

**“Fitting a Man for his Final End:”
Affirming the Common Good in Catholic Schools through Natural Difference and
Dependency**

By

Sr. Maria Catherine Toon, O.P.

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Theology

**Director: Dr. Michael Dauphinais
Second Reader: Dr. Catherine Ruth Pakaluk**

**Ave Maria University
2017**

Much of the Church's rich meditations on her role in education have been promulgated in magisterial documents only in the last one hundred years. Culling from several documents, within the context of both human nature, and man's life on earth in regards to his final end, Pius XI discerns, "Since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end."¹ Pius' statement emphasizes that the Church sees education in light of God's providential plan, in which schools affirm the all intermediate ends on the way to the final end of man, so that he can behold the face of God unveiled in Heaven. Thirty years later, the Second Vatican Council develops Pius' insight and more clearly emphasizes that although the Church regards education's trajectory as being focused on eternal beatitude, "the Church must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing on his heavenly calling."² These temporal ends have come to include guiding students to discern what is real and true, and to pursue and practice the moral, intellectual, and theological virtues, which serve the common good of society and heal man's nature. The Congregation for Catholic Education asserts this in a recent document by saying that Catholic educational principles, "should convey vital values and principles to younger generations, not only to help individual growth and maturation, but also to contribute to building the common good."³ These statements indicate that while man's ultimate

¹ Pope Pius XI. *Divini Illius Magistri* (*DIM hereafter*) [On Christian Education]. Holy See Website. December 31, 1929, 7, accessed November 4, 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html.

² Second Vatican Council. *Gravissimum Educationis* (hereafter *GE*) [Declaration on Christian Education]. Holy See Website. October 28, 1965, Introduction, accessed April 22, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html.

³ Congregation for Catholic Education. *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*. The Holy See Website, April 7, 2014, Introduction, Accessed April 22, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20140407_educare-oggi-e-domani_en.html.

destiny is in beholding his Creator in Heaven, his earthly sojourn towards that end necessitates a framework for what “he must be and what he must do here below.”⁴

Since the Enlightenment, political and social movements have striven to create theories that will give birth to social utopias where each individual is never deprived of justice. In recent history, this thirst for justice has not left the field of education untouched. Modern arguments for social, gender, and racial equality outside of schools, assert independence and self-sufficiency as preconditions for true freedom within schools. The pursuit of equality is proposed as a panacea in this quest for justice. It manifests in a kind of openness, or tolerance, of all ideas, irrespective of truth or reality.⁵ This modern view gives birth to a vision of man that dictates a particular kind of formation in education that is ultimately at odds with the Church’s vision of man. The Catholic school finds herself barraged on every side by accusations that she is not adequately tolerant of ideas that are at odds with Church doctrine. Since Catholic schools have a care for man’s secular life, as Vatican II states,⁶ these influences are worth considering. It is a violation of justice and the ordering of God’s providence in the common good, to assert that all ideas possess the same truthfulness and every individual’s preference should receive the same dignity or attention. Is it possible for Catholic schools to give students an education that “fits a man for what he must do and what he must be”⁷ yet answers the modern call for equality and tolerance?

⁴ *DIM*, 7.

⁵ Francis Beckwith and Gregory Koukl. *Relativism: Feet Planted Firmly in Mid-Air*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 13.

⁶ See note 2.

⁷ See note 1.

In order to give a complete answer to this question my thesis will be split into two parts. The Catholic school's understanding of education finds a foundation in Augustine and Thomas, who make important contributions about how man teaches and learns new things. Explanations of the virtuous life which proves to be a blueprint and directs man towards the common good and his ultimate end, is predicated on Augustine and Thomas' work, and paves the way for clearer arguments about the common good. In the second half, using this understanding of how man learns and the role of the virtuous life, one can better affirm how equality and tolerance are defined by the modern world, and how natural difference and dependency can serve to fittingly order those terms towards the common good. With this conceptual structure in place, I argue that if Catholic schools reintegrate authentic equality and tolerance using the contours of natural difference and dependency, schools order themselves more properly to the common good, which satisfies both the temporal and eternal ends of man, in a way that the modern understanding of these relativistic terms cannot.

Part I - Education in the Sapiential Tradition

a. Who Man is

In order to give the school's affirmation of the common good a framework, it is necessary to begin with who man is and how he learns. In his discussion of the Trinity, Aquinas quotes Boethius as saying that a person is "an individual substance of a rational nature."⁸ The rational nature in man is what sets him apart from other animals. Man's soul, which is the animating principle of all his parts, subsists in his body. As a result, human nature is a composite of body and soul, flesh and spirit; he is hylomorphic. Man, who possesses a physical body generated by

⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (hereafter ST), (Benzinger Brothers Edition, 1947), accessed January 30, 2017, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/summa/index.html>, I.29.1.

his parents and an immortal soul made by God is made in the image and likeness of his creator. Man's intellect receives the form of the world around him, and his desire moves his will towards what is universally good.⁹ The presence of man's intellect and free will, his ability to know and to love, indicate that there is a hierarchy of goods for which this rational animal can strive.

Man's happiness lies in possessing God himself, who is the universal good that the will seeks. Through divine revelation man comes to realize that he is meant for participation in the divine nature. Therefore, the beatific vision is an intellectual one, where the mind rests in God because it reaches its perfection through understanding.¹⁰ It unveils a profound connection between the essence of human nature and the inner life of the Trinity. The Council Fathers confirm this by stating, "This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself."¹¹ Since God made man for his own sake, in order to pursue happiness, man has to embody in his own willing and loving an action of the same character to the gift of self in the Trinity. Man participates most fully in the *imago dei* when he rationally and willingly engages this pursuit. As a result, Catholic education that cultivates the virtuous life corresponds directly to man's two-fold nature. Schools can evaluate how they are pursuing the common good through cultivating man's rational and engaged self-gift.

b. Augustine on Education - How Man Learns

⁹ ST I. 82.2ad1.

¹⁰ ST, I.26.2.ad2. See note 94.

¹¹ Second Vatican Council. *Gaudium et Spes* (hereafter GS) [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World]. The Holy See. December 7, 1965. 24:3. Accessed November 23, 2016. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

This view of human nature was well known to St. Augustine of Hippo, who claims that engaging reason and the will is a source of wonder that leads to self-knowledge and knowledge of God. He explores the role of teaching and learning amidst his own conversion to Catholicism in his *Soliloquies* and later in life in his *Confessions*. Augustine determines that using the intellect and will man comes to know himself in order to know God and the world. Augustine's mode of proceeding is from the inside out. He says, "May I know myself, may I know you. That is my prayer."¹² Following the Neo-platonic tradition, Augustine looks within himself and examines what he knows and how it is possible for him to know. However, unlike the Neo-Platonists, this drives Augustine out of himself and any self-proclaimed greatness. This procedure leads him to remember his own nature and the Creature who has given it to him. "Great is the power of memory, a thing, O my God, to be in awe of."¹³ Gratitude and thanksgiving for these cognitive powers becomes a habitual consequence of his discoveries. Augustine's precision in examining his own sense memory makes it clear that he sees self-knowledge as most important. But it also drives home the central question he is asking of God, "What then am I, O my God? What nature am I?"¹⁴ Augustine is a man of many questions: "What am I to do now?"¹⁵ How shall I seek you? What is the way?¹⁶ Augustine's desire to know God drives him to know about human nature and his own particular choices. The curiosity and wonder about Divine things rooted in self-knowledge is essential to preserve in any child's pursuit of learning.

¹² Augustine, *Soliloquies: Augustine's Inner Dialogue*. Translated by Kim Paffenroth (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2000) 55.

¹³ Augustine. *Confessions*. Translated by Frank J. Sheed (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), 203.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, 205.

