socialize students into critical thought or into dependence on authority, that is, into autonomous habits of mind or into passive habits of following authorities, waiting to be told what to do and what things mean."⁹ Favoring a model of education that empowers students, Shor goes on to argue that to have an "empowering education invites students to become skilled workers and thinking citizens who are also change agents and social critics."¹⁰ Education for empowerment is not something done by the teachers to the students for their own good, but is something students co-develop for themselves.

4. Education That Empowers

Imagination and empowering education set in contrast two ways of being educated: education that socializes people to fit into society and its values, or education

⁶ Greene, Maxine. Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995, 19.

⁷ Trend, David. The Crisis of Meaning in Culture and Education. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

⁸ Gay, Geneva. Culturally Responsive Teaching. (New York: Teachers College Press: 2000); John Gardner, 1984, 20.

⁹ Shor, Ira. Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 13.

¹⁰ Shor, 16.

that incorporates students' own dreams and agendas. Here the teachers are the mediators between what has to be learned to live in society, and learning to follow their dreams. This presupposes students are actively engaged in their education so they accept and perform based on themes, texts, tests, rules for speaking, grading systems and learning processes that keep both foci in view. Gardner says this type of education invites a student into a process of "perpetual self-discovery, perpetual reshaping to realize one's best self, to be the person one could be. It includes not only the intellect but the emotions, character, and personality...not only surface but deeper layers of thought and action...adaptability, creativeness, and vitality...[and] ethical and spiritual growth."¹¹ To be fully engaged in this kind of education requires both students and academic personnel to answer these questions, "Who do I want to become?" and "What type of citizen do we want for the future good of our society?" John Gardner (1984) says excellence in education is a process of "perpetual self-discovery, perpetual reshaping to realize one's best self, to be the person one could be. It includes not only the intellect but the emotions, character, and personality...not only surface but deeper layers of thought and action...adaptability, creativeness, and vitality...[and] ethical and spiritual growth."¹² This implies that both students and faculty are future oriented – they have a vision of the type of person that would best serve society in the future and the kind of society that is to be shaped. Where to we go for such a model? I believe we do have models, models of heroes in society, models the Church provides and persons of faith know.

A final point about the first arena – if education is to foster the gifts of an individual, then education is about developing a basic theological principle that the person is a gift in herself or himself. Catholic theological thinking holds that a person must be developed to meet its ends, not only economic ends. Pope Paul VI says that development must

.... promote the good of every man and of the whole man....what we hold important is man, each man and each group of men, and we even include the whole of humanity. In the design of God, every man is called upon to develop and fulfill himself, for every life is a vocation. At birth, everyone is granted, in germ, a set of aptitudes and qualities for him to bring to fruition. Their coming to maturity, which will be the result of education received from the environment and personal efforts, will allow each man to direct himself toward the destiny intended for him by his Creator. Endowed with intelligence and freedom, he is responsible for his fulfillment as he is for his salvation. He is aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate him and those with whom he lives, but each one remains, whatever be these influences affecting him, the principal agent of his own success or failure. By the unaided effort of his own intelligence and his will, each man can grow in humanity, can enhance his personal worth, and become more a person.¹³

We become more a person as we realize God's desire to reveal God's self to us through our own nature. In that realization, we are drawn to pursue our innate desire to

¹¹ Gardner, p. 15

¹² Gay, 15. John Gardner (1984, 124).

¹³ Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, #14, #15, 1967.

know Truth. This provides the context for all human inquiry into the meaning of life. Through the life of faith, truth becomes incarnate and reason becomes truly human, and capable of directing our will along the path of freedom.

The theological tradition believes in educating the whole person, a concept understood in the phrase, “authentic human development.” The Church in America has a long history of educating the whole person from its early roots in the Catholic school system. Through the early schools of the 1800’s education was an important mission of the Church that provided for millions of children whose immigrant parents arrived to establish a new life in America. They valued formal education for their children, but also the education of the whole person that Catholic schools provided through its inclusion of religion in the curriculum and through character and moral formation. “Throughout history education has been seen as a force for transformation,” writes Lakes and Carter.¹⁴ Education was the force that established our country and still is the force that forges our future. Our foremothers and forefathers knew well that education begins with shaping a person but moves into shaping a nation.

When education is viewed through the lens of responsibility, it takes an outward thrust. We want to share what we know, we want to put it into practice; we are driven to test our ideas with real life. *Educo* means to lead out. Education becomes learning for the sake of others, not just for the self. *Educo* is the effort to lead out our own gifts through education but also the gifts of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Our responsibility is a responsibility with and for others. This takes us to the second arena of education: the local and national levels of responsibility for education.

