



HOLY SPIRIT

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Holy Spirit Prep is based on the Christian concept of the human person. We believe that children are created in the image and likeness of God with a supernatural destiny in Christ, since Christ has rescued them from the darkness of sin and called them to share in divine life, in communion with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Our vision of the human person, therefore, is a vision of faith. It takes into account the wounds of original sin with which every human person is born. Yet our vision remains deeply positive because we believe Christ frees us from original sin and all other sin through baptism, and opens for us the gates of heaven. Viewed in this light, man emerges as being essentially open to hope.

This positive view of the created order gives rise to a series of fundamental educational principles. Foremost among them is the importance we give to the integral formation of every dimension of the human personality. Not only should we not undervalue the natural gifts that a person receives from God, but also we must develop them to their full potential.

An integral formation necessarily includes **the proper formation of the mind**. This does not consist only in a quantitative acquisition of knowledge, what we might call the accumulation of information. It implies the proper use of our ability to reason (in accordance, that is, with its inherent rules of logic); penetrating the truth (which is sought above all); and the ability to express balanced, true judgments about oneself, others, and the events of history, society, and culture. Intellectual formation must be complemented by the formation of the will, passions, sentiments, emotions, and all that goes to make up a person's character.

Our school seeks to fashion men and women of mettle, **masters of themselves**, not weathervanes at the mercy of the whims and vagaries of emotion, as changeable as it is unreliable. We aim to form robust personalities capable of mastering their instincts, subjecting them to reason enlightened by faith.

We cannot overlook the role **imagination** plays, both in grasping concepts and ideas, and in personal creativity thus we also promote its development so as to achieve a creative personality that can express itself in diverse ways: in art, technical professions, and even in perceiving values and putting them into practice.

Conscience formation is of immense consequence since conscience provides the moral judgment of our acts and perceives the good to be done and the evil to be avoided. The intimate link between conscience and the perception and living out of moral values renders conscience a topic

of capital importance in the formation of the person. Conscience discovers the moral character of human acts, their ethical dimension.

The area of **value formation**, intimately tied to conscience formation, is extremely broad, because it comprises a vast array of human and social realities. Consider, for example, the need for and importance of teaching young people to appreciate the values of justice and fairness, truthfulness, dialogue, responsibility, nobility of heart, mutual respect, and living in a manner consistent with ones principles- these are the foundation stones of any human community. Add to these virtues others that lend added perfection to the individuals human stature- good manners, sensitivity to others, etiquette, social grace, courtesy, kindness, generosity, and so forth.

In the very first encyclical of his pontificate, John Paul II himself reminded us that “man cannot live without love,” that “he remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it” (*Redemptor Hominis*, 10). If an educator were to lose sight of this reality, he would neglect the heart and soul of all true formation. **Love is the whole purpose of education**, and at the same time the overriding impulse that determines its execution. An education confined to a series of external rules, to patterns of behavior imposed from the outside, with no love to drive it, would be useless. Once those rules and patterns are no longer around, all that varnish of formation, which the student never made his own, interiorly, will vanish and collapse like a house of cards.

A truly free person lives and directs his life based on principles he has made his own, or interiorized. Each student has to embrace his own formation freely and out of love. The principal, faculty and all those who are in some way responsible for the education of the students, can help by motivating, driving, demanding from and supporting them. But in the end, it is the student himself who must, by making principles his own, use his freedom properly and out of love undertake and carry out the lions share of his formation.

One of our objectives from the very outset of Holy Spirit Prep has been to provide a higher level of individualized instruction for the children than they might otherwise obtain elsewhere. The principle of personalized education derives from the fact that each person is unique, endowed by God with a combination of talents and gifts all his own. God does not create duplicates, nor does he “mass produce,” especially in the case of free and spiritual creatures. Moreover, the life-circumstances of each individual are different depending on God given talents and the family, social, economic, cultural, emotional and moral setting he finds himself in. Education cannot be carried out en masse. It must be undertaken on a one-on-one, person-to-person basis.