Augustine's emphasis on self-knowledge grounded in God implies that the Trinity is the ultimate source of knowledge for man, and leads to a dialogue with God that produces new knowledge. According to Augustine, man cannot learn in the most proper sense from anyone or anything except through consultation with God interiorly. An inner light that God has placed within man is the primary instrument through which man learns.¹⁷ Augustine determines it is this Divine Light in us that is teaching, not an external agent. He claims, "He who prompts us externally through men by means of signs, [does] so that we are instructed to be inwardly turned towards Him."¹⁸ When ideas are offered to man's senses, either through conversation (words) with another or through experience (other signs), man is to consult this inner Truth and enter into a dialogue with it, testing its mettle against this graced inner voice. Augustine sees God as the direct cause, nothing else. This "cogitation" is the definition of true learning, according to this Church Father.¹⁹ Likewise, the repetition of this process is crucial for retention. "They must be drawn together again, that they may be known."²⁰ Cogitating and deliberating with this inner Light, brings to mind concepts repeatedly so that they might be known more fully and retained more completely. He concludes that a teacher, properly speaking is not the direct cause of his learning. The teacher does not bring about the new knowledge in the students, but rather Christ.²¹ He says, "He who is consulted, He who is said to dwell in the inner man, does teach: Christ – that is, the unchangeable power and everlasting wisdom of God."²² It is Christ who causes new knowledge within the individual. But he puts such emphasis on the role of "Divine Light" within a man to bring about new knowledge, that this light trumps the influence of a

¹⁷ Augustine. *Against the Academicians: The Teacher*. Transl. Peter King (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 1995), 141.

¹⁸ Augustine, *Confessions*, 146.

¹⁹ Ibid, 145.

²⁰ Augustine, *Confessions*. Transl. E. B. Pusey, 192.

²¹ Augustine, *Against the Academicians*, 137.

²² Ibid, 139.

teacher. These considerations illuminate reality for man's intellect so that he might turn to God with a more complete knowledge of the created world and praise him. Knowing ourselves and reality more deeply prompts praise. To Augustine, education that encompasses all of man's powers and desires to know is meant to help man to reach his final end in God in order to praise him.²³

According to Augustine, even a lofty education in the liberal arts, is worthless in regards to man's last end if it does not lead to God. He recognized the gifts God had given him in his early life, but prior to his conversion he had failed to put these to use in achieving his own salvation. "Of what use to me then was my intelligence...when in the doctrine of love of you I erred so far and so foully and so sacrilegiously?"²⁴ Even a strong liberal arts or classical education (like Augustine's) in itself cannot be the sole means for man's reaching heaven. Knowledge alone, even clear knowledge, is inadequate. Because of his human nature man needs an education that will address both his desire to know what is good (the intellect) and to choose it (the will). Man's choice in how he uses his gifts determines whether he achieves his last end. Knowledge of God moves man to praise him and desire his final end more acutely. Augustine addresses God, "When once I shall be united to thee with all my being, there shall be no more grief and toil, and my life will be alive."²⁵ Augustine teaches the modern Catholic school that learning and knowledge are grounded in knowledge of self and are motivated by love and desire for union

²³ Augustine, *Against the Academicians*, 145. "when they inwardly discover that truths have been stated they offer their praises", "To know and love Him is the happy life which all proclaim they seek, although there are few who may *rejoice* [emphasis mine] in having really found it." *Confessions*, xviii. The purpose of Augustine's writing his *Confessions* is to praise God's glory.

²⁴ Augustine, *Confessions*, 72.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 211.

with the Divine Essence. If students are truly being educated for heaven, self-knowledge that leads to God and deeper love for him is a cornerstone of the common good in schools.

c. ***Thomas Aquinas on Education - The Roles of Learning and Teaching***

Like Augustine, Thomas Aquinas' contribution towards the Catholic school's understanding of the common good affirms the proper role of the reason and will, and citing God as the main source of learning. His conclusions about how man derives knowledge from his natural faculties confirm Augustine's observations on two points, but also include some distinctions. Firstly, Aquinas and Augustine affirm that God is the one true teacher who enlightens man interiorly to know what is true. Augustine's apparent rejection of human teachers is to emphasize that God's action in the soul is prior to learning new knowledge. Aquinas indicates the same claim. "Since all human teaching can be effective only in virtue of that light, it is obvious that God alone teaches interiorly and principally."²⁶ Thomas makes all his arguments about learning and teaching presupposing this point.

Thomas views man's intellect, which is a reflection of God's own Divine Reason, as the faculty through which God acts on man to teach him intellectual truths. Both the *ratio* and *intellectus* that Josef Pieper distinguishes in his arguments for leisure, are what make man distinctively human: there are two different kinds of knowing for the purpose of contemplating truth.²⁷ Ratio, or discursive thought, allows man to analyze, contrast, and draw conclusions. In this way, Thomas and Augustine would affirm that man is meant to learn new things as part of his path to

²⁶Thomas Aquinas and Robert W. Mulligan, James V. McGlynn, and Robert William Schmidt. "Question Eleven: The Teacher." *In Truth* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 84.

²⁷ Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*. (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1998), 12f.

eternal beatitude, truthful things like geometry, literature, and biology, which pertain directly to the life of a school. Lewis articulates the same truth when he says, “We can therefore pursue knowledge and beauty in the sure confidence that by so doing we are either advancing to the vision of God ourselves or indirectly helping others to do so.”²⁸ Knowledge of truth leads to contemplation of higher truths. Regarding the *intellectus* Pieper says, “Human knowing has an element of the non-active, purely receptive seeing, which is not there in virtue of our humanity as such, but in virtue of a transcendence over what is human, but which is really the highest fulfillment of what it is to be human.”²⁹ According to Pieper, man needs contemplation in his intellect in order to satisfy his nature. Secondly, Aquinas would also agree with Augustine’s concept of cogitating to bring forth new and more full understanding of concepts learned. These realizations help Catholic schools to emphasize the importance of their teachers.

Aquinas sees teachers as an important causal force in learning which means that teachers possess a crucial role in the common good of a school. Unlike Augustine, Thomas’s view is that an agent for new knowledge could be an experience, or an actual teacher, and is causal for the learner. It is a force outside of the knower that God uses to act on man’s intellect. As a result, Aquinas argues that man learns something new when a proximate external agent brings principles that exist intrinsically in the intellect to actuality.³⁰ Aquinas sees this movement from potency to a specific act, as the process through which one achieves knowledge.³¹ This can occur in two ways. Man can discover new knowledge by engaging his sense experience with the principles that already exist in his intellect, whereby he comes to conclusions about things

²⁸ C.S. Lewis. *The Weight of Glory*. “Learning in Wartime.” (New York: HarperCollins, 2001),56.

²⁹ Pieper, 12.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

previously unknown to him. Or, man has an external aid which leads him to new knowledge, building on principles already known to him, or introducing new principles through which man can reason to learn new things. This first way of knowing, which Thomas calls discovery, is to “apply general self-evident principles to certain definite matters, from these to proceed to particular conclusions, and from these to others.”³² Man can do this independent of any external agent. However, teaching occurs when one person guides another through a path of reasoning from self-evident principles, and this is the second way of knowing. As a result, Thomas defines a teacher as someone who “causes knowledge in another through the activity of the learner’s own natural reason.”³³

Since teachers guide students through a specific reasoning process to come to new knowledge, their place in the school cannot be underestimated. Thomas is adamant that man cannot be his own teacher.³⁴ Man does not possess all the principles latent in the created order that will allow him to bring perfect knowledge from potency to act, nor does he know all things at once. Man reasons in sequence by abstracting from self-evident principles,³⁵ or using new knowledge he has gained from experience and from being taught. Consequently, some of the principles that man has interiorly are only partial knowledge. Aquinas recognizes that man, even with his reasoning that bears some likeness to the Divine, cannot possess within himself all the self-evident principles needed to know God and engage with his creation. Man needs a teacher in order to know creation and himself more perfectly. Although Augustine would disagree that teachers do not bring about new knowledge in their students, Thomas makes the strong distinction that

³² Aquinas, "Question Eleven," 83.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Aquinas, "Question Eleven," 89.

