

FOR ETHICS IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT *THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH*¹

INTRODUCTION

What is the “social doctrine of the Church”? For over a century, from ‘*Rerum Novarum*’ (Leo XIII, 1891) to ‘*Caritas in Veritate*’ (Benedict XVI), Catholics have analysed the issues of living in society to denounce inhumane situations, to propose fundamental principles, to define judgement criteria and to suggest concrete guidelines or directives for action. This doctrine is not only still evolving; it also applies in several ways: there is the relationship of a person vis-à-vis the authorities; the economic situation; the issues of peace, and more recently, the relationship between man and nature.

How does this doctrine concern school or education? All Christians are called to make their own contribution to the social doctrine and to humanise social life, and thus also educators, headteachers, school governors and managers. Moreover, the teaching and dissemination of the Church’s social doctrine are part of the evangelisation mission of the Church. And we read in the introduction of ‘*Gravissimum educationis*’ that the Church for which education is a mission “*must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it*”.²

PART ONE

AN INTEGRAL AND SOLIDARY HUMANISM

The title of the introduction of the Compendium is in itself a programme: “*An Integral and Solidary Humanism*”; a humanism that wants to express solidarity with all men, “*travelling companions*” of the Church (n°3). Note that the social doctrine of the Church has a theological starting point: man is loved by God, he is liberated, and free “from” and “to”. This will have consequences for our formation.

We believe in “*whole and complete salvation*” (n°3) that already concerns the present world in which the Christian is called to testify to God. The first message from an educator to the child will thus be: “*you are loved by God*”. We can say it on behalf of a community: “*Discovering that they are loved by God, people come to understand their own transcendent dignity, they learn not to be satisfied with only themselves but to encounter their neighbour in a network of relationships that are ever more authentically human*” (n°4). This is true for all those who are responsible for managing our schools.

This new spirit of Christ is thus necessary to go into human relationships in a liberating way by bringing peace, brotherhood and justice (n°4).

The principle of “*integral and solidary humanism*” will inspire our schools to translate this inspiration into a taking of responsibility through an educational project that mobilises **both** the human person **and** the whole educational community.

I wished to insist on the importance of the basis of this doctrine. The management of a school or a diocesan service to Catholic schools is not hard-line management. It is primarily a vocation to create the conditions for an excellent Christian education, the conditions of human encounter. The question is especially to make a link between the human efforts in education and Christ.

¹ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, USCCB Communications, 4th printing edition, March 2005, 480 p.

² Second Vatican Council, *Declaration on Christian Education “Gravissimum Educationis”*, Introduction.

PART TWO
THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL DOCTRINE

What are the permanent principles constituting the very heart of the Catholic social doctrine and which must lead to the building of a society worthy of man? There is first of all “*the principle of the dignity of the human person, which is the foundation of all the other principles and content of the social doctrine; the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity*” (n°160).

1. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

- A.** The foundation of all the principles and contents of the doctrine is the “*inviolable dignity of the human person*”. This dignity comes from the fact that the human person is in the image of God (*imago Dei*)³. As a person, man is not only “*an active subject capable of freely giving himself and entering in communion with other persons*”, but he also is “*a responsible subject of his own growth process, together with the community to which he belongs*” (n°133). Applied to the school, this means that the youngster is responsible for his own formation. Dignity challenges men and women to create and use their talents. But, at the same time, it implies a responsibility, for oneself and for the others.
- B.** The respect of human dignity. Dignity excludes the manipulation of man “*for ends that are foreign to his own development, which can find complete fulfilment only in God*”. His rights and his freedom must be respected. And confronted with the tendency of the States – for example in Europe – to subject education to economic objectives, the social doctrine stipulates: “*The person cannot be a means for carrying out economic, social or political projects imposed by some authority*” (n°133).
Examples:
(1) Reducing education to preparation for employment;
(2) Too much sponsorship by trademarks.
- C.** It concerns all people: all men have the same dignity, which is the ultimate foundation of equality and brotherhood.
- D.** It also concerns the whole man: our education will thus have as objective the integral development of man.
- E.** Respect for human dignity also implies respect for human rights, and one of these is the right to “*build its future by providing an appropriate education for the younger generation*” (n°157). The Council of Europe calls for education in human rights: promoting equal dignity of human persons, intercultural learning, participation, strengthening of the rights of minorities and emancipation of minority young people. An education by means of knowledge and understanding, but also by competences, behaviour and values.
- F.** Finally, there is the dignity of the worker and the human work. For education, this concept of work also gives value to formation: each person has the right to maintain his/her competences or to acquire new knowledge (n°261 to 272).

