

# Educating the Whole Person and Struggling Students

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# Introductions

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## **Some background on myself**

- My voice
- Bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Master of Arts in Theology
- Doctorate in Education
- Served as Consultant to USCCB
- Adjunct professor (Univ. of Mary, North Central Univ., Univ. St. Thomas)
- Taught in a Catholic High School and served as Dean
- Published and presented on teaching diverse students
- Certifications in mental health, learning disabilities, and English language learners
- Accomplished Instructor with Institute for Excellence in Writing
- Married 30 years and mother of 5 young-adult children
- Grandma to one 😊

# Catholic Education and Student Success

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Despite limited resources and training, Hispanic/Latino students who attend Catholic schools are 42% more likely to graduate from high school and two-and-a half times more likely to graduate college than their peers in public schools

# Catholic Education and Student Success

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What are Catholic schools doing to achieve this success?



Quora.com

What practices provide the most help to struggling Hispanic/Latino ELL students?

# The Plan for Today



**The Foundation:**  
What is Catholic Education?  
What is the Human Person?



**The Whole Child and Mission:**  
What does it mean to educate the whole child?  
What is our school mission? Who knows this mission? Why does this matter?



**Vocation:**  
What is it and why does it matter?



**Leading in Diversity:**  
How do we support all learners?



**Four Steps:**  
What steps will help to better support all learners?



**In Conclusion:**  
What do we do with this information?

# Definitions Matter

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## **Catholic Education: *Gravissimum Educationis***

- Form the whole person while leading that person to Christ
- Parents are primary educators of their children
- Teachers carry much responsibility in fulfilling goals of school

## **The Human Person: *Imago Dei***

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# Why understanding anthropology matters

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My understanding of the human person informs mission and how I approach and respond to others and myself.

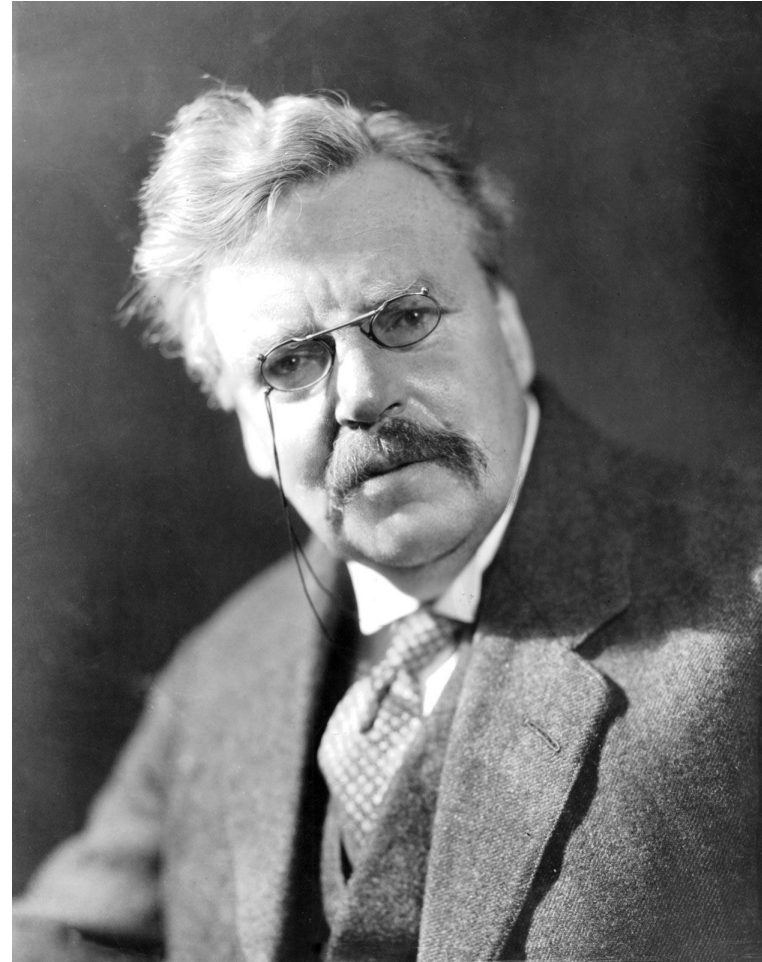
Pedagogy reveals human anthropology.

The curriculum we select and the way in which we teach reflects our understanding of the human person.



# *The Everlasting Man* by G.K. Chesterton

The human person differs  
in *kind* and not in degree.