Second Arena: Local and National

Education is about the development of the person, but as I noted, it must prepare a citizen for membership in a society. Citizens ought to be contributing members of the society and be able to care for themselves. Education is also political in that it forms the person in the values of the polis and the culture of a given society. The values of the political tenor of the society are taught and upheld in educational institutions.

In the second arena of responsibility and education, two elements come into play: education to support oneself and those for whom we are responsible, and secondly, education as service to others. Economic implications of education are particularly significant on this level. The bishops of the U.S. issued a document on the economy called, “Economic Justice for All.” Here they address the link between education and poverty and the economic ends of education. They write,

All of society should make a much stronger commitment to education for the poor. Any long-term solution to poverty in this country must pay serious attention to education, public and private, in school and out of school. Lack of adequate education, especially in the inner city setting, prevents many poor people from

¹⁴ Lakes, Richard D. and Carter, Patricia A, ed. Globalizing Education for Work. (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2004).

escaping poverty. In addition, illiteracy, a problem that affects tens of millions of Americans, condemns many to joblessness or chronically low wages... Since poverty is fundamentally a problem of powerlessness and marginalization, the importance of education as a means of overcoming it cannot be overemphasized.¹⁵

“At all levels of education we need to improve the ability of our institutions to provide the personal and technical skills that are necessary for participation not only in today’s labor market but also in contemporary society.”¹⁶

Education and Potential Earnings

In the second arena of responsibility and education, we find the link between education and economic well-being. Certainly local and national studies seem to verify this. “Economists estimate that if America raises student skills closer to that of European nations, the U.S. economy would grow by an additional 5% over 30 years resulting in an extra \$1.5 trillion in 2037 alone – more than triple current U.S. spending on K-12 public education.”¹⁷ Former Labor Secretary William Brock heads the New Commission on the Skills of the American Work Force, created to report on the state of U.S. education. Brock says we have to begin with admitting we have a problem in American education. “In the last 25 years, spending has arisen 240% while performance has barely changed. Only 68% of students graduate from high school, and many states require only eighth-grade skills in reading and math to get a diploma.”¹⁸ Brock believes early-childhood education, better teachers, development of critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and teamwork are solutions to our educational impasse. He says, “Education is the key to better jobs, higher incomes, and greater growth in what has become an extremely competitive global economy. Nothing is more important than education. Absolutely nothing.”¹⁹

Any college job placement center can supply data on the amount of income a graduate can expect for a given job. In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education found that on the average people who completed 9th to 11th grade education could expect to earn \$19,851 yearly, high school graduates could earn \$33,779 and college graduates \$59,048. Other studies give similar estimations of earnings. The Fall 20002 issue of *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* presented a study of synthetic work-life earnings based on the highest level of educational attainment. Over a lifetime, those who had some high school education could earn \$1.0 million while college graduates could earn \$2.1 million.²⁰

Thurow wrote

The high earnings of college graduates compared to high school graduates is [thus] based not on their greater stock of knowledge or skills (human capital) but

¹⁵ “Economic Justice for All,” #203, 1986.

¹⁶ Ibid. #205.

¹⁷ Brock, William. Interview for *Parade* magazine, August, 2008.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “More Education Means Higher Earnings—for Life,” *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* 46 No. 3 Fall, 2002, 48.

on the fact that employers use academic degrees as a device to screen out those they expect will require higher training costs.²¹

Poverty

Minimal levels of education often lead to poverty and insecurity. Poverty wipes out security in many areas of life in terms of food, shelter and clothing. The Campaign for Human Development (CHD) notes that poverty breeds insecurity so tomorrow is a place of frightening uncertainty for the poor.²² In the United States, poverty is found in both urban and rural areas; and is also growing in suburban areas as well. Census data of recent years shows the increase of poverty in the USA. The 2000 census revealed that on the average, 34.2% of U.S. citizens lived in poverty at least two months a year. By 2002 the number living in severe poverty increased from 600,000 to 14.1 million. In 2003, approximately 35.8 million people lived below the poverty line, or about 12.5% of the population. That was up from 34.5 million, or 12.1% in 2002.²³ The growing rates of poverty are found in the Midwest, although the American South has the highest overall rate of poverty at 13.8%. The South also has the largest number of people living in poverty: 40.6%, compared with 35.6% of all people. Each year the government calculates the basic needs for modern American living: food, shelter, clothing, health care, and transportation.²⁴ Following the financial guidelines set at the poverty line, government assistance is available, but is often insufficient for families to survive. Consequently, “food insecurity” continues to increase.