³⁵ ST I.79.8.

having a teacher is necessary for learning because the teacher is an instrumental cause in that learning. Thomas recognizes that these professionals help students to exercise the mind in the correct way habitually. If Catholic schools are ordered to the temporal and eternal ends of man (i.e. the common good of the school) teachers must be adequately bringing students the correct principles of knowledge within their fields.

Thomas requires that teachers have a perfect knowledge of their subject in order to pass on knowledge to another. This is accomplished through the reasoning process. A teacher's role is to "manifest to that other the reasoning process which he himself goes through by his own natural reason."³⁶ Through this proximate agent a student is able to gather his own intellectual powers together to mimic the reasoning process the teacher demonstrates. In this way, the learner is able to understand, grasp, and arrive at knowledge previously unknown.

This understanding about teaching and learning should engender a deep sense of respect and reverence for teachers and parents in schools. It should also prompt parents and teachers to acknowledge their own responsibility for forming young students by allowing God to form their minds and hearts through continued conversion. Administrators should see themselves at the service of these relationships which enrich and build the common good within the school community.

d. *The Role of Students*

If teachers must possess the principles of their subject, and pass them on in an ordered way, what does Thomas require of students? Students should have some willingness to have the exercise of

³⁶ Aquinas, "Question Eleven," 83.

this process and these principles impressed upon their minds. This implies that students either possess or are fitted with an interior structure that enables their engaged intellect and will to build an edifice of knowledge in subordination to their teachers and in cooperation with them. These structures are what Thomas refers to as the moral and intellectual virtues. Thus, a Christian education must impart not only the principles of the given subject matter, but must also aid the students in possessing goodness that forms their hearts and their choices to use this knowledge well. The dependency of students upon their teachers is an unequivocal demand that requires students to be open to the wonder of learning, and being formed by their parents and teachers in the virtuous life.³⁷

e. Contemplation and Action in Teaching and Learning

The common good of a school encompasses the way learning influences action and contemplation. Thomas sees teaching as pertaining to the two ends of man's life: on the one hand, teaching allows the teacher to contemplate the truth in the subject matter he is imparting which is an action worth doing for its own sake, but on the other hand teaching is a practical act that deals concretely with man's action both in the physical world and with other men in society.³⁸ These two actions, contemplation and the act of teaching, characterize the teacher's life on earth, and will ultimately shape how he pursues life with God, and the student will receive this knowledge for his own contemplation and action. For this reason, Thomas applies teaching more directly to what he calls the "active life". The active life of man is meant to order him towards charitable, human acts with respect to all other members of society. Although the

³⁷ My discussions of Augustine and Aquinas are meant to determine the Catholic school's justification for how she educates according to man's nature and final end. The role of dependency between teachers and students should certainly be explored further.

³⁸ Aquinas, "Question Eleven," 100.

contemplative life is primary (and directed to man's supernatural end), the active life is prior and is meant to inform the contemplative life.³⁹ This interplay in both respects constitutes Aquinas' understanding of man's movement towards his final supernatural end with respect to intermediate ends in the practical sphere of man's life.

f. The Will in Educational Formation

If contemplation and action go together, man must also will what is good, based on this knowledge of the truth. Possessing intellectual knowledge of the truth is not sufficient in itself, as Augustine discovered. Exercising the will in the correct way is also needed. The will is what Thomas' calls an "intellective appetite": although it cannot properly know things in themselves, it relies on the intellect to give it information about what is desirable. The will has the power to move itself but only after it has been influenced by receiving information from the senses processed in the intellect, and on some occasions by influence from the passions.⁴⁰ The passions in themselves are morally neutral, but they can exercise power over the will. Their proper role is to be disciplined by reason. Because of this, Thomas argues that man can only reach the perfection of his nature when his emotions and affections are gathered under the authority of his intellect.⁴¹ Likewise, the will, when unduly influenced by the passions is led to sin, but when it is subjugated to the intellect it leads to virtue.⁴² In order for man to be truly happy, education is needed to harness man's understanding of himself in his passions and desires, and also the world and society, and what his contribution is to be. Educating the will and the intellect prove to be a common good for man in pursuit of both temporal and supernatural ends.

³⁹ Aquinas, "Question Eleven," 99-100.

⁴⁰ ST I-II.10.4.

⁴¹ ST I-II.24.3.

⁴² ST I-II.24.2.ad3., I-II. 24.3.

g. *What a Man must Do - Education in Virtue*

Through knowledge of the virtues and their practice in daily life at the service of the common good, Catholic education can help students to become fully integrated persons. Man naturally loves God above all things because God is the origin of Man's being, but he needs grace to heal his nature.⁴³ Before the fall, all of his lower powers and faculties were marshaled under the rightful authority of his intellect. Sin detached the passions and emotions from his reason and disrupted man's internal order. Instead of the good always being self-evident to man's intellect so that man could direct his passions and emotions properly through the will, the passions now rise up within man, and compete with the darkened intellect for the will's attention. Despite this, man's inclination to the good and desire to act virtuously remains intact but is weakened.⁴⁴ The effects of sin mean that schools acknowledge that man needs healing in his nature in order to restore the integrity between his reason, will, and passions.⁴⁵ Therefore, the common good of the school should adequately acknowledge this weakness and battle in man's nature, and its solution in the virtuous life.

The theological and moral virtues are the answer to man's wounded state and thus are a chief force in forming young students in Catholic schools. According to the Catechism, "A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good."⁴⁶ The virtues allow man to perform a good act with a good end with facility or ease. The three theological virtues bridge the gap between our

⁴³ ST I.109.3.

⁴⁴ ST I-II.85.1.

⁴⁵ Steven Long. "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Their Indispensability for the Christian Moral Life: Grace as *Motus*", *Nova et Vetera*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2013): 361.

⁴⁶ *Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church* (hereafter CCC), 1803, Accessed April 22, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P64.HTM.

wounded, created nature and assist man in seeking his supernatural end, and have God as their object.⁴⁷ These are given by God, and infused at Baptism. The four moral virtues have several objects and are acquired through practice.⁴⁸ Aquinas notes that the other virtues that correspond to man's nature are the three intellectual virtues. He says, "In man there are but two principles of human actions, viz. the intellect and the appetite: for these are the two principles of movement in man. Consequently every human virtue must needs be a perfection of one of these principles."⁴⁹ Moral virtues each play their part in directing the will towards what reason has dictated.⁵⁰ The intellectual virtues perfect the mind in regards to knowledge.⁵¹ Teaching students to view life through the lens of virtue gives them a structure with which to integrate their intellect, passions, and will. For this reason, the focus of a school community's concern for the common good will be upon the acquired moral and intellectual virtues grounded in charity.

h. Charity

Firstly, the theological virtue of charity informs all the work of the Christian life: the Catholic school is no exception. While the Faith and Hope also elevate man to friendship with God and make him a "partaker of the Divine Nature" without destroying his nature,⁵² man needs a specific virtue that will heal how he loves God. Charity is chief in the ordering of the theological virtues, because it is the form of all the other virtues.⁵³ Man's natural inclination to love God which is corrupted by sin is reordered through the infused theological virtue of charity.⁵⁴ It is the virtue of

⁴⁷ ST I-II.62.1, I-II.63.3.

⁴⁸ ST I-II.63.4.

⁴⁹ ST I-II.58.3.

⁵⁰ ST I-II.59.4.

⁵¹ ST I-II.58.2.

⁵² Ibid. ad 1.

⁵³ ST II.23.8

⁵⁴ Long, 361.

charity that makes it possible for man to love God as he is in himself, and this paves the way for man to actually participate proportionately in the Divine Life.⁵⁵ Charity lies within him as a gift from God that he exercises by loving God and loving neighbor. St. Catherine of Siena says, “I would have you know that every virtue of yours and every vice is put into action by means of your neighbors.”⁵⁶ This superadded power allows man to love God and neighbor with ease and facility,⁵⁷ and which directs man to God and the order all other proximate ends to this final end.⁵⁸ Thus, the virtue of charity is its own unique thing upon which the rest of the virtuous life pivots.