This principle of dignity is one of the pillars of Catholic education:

- (1) To refer to God as the Creator and Redeemer.
- (2) Formation of the whole person.
- (3) Priority to the weakest.
- (4) Importance of the community dimension.

In management vis-à-vis headteachers, teachers, employees, parents: call for responsibility!

³ Genesis 1 : 27.

In a more concrete way:

- (1) An example from real life of a headteacher: the headteacher has set himself some goals. He wants to achieve them in his school as soon as possible. He can be tempted by manipulation.
- (2) An example in connection with education policy: this policy cannot be finalised in projects having only an economic, social or political character (OECD, European Commission).
- (3) Importance of the integral person: respect of the teacher's personality in its entirety.
- (4) For example: the teacher's timetable (see later in the paragraph about "justice").
- (5) Dignity:
 - state of the buildings,
 - attitude regarding difficult headteachers, regarding angry parents or teachers: each person is unique and irreplaceable.

Dignity must also be integrated in all the formations we organise. For instance, a headteacher formation implies:

- (1) A philosophical/anthropological reflection: what concept of the human person?
- (2) The human person in his relations with others.
- (3) In his personal responsibility.
- (4) In his dignity.
- (5) The reading and interpretation of the text on the Creation of man (Genesis): "*in the image of God*", co-creator of God.
- (6) To lead to a Christian reflection:
 - a. Christ has saved man.
 - b. Sends his spirit, which gives freedom and creative strength.
 - c. Gives man hope and infinite perspective.
- (7) This formation will also generate a reflection on the personal vision on education in its larger meaning. It will help formulate the key criteria for education.
- (8) It will lead to a reflection on the educational project.
- (9) Formation in shared leadership. Each educator is a leader. Headteachers must thus be trained to listen, to respect the teacher's freedom while respecting the following scheme:

NOT:

Educational project



Headteacher
with his personal vision



who must convince educators
to follow him and realise his vision

BUT:

Educational project



Educators + Headteacher,
each one with his personal vision,
commit in solidarity to
develop integral education of



the CHILD
who is central in all our efforts !

This process requires a very human, but not naïve, approach.

- (10) Training headteachers to make difficult decisions.
- (11) Training them to combine self-determination with team animation and with patience, so that the educator feels he is responsible for developing a vision of education.

2. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE COMMON GOOD

- A. The common good can be understood as the social and community dimension of the moral good. As 'common good' we mean: "*the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily*" (n°164). One of the requirements of the common good concerns: "*provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom*" (n°166).
- B. The preferential option for the poor. In showing a commitment to serving the common good, the Christian needs to bring into play a specific criterion of evangelical inspiration: the priority choice for the poor (or "*the preferential option for the poor*"). It is a conscious will to consider social reality from the particular point of view of the poor.

In a more concrete way:

- (1) Religious and spiritual needs of teachers and pupils must be managed so that each one can achieve perfection in a total and easy way.
- (2) Do not exaggerate in the offer of fee-paying initiatives. Ensure that we remain faithful to the preferential option for the poor. Is there a special social fund in the school? Did we consider principles such as: "We don't organise anything that isn't accessible to **all**".
- (3) Timetable: do we establish class schedule for pupils according to the common good or contingent on three or four teachers (see "justice").
- (4) Investments: we must ensure a balance between the investments in some disciplines and those at the service of all disciplines. Of course, a chemistry laboratory is expensive, but a teacher of geography also matters. How to strike a balance? A commission of investments? A budget per discipline? We can develop the same reflection at the level of diocesan investments.
- (5) The diocese of Breda in the Netherlands has organised a three-day reflection on the spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi. The diocesan director ("diocesan vicar") of the diocese of Bruges in Belgium has organised a weekend in the Mont des Cats monastery, in Nord of France.