Despite numerous government efforts, the disparity between the “haves” and the “have-nots” is growing. Bailey asserts that massive wealth (control over assets and income) in this country is due largely to public policy, with significant institutional support given in public policy; conversely, the non-wealthy do not have institutional supports as a matter of public policy.²⁵ The rich are beneficiaries of direct expenditures such as tax deductions, tax credits, preferential tax rates, tax deferrals, and exclusion from taxation.

The top 20 percent of households earn about 56 percent of the nation’s income – but command 83 percent of our wealth. The bottom 60 percent, the majority of the country, earns 23 percent of the nation’s income – but owns less than 5 percent of

²¹ Ibid., 403.

²² “A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out” from Poverty USA – Catholic Campaign for Human Development, July 6, 2004. www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/edcenter/adulted.htm.

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, *Poverty in the United States: 2002, Current Population Reports*, September, 2003.

²⁴ The U.S. Census Bureau provides data on Earnings by Occupation and Education. As expected, workers without a high school diploma are on the low end of the income scale while those earning advanced degrees earn significantly more. See www.census.gov/hhes/income/earnings/call11aboth.html.

²⁵ James P. Bailey, “Asset Development and the Poor,” *Journal of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 24, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2004, 61.

the wealth. And the bottom 40 percent earns 10 percent of national income but owns less than 1 percent of the wealth.²⁶

As I mentioned, a second thrust of education is service to others. A heartening phenomenon is developing among our young adults and other professionals: they are donating at least two years of their lives to respond to the needs of others in society. These people are assuming responsibility beyond educating themselves to educating children in some of the country's most needy schools. These young people are serving in several organizations that recruit from the best of college graduates to teach and work in the poorest areas of this country including this city. These groups include Teach for America, Teach NOLA, Peace Corps, and AmeriCorps. From 36,000 applicants, Teach for America chose nine LU spring graduates from among 3,000 accepted into the program. This group has seen a 36% increase in applications compared to a year ago. Young people in Teach for America will teach for two years in our country's low income public schools. Eight of the nine LU graduates are teaching in N.O; they joined the 75 new Teach for America teachers who are working in N.O. this year. Teach for America seeks to close the achievement gap between schools in affluent and poor areas. About 250 new Corps members are working in New Orleans this year. The competition for TeachNOLA was fierce also. One hundred recruits were chosen from the 2,450 applicants. Students want to "pay back," to make a difference in a city that is rebuilding its educational system. In addition, applications for the Peace Corps are up by about 14% this year with about 13,000 applicants expected by the end of 2008. This may be due to schools requiring community involvement. Service learning and giving is now part of who this generation is.

The second arena of responsibility through education of others, reaches beyond local and national boundaries. The momentum to learn and educate now moves to an international movement as seen in the work of the Peace Corps. I am calling the third arena of response to the call for education the international level.

Third Arena: International

At the beginning of this talk I spoke of my experience at the UN and meeting members of other NGO groups. The international meeting of NGO groups was convened to support the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the goal on education.

UN and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

At the 2000 millennium, national and international leaders realized the tremendous challenge of providing for people who are not able to sustain themselves. Recognizing the problem is bigger than one country could handle by itself, the UN issued the "United Nations Millennium Declaration" in September 2000. The leaders of nations said, "We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women, and children from the

²⁶ Ray Boshara, "Poverty is More Than a Matter of Income," *New York Times*, September 29, 2002, 13.

abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected.” They pledged to halve worldwide poverty by 2015 through fulfilling eight Millennium Development Goals.²⁷ Two of the goals speak to my concerns this evening: Goal #1 “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,” Goal #2 “Achieve universal primary education.” World leaders found a direct connection between poverty and education in the report they issued in 2002.

The “State of World Population 2002” finds investments in education bring substantial returns. However, the report also notes that although overall access to basic education in many developing countries has risen substantially over the last decade, the poor are still less likely to attend school. In many countries, most children from the poorest households have no schooling. A recent study of 35 countries in West and Central Africa and in South Asia showed that in 10 countries, 50% or more of 15-19 year-olds from poor households never completed grade one.²⁸

Cathy Arata, S.S.N.D. and Ann Scholz, S.S.N.D. who work at the UN, and with international educational efforts argue, “There is no greater need in our world, no greater gift we can offer, than our ministry directed toward education. There is no greater need. In a world where....