Catholic education recognizes that although man’s final end is the ordering principle of his life, it is not the only one; charity is necessary. But why should a Christian be concerned with anything else but eternal life with God? C.S. Lewis pondered this same question when he addressed groups of academics at Oxford University during World War II. He gives an answer worth noting: “Christianity does not simply replace our natural life and substitute a new one: it is rather a new organization which exploits, to its own supernatural ends, these natural materials.”⁵⁹ This “organization” that Lewis speaks of is in charity which animates and reorders our natural inclinations. Pieper articulates this also by stating, “Virtue perfects us so that we can follow our natural inclinations in the right way.”⁶⁰ Charity is the virtue par excellence that forms our inclinations towards God and neighbor, and all other things besides. Exercising charity imbues man’s task with an act of worship to God. As is evidenced the writings of spiritual masters,⁶¹ all of the tasks of life each have a fitting place in the life of man because the baptized belong to

⁵⁵ ST II-II.23.2

⁵⁶ St. Catherine (of Siena) and Suzanne Noffke. *The Dialogue*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 33.

⁵⁷ ST II. 23. 2.

⁵⁸ ST II.23.7

⁵⁹ Lewis, 54f.

⁶⁰ Pieper, 17.

⁶¹ See the works of Therese of Lisieux, Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena.

Christ; “and Christ is God’s.”⁶² Although man is destined for eternal happiness with God, charity orders the all corresponding parts of man, and should be a foundational element in Catholic education. It also directs students and administrators to contribute to the common good of the school and society as it orders man’s relationship with his neighbor.

i. Justice

After establishing the role of charity within Catholic education, and in order to answer modern society’s arguments for equality and tolerance, a proper understanding of the virtue of justice at the service of the common good is needed. In this case, the school community is its own little society, and strives to form students in this virtue. A life lived well in society with others requires a virtue that regulates man’s exterior dealings in the civic sphere. In essence, the virtue of justice is giving to God and neighbor what is properly due to them.⁶³ Concretely justice manifests in rules and agreements within the school for the purpose of utility and peace. Where these are concerned the school administrators are deputized to govern the dealings with students as individuals and as clubs or classes. Thomas calls this distributive justice, which is meant to distribute common goods proportionately.⁶⁴ He also acknowledges a certain justice between two private individuals and the justice of each individual towards society.⁶⁵ This relationship between individuals and groups highlights that justice is something that is owed to an individual, or a group, out of duty. The common good is preserved through the virtue of justice.

⁶² 1 Cor 3:23.

⁶³ ST II-II.58.1.ad6.

⁶⁴ ST II-II.61.1.

⁶⁵ ST II-II.61.1.

But how does one educate about duties owed to another at the service of the common good? How does one determine what is due to someone else? Justice implies a prior claim: it has to be due in regards to an action or transaction previously performed, “based on the nature of him to whom the obligation is due.”⁶⁶ No creature without reason makes claims about being paid or respected because of their dignity, except for man. The whole concept of rights rests exclusively with reasoning beings. Josef Pieper comments: “Man is a person a spiritual being, a whole unto himself that wills its own proper perfection. For that very reason, something is due to man. He does inalienably have a ‘right’ which he can plead against everyone else, a right which imposes on every one of his partners the obligation at least not to violate it.”⁶⁷ Justice in its various forms, is therefore, due to all men because man can rationally claim it and it will govern all of his relationships with others. The three various kinds of justice correspond to every sphere of man’s relationships, and ideally the just man maintains all three in proper order.⁶⁸ The central way schools exemplify this to their students is through the example of school administrators whose authority must be balanced with justice because they have particular care of the common good of the community.

For the Christian, justice is a moral obligation with a personal character.⁶⁹ Like the other moral virtues, justice has to be rationally engaged with a view towards the good, even when it concerns an action that appears insignificant. “To do the good, does not mean one obeys some abstract norm. On the contrary, even though it has to do with the most private realm of one’s thought which would seem to belong exclusively to the individual, to do good or evil always means to

⁶⁶ Josef Pieper. *Justice*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), 18.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 20.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 51.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 31.

give or withhold from a person I have to deal with, what is ‘his.’”⁷⁰ To operate within the virtue of justice means that it requires a commitment of the whole self, all ones actions, in regards to what is owed towards one’s neighbor. Pieper distinguishes justice versus love because love makes another person in a way like himself, whereas justice recognizes the presence of another who is entirely separate from himself and his own interests.⁷¹ Thomas sees justice as “the common principle of the entire order between one man and another.”⁷² After prudence, justice is the highest moral virtue because it perfects the will.⁷³ Understanding that justice determines what is owed to another and delivers it promptly, or prudently withholds it, will help to make distinctions about true justice for the common good regarding the modern demand for equality.

j. Acquired Moral Virtue Generally Considered

Thomas claims the acquired moral virtues are what help man in ordering the earthly city, which is one of the primary temporal ends for a Catholic school.⁷⁴ According to Lagrange, it is the acquired moral virtues that help students to build the natural structure of virtue within themselves. Some Augustinian scholars have argued that all the moral virtues act as “aspects of the single virtue of divine charity.”⁷⁵ To argue thus would indicate that all the moral virtues are really the same but whose effects manifest in differing ways. Aquinas departs from this and maintains that acquired virtue is a thing independent of charity, although formed by it.⁷⁶ His insight lends credence to the fact that the moral life bears on pursuing eternal life, but is ordered

⁷⁰ Pieper, 31.

⁷¹ Ibid, 25f.

⁷² *ST II-II.58.8.ad2.*

⁷³ *ST I-II.66.4.*

⁷⁴ See note 55.

⁷⁵ Romanus Cessario. *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 32.

⁷⁶ Cessario, 32.

primarily towards temporal ends. He articulates this by reasoning that the acquired moral virtues are more directed towards life in society.”⁷⁷ Considering that Catholic schools have a care for their students in the public sphere, they should put an emphasis on the acquired moral virtues.

The acquired moral virtues which operate between the reason and the will, help students to gear their actions towards the common good. Judging from the Church’s patrimony from Augustine and Aquinas, the will needs forming, exercising, and educating through repetition and strong examples of moral living. As man exercises the moral virtues through repeated acts, these virtues act like an interior blueprint for man’s future decision-making. In order for grace to have a proper foundation for reason to engage in human acts, this blueprint becomes crucial. If there are no architectural plans, then no building can be constructed. Thomas says, “Acquired moral virtue determines the particulars of a moral action so as to render it proportionate to the good of society.”⁷⁸ God has given man moral virtues that are acquired specifically to help man in the earthly city. These virtues will not be necessary in heaven, but they will order a student’s interior to working well with his neighbor, who will be in heaven with him.

Aquinas locates the moral virtues in the will and passions,⁷⁹ and chief among them is the virtue of prudence. Informed by the intellect which possesses correct principles of causes and reasoning, man is able to exercise the will in a rectified manner. Prudence is a particular virtue necessary to man that both orders his reason and disposes him to exercise his will to act fittingly according to the circumstances.⁸⁰ A man educated to exercise the intellectual and moral virtues

⁷⁷ Cessario, 110.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 111.

⁷⁹ Paul J. Glenn, *A Tour of the Summa* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book, 1960), 144.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

bridged by prudence can desire what is good and choose the best means to pursue the good he perceives. Both the intellectual and moral virtues are necessary for man's education because they help to order his intellect towards the truth of reality. True Christian education acknowledges that there is a direct connection between knowledge and moral habits.⁸¹ In order for man to behold God in the beatific vision, this demands that he be able to recognize, desire, and choose what is true and good. In order for students to participate and engage the common good in the school, and later in life, they must be able to discern what is just and prudent in regards to their neighbor.