From the perspective of the common good, a headteacher formation implies:

Training to carefully weigh up the pros and cons with one's own criteria and those of the others, in accordance with the educational project.

- (1) Proposing exercises to teach to evaluate, on the one hand, the organisation of a very large range of pedagogical, cultural or sport initiatives, and on the other hand, the preferential option for the poor.
- (2) The principle "if we go out together, we come back together".
- (3) This implies that the same principle of the preferential option for the poor is presented in a formation to manage the finances of the school.
- (4) Training not to give in to the wishes of a minority (often noisy), to a possible blackmail. Training to know the typology of people, their character. Training to know a minimum of group sociology.

3. THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY

On the basis of this principle, the superior order must adopt attitude of help ('*subsidium*'): that means "*support, promotion, development*" with respect to the lower order. On the other hand, the lower order refrains from off-loading the tasks it is capable to accomplish onto the superior order. It concerns the respect of freedom, of original initiative and responsibility of the intermediate social entities (n°186).

The criterion for discernment: the common good: "*the common good must remain the criteria for making decisions concerning the application of the principle of subsidiarity*" (n°188).

One of the consequences of this principle is participation: everybody must participate in a responsible way (n°189). This means that everybody “*must be informed, listened to and involved*” and that an “*open, transparent and regular dialogue*” must be established (n°190). So, we see emerge in Europe, the USA and Australia not only individual leadership but also a shared leadership in co-responsibility. And finally, education must contribute to remove the cultural and social barriers set against participation (n°191).

For all those who bear responsibility, this principle of subsidiarity is very important. A headteacher or a diocesan director cannot and should not do everything himself. Therefore we must consider shared leadership very seriously and know well what the criteria are.

4. THE PRINCIPLE OF SOLIDARITY

“*The new relationships of interdependence between individuals and peoples have to be transformed into relationships tending towards genuine ethical-social solidarity*” (n°193), with as perspective the life of Jesus, “*the New Man, who is one with humanity even to the point of ‘death on a cross’ [Phil 2:8]*” (n°196). The headteacher will thus ensure that teachers educate pupils in solidarity (examples in Germany⁴ and Spain⁵).

The principle of solidarity goes across all facets of management:

- No privilege: equal chances for all?
- Creation of a solidarity fund (above mentioned).
- At the local and regional level: more solidarity between schools? I know this is a very delicate topic.

PART THREE **THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF SOCIAL LIFE:** **TRUTH – FREEDOM – JUSTICE – LOVE**

Let us now have a closer look at the fundamental values which have a reciprocity relation with the four principles I just mentioned. These values must guide any management in our Catholic schools.

It concerns education in values, which as far as formation is concerned presupposes:

- (1) A philosophical/ethical reflection.
- (2) An overview of the morality of our present society.
- (3) A theological reflection.
- (4) A unified vision of the source of love. We will see this again in point 2, part four: “the social doctrine as basis for formation”.

1. TRUTH

In Greek ἀλήθεια with privative ‘a’ before the word *λήθη* that means “oblivion”: truth is “what is not forgotten”. A teaching, a testimony is needed to know it.

Living in the truth above all concerns the human person with his dignity and rights. But it also concerns truth in the coherence between the commitment made, the declarations and public communications, and the actual practice. The question is to live in coherence with one’s talk. Management and education must encourage the quest for truth (n°198). “*Christ ‘shines’ - said Christophe THEOBALD - because in him thoughts, words and deeds absolutely correspond and show the simplicity and unity of his being*”⁶

⁴ The « Compassion » project in Germany is developed during two weeks, in cooperation with the teachers.

⁵ The Spanish project is developed by the pupils and their parents.

⁶ THEOBALD, Christophe, *Le Christianisme comme Style, Une manière de faire de la théologie en postmodernité, (Christianism as Life Style. A Way of doing Theology in Post-Modernity)*, Cogitatio Fidei, Les éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2008, p. 71 – Translation CEEC.

In the New Testament, we are warned not to fall in the situation: *“they do not practise what they teach”* (Matthew 23, 3). *“Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action”* (1 John 3, 18).

2. FREEDOM

No one may be constrained in terms of personal convictions, and everyone should have freedom of religious practice. This freedom meets the requirements of human dignity. It is also part of the Gospel values.