- 781 million adults, one in five, lack minimum literacy requirements. Two-thirds of whom are women.²⁹
- Over 100 million school-age children are not in school, and 100 million more will leave school without ever learning to read and write.³⁰
- UNICEF estimates that in the developing world an average of only 43 percent of girls of the appropriate age attend secondary school.³¹

Coupled with the low rate of education is the dire state of poverty in many Third World countries. In this regard, statistics from the UN are disturbing.

²⁷ Eight Millennium Development Goals: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 3) Promote gender equality and empower women, 4) Reduce child mortality, 5) Improve maternal health, 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, 7) Ensure environmental sustainability, 8) Develop a global partnership for development. On September 20, 2004, Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, addressed the UN meeting attended by representatives of 110 countries. The Cardinal reminded the delegates of their millennium commitments to increase public aid for development to 0.7% of each state’s GNP and to reduce the number of poor in the world by half. The delegates signed a declaration pledging \$50 billion annually to cover the Millennium Worldwide Goals.

²⁸ “Millennium Development Goals,” www.developmentgoals.org.

²⁹ Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007, *Strong Foundations: Early childhood Care and Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), Also available from <http://www.efareport.unesco.org>.

³⁰ “The Millennium Development Goals: Snapshots of Progress,” *Stand-Up Campaign 2007*. Available from http://stanagainstpovefrty.org/files/8_Goals.doc; Internet; accessed 2 August 2007.

³¹ *State of the World’s Children 2007*, New York: UNICEF, (2007), 4. Also available from <http://www.unicef.org/sowc/archive/ENGLISH/The20%State%20of%20the%20World%27s%20Children%202007.pdf>.

More than a billion people live on less than US \$1 a day and the target for 2015 is to half the proportion of those in poverty. However, this will still leave 900 million who cannot meet their basic needs in the next generation. Many of these people are living in ‘chronic poverty’ – unable to get above the poverty line for several or many years, sometimes generations.³²

The UN is focusing its efforts on poverty and education to address the misery of millions of people worldwide living in crisis.

Effect of Hunger on Education

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has studied the issue of hunger in many countries. Their extensive work led the IFPRI to report that “Because day-to-day survival has to be their first priority, families often cannot provide children with educational opportunities that could help lift them from destitution. Even if schooling is free, costs such as books and other school materials, clothes, shoes, and transportation can be a heavy economic burden. In many poor families, children must contribute to the household’s livelihood.”³³ Food insecurity, in the developing world, is a dire reality for over 200 million children, under five years of age, who are malnourished.

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reports that worldwide 150 million children still suffer from malnutrition and of those, 120 million school age children are not in school (the majority girls). The reports also state that 6,000 children and young people are infected with HIV/AIDS every day, and that there are almost 13.5 million AIDS orphans around the world. Food insecurity jeopardizes educational efforts all over the world. Food for Education programs such as School Feeding Programs and Food for Schooling Programs combine an educational opportunity with provision of food as an incentive to have children attend school.³⁴ School Feeding Programs provide short-term relief for hunger. At least school feeding programs enable a child to have a meal or a snack and encourages enrollment in school, increases attention span, and attendance rates improve. In some countries, Food for Schooling entitles families to earn grain that can be used to feed all family members or they can sell the grain to buy family necessities. This program is designed to help feed an entire family, not just one child. Educators know that children who are hungry cannot concentrate and perform academically. “Children need food to learn; families need food to make the most of education.”³⁵

In this country, there are thousands of food insecure families. In *Growing Up Empty: the Hunger Epidemic in America*, Loretta Schwartz-Nobel tells of driving in central Philadelphia where she saw two young girls and a boy standing next to a

³² “Chronic Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals,” July 6, 2004. Available [Online] www.unsystem.org/ngls/documents/text/go.between/gb95c.htm

³³ “State of the World’s Children 2003: Child Participation,” www.unsystem.org/ngls/documents/text/go.between/gb95c.htm

³⁴ “Food for Education: Feeding Minds Reduces Poverty,” July 6, 2004, www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib4/ib4_background.asp.