To help students to seek the truth that will satisfy their intellect, the mind needs intellectual virtues that order it towards perfection. Manifestations of man's desire to know truth was observed even by Aristotle.⁸² The intellectual virtues of science, understanding, and wisdom, are the avenues through which man pursues truth for its own sake.⁸³ Ordering his mind to the first principles spoken about earlier, the intellectual virtues perfect the aptness for the consideration of truth.⁸⁴ He explains, "in this sense the intellectual virtues are about those things whereby a man is made happy; both because the acts of these virtues can be meritorious, and because they are a kind of beginning of perfect bliss, which consists in the contemplation of truth."⁸⁵ Thus the intellectual virtues help man to strive to possess knowledge of first causes.⁸⁶ These virtues bestow a kind of ordered structure within man's mind that allows him to process new

⁸¹ A.G. Sertillange. *The Intellectual Life: Its Spirit, Conditions, Methods*. Transl. by Mary Ryan. (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 21.

⁸² Aristotle. *The Metaphysics*. Transl. W.D. Ross. Internet Classics Archive. Accessed May 3, 2017, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.1.i.html>.

⁸³ ST I-II.57.2.

⁸⁴ ST I-II.57.1.

⁸⁵ ST I-II.57.1.ad2.

⁸⁶ ST I-II.57.1, 2.

information and observations about the world with greater facility. Science, understanding, and wisdom help man to acknowledge what is true and real about the world. They provide “aptness for a good work,”⁸⁷ and reside in the speculative intellect.⁸⁸ They are designed to perfect how a man seeks and understands what is true, but it takes virtues that lie in the will to assess the circumstances and take proper action based on this knowledge. The perfection intellectual virtues bring facilitate students appreciating knowledge and truth wherever it can be found and for its own sake. Understanding the role of this set of virtues can help faculty to pursue with their students the truth that geometry, literature, and biology bring to the life of man. The speculative truths that rise to the surface in these subjects satisfies a part of man that is necessary to his happiness – his intellect.⁸⁹ Catholic school faculty foster the wonder that Augustine spoke of because it prepares them to meet the beatific vision, which is intellectual.⁹⁰ Cultivating these virtues of the mind supports the wonder that Augustine demonstrates in his own understanding of learning.

The acquired moral and intellectual virtues grounded in charity and justice help to clarify the final and temporal ends of man and support the common good of the school. Education is meant to facilitate the child’s maturity by affirming these moral virtues as they progress through the Catholic school system.⁹¹ After considering the role of charity and justice within the moral and

⁸⁷ ST I-II.57.1

⁸⁸ ST I-II.57.1,2

⁸⁹ ST I-II.3.4.

⁹⁰ ST Suppl.92.

⁹¹ “In this perspective, in the Christian educational project all subjects collaborate, each with its own specific content, to the formation of mature personalities.” Congregation for Catholic Education. “Catholic Education on the Threshold of the New Millennium.” Holy See Website, December 28, 1997, sec. 14, Accessed March 10, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_270419_98_school2000_en.html.

intellectual virtues, it is imperative to explore their terminus, the common good, in order to determine how the dynamics of modern calls for equality and tolerance affect this essential component of human life.

k. The Common Good

The common good dictates and preserves a school's mission and accordingly is an important touchtone of the conversation regarding equality and tolerance. Defining this term is crucial in order to understand its eternal and temporal manifestation for a Christian. In light of Thomas' thought, the common good is defined as a good, or end, one in number, but communicable to many.⁹² The common good is unified because it is directed to a final end, but can be shared in by all. This means that a common good is not quantifiable. Peace, unity, friendship, beauty: these are all common goods. No one would say that there is a limit in quantity to peace or justice or truth. Nor are there quotas that become overly saturated because too many people are friends with one another, or there is too much justice in one particular place. The common good exists without these kinds of demarcations. The reason it does is because it is derivative of goodness itself which comes from God and is God. God is the ultimate common good towards which man is ordered,⁹³ and the temporal common good lies in the ordering of the earthly city words divine ends.

⁹² See *ST I-II*, q.90, a.2, ad 3, and John Goyette, "On the Transcendence of the Political Common Good." *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (2013): 138.

⁹³ Charles DeKoninck, "The Primacy of the Common Good Against the Personalists." *The Writings of Charles De Koninck: Volume Two*. Ed. and Transl. by Ralph McInerny (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 68, 90f.

The common good rests in the larger understanding of goodness in God. According to Thomas, goodness by nature is diffusive of itself.⁹⁴ It is “more efficacious as it communicates itself to more numerous beings. Communicability is the very reason for its perfection.”⁹⁵ When a mother gives birth to her child, she shares her own blood and DNA with her son or daughter, but she also passes onto them her way of living, her attitude, her faith. As the child matures, he also possesses his own personality and gifts that he will begin to contribute to his family first by his mere presence, and then with his speech and actions. Slowly that personality and those gifts will be given over to society as he engages the deeper questions of human life. His flourishing will be the mark of a life lived well. Likewise, with the boy’s gifts, the common good becomes more excellent the more it is shared. As a result, the common good is not something to be hoarded but spread and encouraged to grow and flourish. Man deeply desires the common good but it is worth pursuing for its own sake because of the perfection of goodness in God.

Since the common good is the lodestar, misunderstandings about it within Catholic education can obscure the truth about human society and his heavenly calling. Modern society’s arguments for equality and tolerance presuppose that they are seeking to foster justice in regards to the common good. The common good and its protection and fostering is deeply implanted in each person as a goal that unites the human race. Thus each person seeks the good of the human race to the degree that the good sought is sharable.⁹⁶ Since pursuing the common good orders the person and society’s pursuit of a common end, it also orders their pursuit of all the intermediate ends that schools are teaching students: from the importance of the truth revealed in literature and

⁹⁴ ST I.5.4.ad2

⁹⁵ DeKoninck, 75.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

exercising prudence in decision making. One way that many have misinterpreted the pursuit of the common good is to introduce a goal, an end, that is not sharable (individualist/personalist), and the other is an antithesis to the common good, introducing a goal that does not directly pertain to the person or group (collectivist).

What does it look like when an individual is asserting their preference (i.e. an element that is not sharable) as a measure of justice in society? In this case, the common good is an element that is not even a good in itself is introduced and taken to be the society's measure. De Koninck succinctly points out that the error here is that, "they can perversely prefer the singular good of their person to the common good, erected [as] a common measure of all good."⁹⁷ Advancing this argument, Pieper claims the individualist contends that the world is made up of individuals exclusively. He says, "When an individual confronts the social totality, *one* individual confronts *many* individuals."⁹⁸ This error would reinforce the lack of true objective goods to be sought by man, which relativism reinforces.

Pursuing one's preference as if it is a common good does a deceitful service to the individual and the whole body politic, especially when there is a higher common good to be sought, such as the good of the species. In this case, the common good is treated as a collection of disconnected private goods or elements that coexist as accidents rather than a unified purpose for which all are striving. Consequently, the common good fails to flourish within the individualist error. Instead it creates a kind of tyranny and forces others under its subjection. De Koninck reasons that, "A society made up of persons who love their private good above the common good, is a society not

⁹⁷ De Koninck, 68.

⁹⁸ Pieper, *Justice*, 53.

of free men, but of tyrants” who menace each other by force.⁹⁹ Rather than seeking to participate in the common good, the individualist error asserts a dictatorship over others demanding that the rest of society adopt their personal standard as a rule. “Every phase of man’s communal life [becomes] a compromise between the interests of individuals with equal rights.”¹⁰⁰ Ironically, rather than reinforcing freedom, as individualists hope, it erroneously uses freedom as an excuse to deny real objective goods that are common to all.