“Freedom is the highest sign in man of his being made in the divine image and, consequently, is a sign of the sublime dignity of every human person.” (n°199) *“The value of freedom is respected when everyone is permitted to fulfil his personal vocation in a manner characterized by responsibility”* or in other word: *“to be in possession of oneself in view of the genuine good, within the context of the universal common good”* (n°200).

Being a diocesan director presupposes having developed a personal reflection on freedom:

- Freedom is linked to the divine image (cf. dignity).
- Freedom is exercised in the perspective of the genuine good, in the perspective of the common good, in responsibility.
- The morality of Christians is not only made of prohibitions (which have a structuring place), it is also and above all a positive project. It seeks, in ever new circumstances, to make choices similar to those of Jesus: to place the little ones in the centre of the kingdom, to reintegrate the excluded, etc.

Consequences:

That is for basic orientation. In real life it is not that simple. Situations are complex, complicated, and the questions that arise are no longer those of the time of Jesus or of the beginning of the Church. We know very well today: often we do not have to choose between a “good” or a “bad” behaviour, but our actions have multiple and partly unpredictable consequences. Most of the time, reading the Bible does not provide any obvious answer to our moral questions.

Then how to discern the best way? The reflection will be nourished at the source of the Gospel but also by seeking as much information as possible, taking into account the individual and collective experience, by confronting oneself with the experience and thinking of others. Social sciences, especially psychology, will be very valuable here. In many cases, we will have to choose the lesser of two evils. At other times, Christians will be called to go beyond the requirements of strict justice and to act with generosity.

3. JUSTICE

Justice *“consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour [Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1807]”* (n°201). It *“is particularly important in the present-day context, where the (human) person is threatened by the widespread tendency to make exclusive use of criteria of utility and ownership”* (n°202). *“The full truth about man makes it possible to open up also for justice the new horizon of solidarity and love”* (n°203).

This is a value difficult to implement today, because we are obliged to go against the current trends of society.

I give a very concrete example for a headteacher:

- (1) Application exercise: organise school timetables. The headteacher receives the following written requests asking to take some wishes into account. What just and equitable decision will you make, and what will be your criteria?
- A divorced woman, with two children, asks for an additional free afternoon per week.
 - A teacher asks not giving class after 3 p.m. He says there is too much traffic on his road.
 - A teacher responsible for the school library, who is on duty twice a week during one hour at lunch time, asks for compensation in his personal timetable: for instance, leaving two hours earlier on Friday.

- A teacher with a four-year old daughter, who is a foster child, and besides slightly disabled, asks for giving class from the second hour in the morning and for finishing one hour before the last class, so that he can personally take his daughter to the school and fetch her at the end of the school day.
 - A teacher of physical education asks for finishing earlier in order to be able to combine his class hours with a part-time work as physiotherapist.
 - A teacher organises during summer holidays a holiday camp for 16 and 17-year old pupils in Austria. As compensation he asks for an additional free afternoon per week.
 - A teacher of mathematics asks for giving all his classes in the morning because he says “it’s impossible to give math classes after 3 p.m.”.
- (2) Important in the disciplinary policy of the school.
- (3) Look for an example in the frame of your responsibility!

4. LOVE, SOURCE AND ULTIMATE CRITERION OF THESE THREE VALUES

“It is from the inner wellspring of love that the values of truth, freedom and justice are born and grow” (n°205). Love is thus the source and its ultimate criterion.

“Love (cannot be) restricted to relationships of physical closeness or limited to merely subjective aspects of action on behalf of others, (but) must be reconsidered in its authentic value as the highest and universal criterion of the whole of social ethics” (n°204). We must not only consider the subjective aspects linked to love, but also the social reality. Love is also linked to justice and solidarity.

Examples of deaconry:

- Visits to social institutions.
- Visits to people in distress (“*COMPASSION*” in Germany).
- 50 hours of social service in Hungary: condition to obtain the baccalaureate.
- Saint-Norbert College, Catholic school in Roosendaal in the Netherlands: 2 hours as introduction class. “Social internships”. Visits of 16 and 17-year old pupils to old people (75 years old and more) who are isolated. In cooperation with the parish. 30 hours per semester.
- Same initiative for “younger” retired people: help for using a computer. Pupils meet together after their internship and they share their experiences. Then, two meetings between pupils and old people.
- Example of Saint-Liduina, Catholic school in the Netherlands for children with learning problem:
 - Camps for children are organised with voluntary adults.
 - The municipality of Breda has erected a work of art before the school: a huge 7 meters high chair turned upside down, with birds’ nests hanging from the feet as a “symbol of children growth in this school”.