³⁵ Ibid.

dumpster at the side of the road.³⁶ The older girl climbed on the boy's shoulders, leaned forward and grabbed a paper bag. She jumped off the boy's shoulders, gave a discarded chicken leg to her little sister, and then sat down with her brother to devour the rest of the contents. When they realized they were seen, the children ran, thinking they had done something wrong. "They ran because they believed that they were criminals instead of the victims." Children need food for normal physiological development. A child's brain grows so rapidly that by the age of two it has reached 80 percent of its full development. If the child is malnourished it may be somewhat intellectually handicapped for the rest of its life.

"Bread for the World"(BFW) reports that The Harvard Physicians Task Force in 1985 found malnutrition and starvation as they traveled in the United States. They found children and adults suffering from severe malnutrition, even dying from starvation. In June of 2004, BFW reported 842 million hungry people worldwide, up 5 million every year since mid 1990s. In 2002, 34.9 million people in America experienced either hunger or food insecurity. ("Food insecure households are those where access to food is limited or uncertain.")³⁷ Hunger is one of the effects of poverty and its effects on education are evident.

Education

The fact that education is one of the major avenues to eliminate poverty encourages funding of educational programs on the national and international levels. National and international organizations commit themselves to eliminate poverty. The UN is committed to education as stated in the Millennium Development Goals.

Education is development. It creates choices and opportunities for people, reduces the twin burdens of poverty and diseases, and gives a stronger voice in society. For nations it creates a dynamic workforce and well-informed citizens able to compete and cooperate globally – opening doors to economic and social prosperity.³⁸

In addition to the UN, the World Bank supports efforts for education through its contributions to countries struggling with poverty. Education is one of the five corporate priorities of the World Bank because it believes that education is a primary means of reducing poverty. As an international organization, it promotes education through external funding of educational initiatives. The World Bank has mapped out the goal of giving every girl and boy on earth a full free primary education by the year 2015. The hope is to accomplish this goal through country and global partners. This the World Bank

³⁶ Loretta Schwartz-Nobel, *Growing Up Empty: The Hunger Epidemic in America* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2002), 1-5.

³⁷ *No More Jobs*, Vol. 10, No. 4, June, 2004.

³⁸ "Millenium Development Goals: Education," July 6, 2004. Available [Online] www.developmentgoals.org/Education.htm.

does by supporting the UN's Education for All (EFA) commitment and through the World Bank's Fast Track Initiative. The World Bank believes education benefits society and the world as a whole by reducing inequality and promoting sustained economic growth. Their studies show the major benefits of a good quality education:

- It enables people to read, reason, communicate, and make informed choices
- It increases individual productivity, earnings and quality of life; studies show that each year of schooling increases individual earnings by a worldwide average of about 10 percent.
- It greatly reduces female vulnerability to ill health: Studies show that each year of schooling lowers fertility by 10 percent; better educated women have healthier babies and experience lower infant mortality; and better educated girls (and boys) exhibit lower rates of HIV/AIDS infection.
- It is fundamental for the development of democratic societies.
- It is key to building up a highly skilled and flexible workforce – the backbone of dynamic, globally competitive economy.
- It is crucial for creating, applying, and spreading knowledge – and therefore a country's prospects for innovation, comparative advantage, and foreign investment inflows.³⁹

It is the responsibility of national and international leaders to provide educational opportunities for their citizens and thereby enable them to hold jobs and establish a stable economy. Leaders are charged with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of people and ensuring the common good. The efforts of government leaders are geared toward economic development, but not necessarily development of the whole human person. The Church, on the other hand, does strive to develop the whole human person in its educational efforts. Through development of the whole person, people are enabled to grow on all levels, to care for themselves and to participate in shaping their societies.

The Church and Education of the Whole Human Person

Socrates believed that education was not just for gaining knowledge, but also for becoming a good person. Plato, his student, continued the work of Socrates by emphasizing the civic virtues that promote the common good. This understanding is consonant with the motto of many Catholic schools, "Virtus et Scientia," virtue and knowledge.

While Augustine did not coin the phrase, "Virtus et Scientia," he did write of the vices opposing: concupiscence and ignorance. These he saw as consequences of original sin. "Instead of the knowledge Adam enjoyed without having to acquire it, there is our present ignorance from which we are trying laboriously to emerge; instead of mastery

³⁹ "FAQs – Education," Jul6, 2004. Available [Online]
www.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTSITETOOLS/0,contentMDK:20205.

exercised over the flesh by the soul, there is the body's revolt against the spirit."⁴⁰ Virtue and knowledge are evoked as remedies to the effects of original sin. According to the Augustinians, study is to be pursued in the light of Wisdom that is part of the search for Truth. "The search looks towards an ulterior truth which would explain the meaning of life. And it is therefore a search which can reach its end only in reaching the absolute."⁴¹ The Christian encounters Truth in the mystery of Christ. St. Augustine says, "Believe that you may understand; understand that you may believe." Consequently, "Virtus et scientia" are considered integral elements of one's growth in the Christian life.