A concrete example of this is when one way of being is forced to be accepted as equal within a given society. In recent decades, some school administrations themselves, or groups within the school community, have insisted that the student body and their families accept individuals who assert an exception that is really at odds with Catholic teaching.¹⁰¹ One school in particular gave a rationale that is a classic example of the individualist error regarding the common good.¹⁰² Although the high school administration claimed they are supporting “the dignity of each person regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identification,”¹⁰³ they are actually introducing a kind of disunity into their school culture, as is evidenced by the further need for

⁹⁹ De Koninck, 68.

¹⁰⁰ Pieper, *Justice*, 53.

¹⁰¹ “Catholic School Honoring Pro-abortion Official, Pro-lifers Plan Protest.” *Catholic News Agency*. Accessed April 12, 2017.

http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic_school_honoring_proabortion_official_prolifers_plan_protest/.

“San Francisco Catholic School Teachers Rally Against Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone’s ‘Morality Clauses.’” *Huffington Post*. Accessed April 12, 2017. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/21/san-francisco-catholic-teachers-morality-clause_n_7357962.html.

Shapiro, Lila. “This Catholic High School Is Standing Up To The Church”. *Huffington Post*. Accessed 4/12/2017. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/catholic-high-school-lgbt-discrimination_us_55e095e3e4b0c818f617a782.

¹⁰² Daniel Guernsey. “Transgendered Teachers in Catholic Schools.” *Crisis Magazine*. Accessed February, 16, 2017, <http://www.crisismagazine.com/2016/transgender-teachers-catholic-schools>.

¹⁰³ “Letter to Parents of San Francisco’s Mercy High School”. *National Catholic Reporter*. May 11, 2016. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/312408489/Letter-to-parents-of-San-Francisco-s-Mercy-High-School-students-released-May-11>.

professional counselors so that students can receive “assistance with processing their views.”¹⁰⁴

This is a subtle tyranny that implies that one is allowed to have difficulties but each student, faculty member, or parent, ultimately should affirm individual exceptions at odds with Catholic teaching under the guise of supporting the common good. A situation that is unjust cannot support or enrich the common good. Not only that, but if the school administration were pursuing a common good it would not need to be accepted or affirmed after therapeutic counseling; it would be a universal good that all recognize and share. This pursuit of the universal good should be evidenced from the school’s mission and grounded in their common pursuit of Christ. Instead, in this situation, the school administration is falling into the individualist error. It is a common temptation for schools to think that they are protecting the common good by honoring one person’s preference, but rather than enriching the common good of the entire school community, it ruptures it.

Rivaling the error of individualism, collectivism swings in the opposite direction. Introducing an alien good, a work, idea, or concept that is imposed externally on a person as a goal to be pursued, would define the collectivist mentality. It reduces individuals to faceless groups that cannot assert ingenuity or opposition in the face of such an idea or work. In the tragic examples of communistic societies, an abstract concept of community, or work, or the nature of man is imposed on its members. It is an image of society foisted on them based upon exterior ideological concepts. Man is asked to conform and consent rather than to invent. This produces a collectivism that not only prevents others from sharing in this supposed good, but De Koninck points out that it gives birth to a false unity in the society that cannot perdure. Part of the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

violation against the common good is that the vision of this society lacks authentic unity, which is what makes a good common to all and sharable.¹⁰⁵ Here, too, the collectivist fails to recognize that the individual is compromised, not by pursuing a good that is greater, but by pursuing a good that in some cases is irrelevant to him, and foreign to his interests. Man is coerced to contribute to a good that he may not participate in. For instance, Communist societies promise a flourishing economy free from want, but few enjoy this promise. De Koninck argues that “Beings will be more perfect insofar as their appetite extends to a good more remote from their singular good alone.”¹⁰⁶ In a collectivist society, it appears that all are contributing to a vision of society that they will enjoy because it is a distant dream, but in truth through a controlling administrative mechanism that determines arbitrarily what is good for all, it flattens creativity and stifles ingenuity. However, what the collectivist overlooks is that the “good more distant” from the individual is not the grand utopian vision of a few individuals. The “good more distant” is always rooted in the person and geared towards a good more universal and more common, which is ultimately the good of the greater universe, and the pursuit of God himself. In reality the common good is an organic growth from shared culture and experience which flowers into a voluntary association or shared identity.

Since Catholic schools are concerned with the “whole of man’s life,”¹⁰⁷ the common good of pursuing truth and God orders all the ends of the school. It draws on the highest universal good and is supported by the school’s emphasis on formation in the virtues. Charity which instructs and forms students to participate in the common good by ordering their love for God, in turn

¹⁰⁵ De Koninck, 76f.

¹⁰⁶ De Koninck, 77.

¹⁰⁷ *GE*, Introduction.

orders all their other loves, especially their love for neighbor through just dealings with him. It also prompts a student to contribute to the flourishing of the common good by adding his talents, friendships, ingenuity, and sufferings. This understanding of the reciprocal relationship of charity, justice and the common good will be crucial for understanding the role of natural difference and dependency later.

Recalling Pius XI's definition that education is meant to fit a man for eternal beatitude, the moral and intellectual virtues formed in charity and justice for the common good are necessary pieces if man's nature is to be healed and directed towards his ultimate happiness. For man to possess a good life he must learn both speculative knowledge to appreciate the truth for its own sake, and likewise the practical principles through which he can be happy. Or as Aristotle indicates, correct education is feeling pleasure, and pain at the right things.¹⁰⁸ True Catholic education encompasses both these aspects of man. Likewise, Augustine's emphasis on self-knowledge and Thomas' understanding of learning and teaching, indicate that with God's help man is meant to engage his reason and will towards the good that is in God. In this regard, virtues like prudence, charity, and justice are the means for man to attain self-mastery over his passions but also to savor the truth that has been made clear to him, and participate in the common good. In the way of virtue educators and students alike can participate and preserve the common good and fulfill Pius XI's charge that education is meant to fit a man for what the world will demand of him, and how he might attain, with God's grace, the beatific vision.

Part II - The Catholic School

¹⁰⁸ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1104b3-1104b19.

The Catholic School is a microcosm of society whose common good ordered towards God builds an environment where students are engaged on multiple levels. They practice the virtues and doctrine; they seek excellence in their academics; and they weather the storms of difficulty and conflict guided by those who embody these Christian principles, and are practiced in the life of virtue.¹⁰⁹ According to Vatican II, the Catholic School, “is designed not only to develop with special care the intellectual faculties but also to form the ability to judge rightly, to hand on the cultural legacy of previous generations, to foster a sense of values, to prepare for professional life.”¹¹⁰ These elements ensure that students will be well equipped emotionally, spiritually, and physically to contribute meaningfully to society of which they are apart, and to persevere in the life of faith for which they are made. Formation in virtue according to Thomas is what educates the will to seek what is good. This understanding of teaching and learning forms the foundation of Catholic education: it affirms that man does not create his own reality, rather he discovers it, and its consequences shape the common good of all.

Relativistic opponents would quickly cast aside Catholic schools’ vision of man, proclaiming that man creates his own reality and should not be bound to the ideas previously held by his forebears. In order to confront the demands for equality and tolerance, Catholic schools need proper definitions of the terms and a deeper understanding of their philosophical premises. In recent years these terms have been associated with social issues such as same-sex unions,¹¹¹ transgender individuals,¹¹² women’s rights,¹¹³ and religiously motivated hate crimes.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ *GE*, 8.3.

¹¹⁰ *GE*, 5.

¹¹¹ The examples in the following footnotes are not meant to be exhaustive: Human Rights Campaign.

¹¹² National Center for Transgender Equality, American Public Health Association, NOH8 Campaign.

¹¹³ Equality Now.

¹¹⁴ Americans for Peace and Tolerance, Gedenk Movement.