# Forming the Whole Child

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## Children Learn

- Through the intellect
- Through the senses
- Through experiences

As educators, we need to **acknowledge, hear, and honor** their experiences – experiences which may be different from our own – experiences that shape how they view the world, how they respond, and how they receive information

# Definitions Matter

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## **Catholic Education: *Gravissimum Educationis***

- Form the whole person while leading that person to Christ
- Parents are primary educators of their children
- Teachers carry much responsibility in fulfilling goals of school

## **The Human Person: *Imago Dei***

- Lovingly created by God for a reason
- Has dignity and value
- Differs in *kind* and not in degree

# Forming the Whole Person

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“We look at *all* of the needs of a student, needs that may include emotional, social, spiritual, familial, mental health, physical health, academic, socioeconomic and more. Once the overall needs are identified, a comprehensive plan is put in place which can include the use of faculty, staff, home-school liaisons, tutors, social workers, spiritual directors, and more.” Grade-level Dean at Catholic High School

# What Does it Mean to Form the Whole Person?

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- What does a whole person look like?
- How does a whole person think?
- How can this objective be measured?

# Catholic Education as a Vocation

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***Vocare*** = to call

## **Three Types of Vocation**

- Primary vocation: Baptismal call to grow in holiness and spread the Gospel message
- State in life: married, single, consecrated virgin, religious, lay
- Work or ministry: Catholic educators

## **Living our Primary Vocation**

- Listen
- Learn
- Pray

# Leading a School Community of Diverse Learners

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A word cloud featuring various educational terms. The words are arranged in a cluster, with 'diversity' and 'scaffold' being the largest and most prominent. Other words include 'modifying', 'learning', 'visual', 'assessment', 'intrapersonal', 'high-achievers', 'needs', 'auditory', 'adapting', 'interpersonal', 'catering', 'kinaesthetic', 'inclusion', 'low-achievers', 'support', and 'student'. The colors of the words range from dark red to yellow.

learning visual  
assessment intrapersonal  
high-achievers modifying  
auditory diversity needs  
adapting interpersonal scaffold  
catering kinaesthetic  
inclusion low-achievers support  
student

# Leading a School Community of Diverse Learners

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According to the *New Directory for Catechesis*, there is much diversity within our parish communities and schools including:

- Rural, urban, and suburban differences
- Socioeconomic diversity
- Learning differences
- Racial, cultural, and ethnic differences
- Language differences
- Digital culture and social media use
- Diversity in ages
- Religious diversity and new religious movements



# Four Important Steps

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1. Prayer
2. Intentional learning/professional development
3. Relationship building
4. Joy

# Leading a School Community of Diverse Learners

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“It’s not  
patience that we  
need as much as  
understanding.”

Sister Georgeanne Burr,  
OSB



# How do I support all my students?

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1. With Prayer
2. With Intentional learning/professional development
3. With Relationship building
4. With Joy

# School Culture – What Are We Trying to Grow?

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What are we trying to grow?

What environment is necessary to grow it?



# How do I support all my students?

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4. With Joy

# Resources

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Catholic School Mission Toolkit

<https://saintpaulseminary.org/icsl>

# Where to Learn More?

## 1. Racial Issues and Understanding Poverty

- USCCB Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development <https://usccb.org>
- Poverty USA <https://povertyusa.org/encounter>
- Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame <https://think.nd.edu/the-institute-for-latino-studies/>
- Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism (FAIR) <https://fairforall.substack.com/>

## 2. Mental Health

- Dr. Meg Meeker's website: <https://www.meekerparenting.com/>
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 or text MN to 741741
- Catholic Therapists in MN: <https://www.catholictherapists.com/minnesota>
- CSCOE: <https://cscoe-mn.org/initiative/peace-of-mind/>
- First Aid for Mental Health <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/>
- National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI): Minnesota <https://namimn.org/programs/>

## 3. ADD/ADHD and Dyslexia

- ADDitude Magazine <https://www.additudemag.com/>
- Dr. Russell Barkley's YouTube video 30 Essential Things to Know About ADHD <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCAGc-rkIf0>
- International Dyslexia Association <https://dyslexiaida.org/>
- Dr. Sally Shawitz <https://www.dyslexia.yale.edu/new-fireside-chat-dr-sally-shaywitz/>
- Susan Barton Bright Solutions for Dyslexia <https://susanbartondyslexiastories.com/>

Thank you

And God bless you!