PART FOUR

SOCIAL DOCTRINE AND ECCLESIAL ACTION

This fourth and last part gathers different themes:

1. Family, education and educational institutions.
2. Social doctrine as a formation basis.
3. Social action and commitment for education, more particularly: witness and spirituality of the lay faithful, acting with prudence.
4. Social doctrine and associations.
5. Service in the various sectors of social life.

1. FAMILY

A. Parents have the right to choose. They have the right to found schools:

As far as schools are concerned, *“Parents have the right to choose the formative tools that respond to their convictions and to seek those means that will help them best to fulfil their duty as educators, in the spiritual and religious sphere also”* (n°240). They have the right to found and support educational institutions.

- B. The social doctrine mentions the financial support to schools: “*Public authorities must see to it that public subsidies are so allocated that parents are truly free to exercise this right without incurring unjust burdens. Parents should not have to sustain, directly or indirectly, extra charges which would deny or unjustly limit the exercise of this freedom. The refusal to provide public economic support to non-public schools that need assistance and that render a service to civil society*” (n°241).
- C. Family and integral education: “*The family has the responsibility to provide an integral education. This integrality is ensured when children — with the witness of life and in words — are educated in dialogue, encounter, sociality, legality, solidarity and peace, through the cultivation of the fundamental virtues of justice and charity*” (n°242). In our society the number of divorces is increasing in an alarming way. Let us not judge. Nevertheless, the headteacher will have to ensure that the school is even more welcoming to parents, by supporting and advising them, and ensure to offer parents and children a host community. They could invite grandparents to a day in the school. Christophe THEOBALD speaks about an “open hospitality” (*une hospitalité ouverte*)⁷. This opening to anyone requires an immoderate attitude, self-divestment and inversion of the eye (*une attitude démesurée, dessaisissement de soi et inversion du regard*)⁸. That means that we must put ourselves in the other’s place (“*se mettre à la place d’autrui*”)⁹. We should also more make use of the professional expertise of some parents.

2. THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE AS A BASIS FOR FORMATION

“*The Church's social doctrine is an indispensable reference point for a totally integrated Christian formation*” (n°528) even for catechesis. Catechesis must “*clarify properly realities such as man's activity for his integral liberation, the search for a society with greater solidarity and fraternity, the fight for justice and the building of peace*” (n°529). Any formation in our schools must be “integral”, i.e. theological and vocational.

The text insists on concrete example: “*the witness of Christian life*” (n°530).

“*Catholic educational institutions can and indeed must carry out a precious formative service, dedicating themselves in a particular way to the inculturation of the Christian message, that is to say, to the productive encounter between the Gospel and the various branches of knowledge. The Church's social doctrine is a necessary means for an efficacious Christian education towards love, justice and peace, as well as for a conscious maturation of moral and social duties in the various cultural and professional fields*” (n°532).

3. SOCIAL ACTION AND COMMITMENT FOR EDUCATION

This point concerns especially the role of lay people. Each person, each lay person, is called to leadership!

- A. **By his witness.** “*It is the proper duty of the lay faithful to proclaim the Gospel with an exemplary witness of life rooted in Christ and lived in temporal realities: the family; professional commitment in the world of work, culture, science and research; the exercise of social, economic and political responsibilities*” (n°543).
- B. **By developing a personal spirituality.** “*Such a spirituality will build up the world according to Jesus' Spirit. (...) Thus, especially by the witness of their own life, they must manifest Christ to others*” (n°545). The lay Christian is invited to make a synthesis between his secular life and his spiritual life. In this connection, we should ask for the cooperation of Catholic universities to help train trainers. This itinerary will be regulated by: “*the Word of God as a reference point; the liturgical celebration of the Christian Mystery; personal prayer; the authentic experience of Church enhanced by the particular formational services of discerning spiritual guides; the exercise of the social virtues and a persevering commitment to cultural and professional formation*” (n°546). The question is to trust lay people, to train them. Do not underestimate a “drop by drop” formation in “charisma” in the schools: religious people who share, day after day, with lay people their way of living their charisma.