Although these terms are familiar in the patrimony of the Church, modern culture's use of them appears fluid. The first task is to investigate and define what modern culture means by equality and tolerance and then to appraise that understanding against Catholic education's vision of man. Do these terms adequately satisfy man's desire for justice as modern culture asserts? Lastly, we need to determine if natural difference and dependency can truly meet those needs as they pertain to Catholic schools.

a. Problem of Equality

The problem of equality is rooted in relativistic thinking that affects morality and behavior of Catholic school students and families. Moral relativism has permeated virtually every sector of society¹¹⁵ and teaches that moral truths are not objectively true for all, but rather are determined by individual or group preference. In essence, relativism, argues that all ideas possess the same dignity and are deserving of consideration. As a result, relativists begin to conflate ideas with persons. Here the confusion about identity and will is complete.¹¹⁶ This lack of distinction confronts Catholic school students with a homogenizing sense of culture and lifestyle - all ideas must be equal because ideas correlate to persons. If persons all possess an inherent dignity and all preferences bear equal weight, then it becomes difficult to separate persons from ideas. In this light, all ideas begin to possess an infallible and unquestionable dignity and truth that cannot be gainsaid.

¹¹⁵ Beckwith, 13.

¹¹⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, "Meeting with Educators."

Modern colloquialisms regarding relativism are many, but the term equality takes pride of place. Equality by this definition is “having the same rights or privileges.”¹¹⁷ Equality in modern parlance has come to mean a tacit argument for acceptance of anyone else’s opinion and lifestyle, beyond mere toleration. This is the problem of equality: All ideas and persons are equal. To attack an idea is to attack the person.¹¹⁸ Advocates for lifestyles that are at odds with the traditional roles of husband and wife, male and female, have rallied for acceptance of the meaning and identities that they have pieced together, under the banner that they are arguing that personal autonomy is the highest expression of justice. Although it is not surprising that these issues are seen most clearly in sexual ethics, arguments for “equality” manifest daily in Catholic schools regarding mundane decisions that affect discipline, homework, and sports schedules. Parents argue that administrators fail to treat their child equally because the parent’s preferences are not observed. Or, conversely administrators begin to demand unjust requirements from their teachers because in order to satisfy preferences of students. At bottom, the modern argument for equality no longer argues for justice on the grounds of shared human nature, but rather demands recognition and enforcement of acceptance of all moral choices and ideas as possessing the same value or contribution to the common good of the school.

A hidden error that is often overlooked is that this position implies a kind of moral neutrality while asserting specific directives. An example of this is enshrined in the majority opinion for the Supreme Court Case *Planned Parenthood vs. Casey*. Justice Kennedy writes, “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of

¹¹⁷ “Equal”, *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. <http://www.oed.com/>. Accessed February 24, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Beckwith, 150.

the mystery of human life.”¹¹⁹ The implication of this statement is that each person is responsible for defining their identity and concept of the material world; there is no objective standard of what is real. In writing this, the Justices want to assert personal autonomy as a place of neutral ground. The problem is that “they are not being neutral at all but rather assert or imply a particular view of the human person.”¹²⁰ Rather than being neutral, personal autonomy becomes the measure of justice against anyone who counters an individual’s claim.¹²¹ Consequently, relativism implies that every opinion is a manifestation of personal autonomy and should be equal in dignity but fails to make distinctions regarding nature, nor to seek what is true, and disregards the prior claims indicated in justice that human nature makes on others. It falls into the personalist error that De Koninck mentions, using one’s private good or preference as a yardstick against the other’s claims.

b. The Problem of Tolerance

In order to maintain a relativistic outlook that all opinions are equal, the term “tolerance” has quickly followed equality in importance. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, this is a noun that means, “The action or practice of enduring or sustaining pain or hardship.”¹²² This definition implies arduous labor in the face of difficulty. However, another definition that encompasses the modern view is the following: “Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human.”¹²³ Contrasting with the *Oxford English Dictionary*, this infers that tolerance

¹¹⁹ *Planned Parenthood Vs. Casey*. 505 US 833 (1992). <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/505/833.html>. Accessed February 22, 2017.

¹²⁰ Beckwith, 116.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² “Tolerance”, *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. <http://www.oed.com/>. Accessed February 21, 2016.

¹²³ Teaching Tolerance website. <http://www.tolerance.org/about>. Accessed 4/12/2107.

implies passivity in the face of possible disagreement.¹²⁴ However, the United Nation's educational body from which this definition is drawn, adds the following language, "Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. The practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs."¹²⁵ Their definition echoes the American Supreme Court Justices' majority opinion which asserts personal autonomy as being the measure of justice. If each is defending their personal independence, this cannot result in harmony. UNESCO's position is contradictory: its premise claims neutral moral ground while obligating people to assert their preference.¹²⁶ What if asserting one's preferences for street parking, manners of dress, or loud music creates difficulties for one's neighbor, as is often the case? Is justice satisfied if everyone retreats into neutrality? These principles of tolerance do not help to satisfy the appropriate justice between neighbors in a society. UNESCO's view sees all ideas as being equal irrespective of any truth or moral ordering.

Subsequently, it is important that Catholic schools emphasize that respect for ideas is not the same as respect for persons. While all persons should be treated with dignity in Catholic education, ideas that are not true or are harmful to the common good should not be respected or tolerated. Real tolerance makes a distinction in favor of the truth and justice. In Catholic schools especially, where virtue is being demonstrated by adults and imitated by students daily,

¹²⁴ Jefferson Fish, "Tolerance, Acceptance, Understanding". *Psychology Today* Website. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/looking-in-the-cultural-mirror/201402/tolerance-acceptance-understanding>, accessed February 22, 2016.

¹²⁵ UNESCO, "Declaration of Principles of Tolerance." November 16, 1995. *UNESCO* Website. http://www.unesco.org/webworld/peace_library/UNESCO/HRIGHTS/124-129.HTM. Accessed 4/12/2107.

¹²⁶ Beckwith, 117.

personal autonomy has to cede to the universal rights of others, which means that personal autonomy cannot be the measure of justice. While people are equal in dignity not all ideas can be tolerated. Some must be more true than others. One position is to be affirmed and another denied in order for man to move forward. When the truth, which is a common good, is affirmed everyone wins. In a way similar to the term equality, tolerance argues for a false universalism in all moral choices that cannot sustain itself, nor produce the harmonious culture in Catholic education that these principles propose.

1. Consequences

This problematic way of thinking has deep consequences for students in Catholic schools. What Pope Benedict has dubbed the “dictatorship of relativism”¹²⁷ systemically infects the culture of the institution, which prevents students from seeking the truth. While claiming all ideas are equal and to be tolerated so as to avoid pain for anyone, relativism ironically prevents any kind of meaningful engagement. If all ideas are equal, no objective truth can be asserted. This appears to absolve students from sparring with their peers and instructors in a culture that desires to fructify ideas and pass on the principles Thomas claims are intrinsically in man. The Congregation of Catholic Education notes a similar effect on schools, “The fragmentation of education, the generic character of the values frequently invoked and which obtain ample and easy consensus at the price of a dangerous obscuring of their content, tend to make the school step back into a supposed neutrality, which enervates its educating potential and reflects negatively on the formation of the pupils.”¹²⁸ If there is no truth, then Augustine and Thomas were wrong about principles that are brought to birth through the exchange of free ideas and the

¹²⁷ Josef Ratzinger. “Homily of His Eminence Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger Dean of the College of Cardinals.” April 18, 2005, Holy See Website. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/gpII/documents/homily-pro-eligendo-pontifice_20050418_en.html.

¹²⁸ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 10.

process of “cogitation” between teachers and students. If there is no truth, then likewise there is no virtue, or charity, or justice to be taught or enjoyed in civic society. This environment creates a stifling atmosphere without truth, and charity, where no opinion can be challenged or vetted against what is real.¹²⁹ In this case, engaging the intellect and will, is akin to forcing one to simultaneously gag and gasp for breath. A school that insists on tolerance and neutrality becomes the most intolerant of all.