In the Augustinian spirit, the past president of Notre Dame University, Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, wrote "Education on all levels seeks to draw out the potential good in all of us, to replace error with truth, to move from ignorance and incompetence to knowledge and competence. Beyond knowledge, education should lead to wisdom, which is the foundation of all human good and happiness."⁴² To educate with wisdom as an end is a challenging endeavor.

Education of the whole person confirms the perspective of many contemporary moral theologians. They are concerned about all dimensions of the human being: intellectual, spiritual, physical and psychological. Belgian theologian, Louis Janssens, posited the Personalistic Criterion that embodies this holistic perspective. It determines the morality of an action from a holistic perspective. The Personalistic Criterion maintains that "an action is morally right if it is beneficial to the person adequately considered in himself or herself (i.e., as a unique, embodied spirit) and in his or her relations (i.e., to others, to social structures, to the material world, and to God)."⁴³ Based on the Criterion, we see that intellectual formation through education is but one aspect of human development. Education must include all aspects of human development.

Paul VI understood the importance of educating all aspects of the person when he wrote of human development in his encyclical letter, "Populorum Progressio." ("Progress of Peoples")⁴⁴ Pope Paul VI wrote "...basic education is the primary object of any plan of development." He also states that literacy is "a fundamental factor of social integration, as well as of personal enrichment, and for society it is a privileged instrument of economic progress and of development." (PP #35). Moreover, literacy enables people to be trained for a meaningful type of work in society that enables them to assume real responsibility for directing and shaping their lives. (PP #35) The Pope linked education to development of the whole person when he wrote, "*Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth.* In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every man and of the whole man." (PP #14) The Church's

⁴⁰ "Devotion to Study and the Pursuit of Wisdom" from *Ten Augustinian Values: Introduction*. www.angfrayle.net/values/value4b.html.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C. *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 330.

⁴³ Louis Janssens, "Artificial Inseminations: Ethical Considerations," *Louvain Studies* Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring, 1980): 4.

⁴⁴ Pope Paul VI, "Populorum Progressio," 1967. David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1992).

goal for education is not only to promote economic growth, but growth of the whole person. Rather than placing the burden for education on the government or some institution, the Pope believed that each person shapes his or her own destiny. (PP #15, #20, #65, #70). He said it is not possible to develop people; development is something people have to do for themselves (PP #15, #25, #27). For this reason the encyclical stresses the importance of basic education and literacy which are seen as the keys which enable people to assume responsibility for themselves, their lives, and their world: ‘To be able to read and write, and to get training for a profession, is to regain confidence in oneself...’(PP 35).

At birth, everyone is granted, in germ, a set of aptitudes and qualities for him to bring to fruition. Their coming to maturity, which will be the result of education received from the environment and personal efforts, will allow each man to direct himself toward the destiny intended for him by his Creator. He is aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate him and those with whom he lives, but each one remains, whatever be these influences affecting him, he is the principal agent of his own success or failure. PP#15

Conclusion

In summary, the Church places great value on education. However, it takes the wider focus of educating of all dimensions of human development rather than the narrow focus of supporting education only as a means to economic well-being. What is the “wider focus” or “development of the whole person?” I suggest that the development of wisdom and moral character, and the religious aspects of human growth are avenues of a wider focus for educational endeavors.

Educational Challenge for the Future

UN Millennium Development goals are but one effort to end the poverty, disease and hunger in our world. Education is an important effort to end the cycle of poverty for people and nations. However, the challenge facing workers in this country goes beyond academic degrees and job skills. One must consider development of the whole person. This is a challenge to educational institutions, government programs and to the workplace whose scope is limited to academic or job skills’ preparation. Can these institutions broaden their scope of education to include education of the whole person? Can they enable workers to make a living and build a life?

Jean Piaget once wrote, “The principle goal of education is to create men [women] who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done – men [women] who are creative, inventive and discoverers.” Education of the whole person means encouraging creative visions, supporting growth in moral values, and strengthening character so the person can develop self-esteem, and recognize God given abilities. Education has to reach all three arenas of responsibility: education of the self, education on the local and national level, and finally education on

the international level. Education is service for others and must include the broader vision of human development.