⁷ THEOBALD, C., o. c., p. 105 – Translation CEEC.

⁸ THEOBALD, C., o. c., p. 77 – Translation CEEC.

⁹ THEOBALD, C., o. c., p. 77 – Translation CEEC.

- C. By making decision and acting with prudence. This is an important criterion for decision makers! Prudence is *“the virtue that makes it possible to discern the true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means for achieving it. Thanks to this virtue, moral principles are applied correctly to particular cases. We can identify three distinct moments as prudence is exercised: to clarify and evaluate situations, to inspire decisions and to prompt action. The first moment is seen in the reflection and consultation by which the question is studied and the necessary opinions sought. The second moment is that of evaluation, as the reality is analyzed and judged in the light of God's plan. The third moment, that of decision, is based on the preceding steps and makes it possible to choose between the different actions that may be taken”* (n°547).
“Prudence makes it possible to make decisions that are consistent, and to make them with realism and a sense of responsibility for the consequences of one's action. (...) The exercise of prudence calls for a progressive formation in order to acquire the necessary qualities: “memory” as the capacity to remember one's own past experience with objectivity, without falsification; “docilitas” (docility) that allows one to learn from others and to profit from their experience on the basis of an authentic love for truth; “solertia” (diligence), that is, the ability to face the unexpected with objectivity in order to turn every situation to the service of good, overcoming the temptation of intemperance, injustice, and cowardice. These cognitive dispositions permit the development of the necessary conditions for the moment of decision: “providencia” (foresight), which is the capacity of weighing the efficacy of a given conduct for the attainment of a moral end and “circumspectio” (circumspection), or the capacity of weighing the circumstances that contribute to the creation of the situation in which a given action will be carried out” (n°548).
- D. Social doctrine and associations. Catholic associations in the professional or cultural sector – for instance, Catholic teachers associations – can make a valuable work regarding Christian maturation and conscience formation (n°550).
- E. Service in the various sectors of social life. Service, which is *“sign and expression of love”*, is seen under specific angles: service to the human person, service to culture and to politics (n°551).
- (1) Our Christian religion is a religion of Incarnation. God becomes a man in this world, in our school world. The service to the human person starts with internal renewal and renewal of the religious dimension (n°552 & 553). This faith in God incarnate is also the basis of all our efforts to humanise culture (literature, sport, music, ballet...). The headteacher will thus ensure that education does not unilaterally comply with utility requirements at the service of economy or employment.
 - (2) Secularity (*Laïcité*). Lay people will involve themselves in culture and politics. The social doctrine recognises secularity/autonomy as *“the distinction between the political and religious spheres”* however it *“clearly rejects the prospects of an autonomy that is understood as independence from the moral law”* (n°571).
 - (3) Social doctrine and democracy: There is no democracy without promotion of the human person. Education plays an important role by a formation in true ideals and a contribution to *“structures of participation and shared responsibility”* (n°406).
 - (4) Finally, the social doctrine insists on *“the right of families and persons to free and open schools”* (n°557).

CONCLUSION

The Church does not have a political, economic or social mission. The Church's mission is primarily religious: it is to witness to the renewing power of the interindividual and social links generated by love.

Above all, the Church's social doctrine indicates that mutual love between human beings, in the sight of God, is the most powerful instrument of change at the personal and social level. In fact, it develops a critical debate with the trends of the present world in its relations with possession, power and knowledge.

Beyond this critical aspect, the social doctrine wants to contribute to the formation of an ethos, i.e. a set of references and practical attitudes suitable for guiding the action of Christians. It reminds people in charge of school management, at local, diocesan or national level, of the promise of a reign of justice and peace, and calls for their responsibility to reach this goal.

The credibility of the Church in social matters is to be found in its ability to generate initiatives, to develop new practices, to create innovative institutions that express the concept of man promoted in its teaching. Let us be men and women of faith, prayer and peace, who are fair and responsible and who seek the kingdom of God.

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