Another consequence is that because preference reigns supreme anyone in the school community can use preference to justify special treatment or exceptions to the common good. Demands from parents and administrators for personalized attention and instruction for students, or exceptions for sports, can sometimes extend beyond what is truly just both to teachers and others in the school community. This impacts learning because it compromises the time and resources that teachers have to adequately prepare their classes, and the increases the demands placed on students to learn. In these cases, parents or administrators fail to see the greater common good and weigh it against the personal needs of a student or his family. In order for teachers to perfectly embody the principles of their discipline as Thomas articulates, their time must be protected by administrators who have a care for the common good of the school.

Not only does this misunderstanding of equality and tolerance keep students from seeking truth, but it deeply affects their relationships with others which in turn affects the common good and the culture of the whole school. If one’s choices do not affect other people, then I am not my “brother’s keeper.”¹³⁰ This deeply and directly attacks the way Man images God, who is

¹²⁹ See note 99.

¹³⁰ Genesis 4:9.

relational, and who makes moral demands upon us, the first of which is to love him and our neighbors as ourselves. Neglecting to teach students, or cultivate an atmosphere where they learn to love God and neighbor in light of the truths of reality, will result in breeding a generation that lacks courage and maturity. In an atmosphere where each person decides what is right and wrong according to their preferences, no one can take risks, or be creative, neither can any person come to the aid of another. This seriously harms the culture of virtue in a school and seeking God as the ultimate common good.

Lastly, both equality and tolerance's trajectory denies the Catholic understanding of the common good. Personal preference, or as De Koninck says "personality," set up as a common good is an erroneous proposition because it is taking a private good that is neither universal nor diffusive and making it the measure of all other goods. It inverts the pursuit of perfection and leaves man directed towards a lesser good than the beatific vision for which he is made. This lesser good neither enriches him privately nor contributes to the common good through which he will ultimately be satisfied.¹³¹

The pressure to generate identity and meaning within relativism translates to equality and tolerance being seen as common goods to be used as measurements for the success of a school or an individual.¹³² According to Goyette's definition,¹³³ equality and tolerance are not common goods. Neither term is an end in itself. Equality and tolerance are accidental properties to any body, not its essence. Because of this, each term points towards a greater good that is beyond

¹³¹ De Koninck, 78.

¹³² Willems, 217f.

¹³³ See note 79.

itself. Since equality is an effect of justice which is universal and communicable to many, justice is the common good to be pursued. Tolerance, at best, distantly resembles patience, a virtue Thomas places under fortitude.¹³⁴ In addition, tolerance has to be adopted individually by personal choice; it fails the test to be sharable in the way that justice, beauty, or goodness are. Proponents of tolerance are ironically in the right, that one cannot foist tolerance on another. Tolerance properly understood is something that is rationally engaged, and endured, rather than asserted. Equality and tolerance each fail the test of being common goods.

Recalling Pieper's distinction between ratio and intellectus,¹³⁵ the modern understanding of equality and tolerance collapse in the face of the true ends of man's happiness. The common good in Catholic schools comprises these two ends: learning to reason clearly and well, and using that reason as a springboard for contemplation as Thomas indicates. Reasoning well helps students to order their lives in accord with temporal realities, and aids their contemplation, which properly fits them for eternity with God. Asserting preference as common goods, prevents students from acting in accord with objective truth and justice. These terms wrongly understood skew the meaning of truth which can keep students from the ordered interior that Catholic formation gives, and possibly even their final end in God.

Catholic school teachers, administrators, and families would all argue that the principles behind these terms properly understood have a place within the common good of a school community. Catholics should pursue justice with the view that all people are equal in dignity. Schools should promote a culture where students are free to explore and affirm with open hearts what is true and

¹³⁴ *ST II-II.136.*

¹³⁵ See note 27.

good in other traditions. Students in Catholic schools should not be afraid or dismayed by legitimate questions about the Church and her practices with an end to deeper understanding and commitment. A correct understanding of tolerance and equality would see these terms as an opportunity to pursue a common purpose, or end; working towards the perfection of the earthly city and ultimately eternal beatitude.

c. The Church's Answer to Equality and Tolerance

The answer of Catholic schools to the insufficient grasp of equality and tolerance necessitates reclaiming the authentic definition of these terms along with a deeper understanding of natural difference and dependency ordered to the Common Good, which is ultimately found in Jesus Christ. He is the source of charity, the ultimate common good, and the interpretive key to the meaning of human existence. Because of the Incarnation, Christians understand that “Christ fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear.”¹³⁶ Since God is the one true teacher, as Augustine and Thomas affirm, there can be no true education without him. God has to be the focus of the Catholic school. If the purpose of a school is to “fit a man for what he must be and what he must do here below,”¹³⁷ then it is Christ who serves as the model of man striving to integrate all the intermediate ends of life to his proper end in God.¹³⁸ To neglect his presence and his teachings is to sunder the school’s mission to everyone’s peril. As Pope Francis says, “Modernity sought to build a universal brotherhood based on equality, yet we gradually came to realize that this brotherhood, lacking a reference to a common Father as its ultimate

¹³⁶ GS, 22.

¹³⁷ See note 1.

¹³⁸ CCC, 459.

foundation, cannot endure.”¹³⁹ Embracing personal knowledge and an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is central to the mission of every Catholic School, and the reason for its existence. It is in pursuit of knowing and loving Christ that all other activities of the school find their ordering and proper function.

As the common good in the life of the school, Christ gives school communities a model of pursuing temporal and supernatural ends within the common good according to natural difference and dependency. In a passage from St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians, an ancient song notes about the Lord, that “though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.”¹⁴⁰ Christ’s kenosis in the Incarnation reveals that within the Trinity the Divine Persons possess a distinction that reflects a natural difference between them and a dependency because of their shared essence. Because of the limitations of human nature, Christ’s example is applied to man analogously.¹⁴¹ Though Christ is God, he embraces human nature and even allows himself to be physically dependent upon other men. Because of the dependence evidenced in his Divine and human nature, the Incarnation allows Christ to participate in the common good while being its source. Journet points out that Christ’s actions encompass the whole of human life. He says that, “by reason of the person of Christ each of his acts have by their nature an infinite value, each act was in fact offered as a part of the whole.”¹⁴² Adopting the two fold ends of man, Christ did not only pray, but he worked, slept, ate, and wept. Christ exercises his humanity in perfect acts towards

¹³⁹ Pope Francis. *Lumen Fidei*. June 29, 2013. Holy See Website. Section 54.1. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html.

¹⁴⁰ Phil 2:6-7.

¹⁴¹ ST I.13.5

¹⁴² Charles Cardinal Journet. *The Mass*. (Notre Dame: St. Augustine's Press, 2008), 16.

temporal ends, always with the final end in mind and respecting the interdependency with which he had created man. He intends for his mystical body to do the same. His life on earth is an example that working towards temporal ends is valuable and necessary for the Christian life as Lewis asserts. Through Christ's example, natural difference and dependency ordered to the common good influence the manner in which students in Catholic schools go about pursuing education.

d. *Natural Difference*

The Church's answer to the demand for a blanket acceptance of ideas that are antithetical to the Christian life lies in an understanding of authentic natural difference rooted in creation.

Returning to the truth that man's identity and meaning are discovered not invented, there are obvious differences and distinctions in nature that point towards natural inequality for man.

Therefore, natural difference is factual inequality that exists in creatures even between individuals in a species. To be clearer, not only do individuals possess different physical characteristics between members of the human race, but all differ in talent and ability.

Aquinas claims this is a reflection of God's goodness in his creation. He says,

"The distinction among things, and their multitude, is from the intention of the first agent, who is God. Because this goodness cannot be sufficiently manifested by one creature alone, he has produced many and diverse creatures, in order that what one fails to manifest of the goodness of God may be supplied by others. For goodness exists in a multiple and divided manner in creatures; that is why the entire universe participates more in the Divine goodness, and manifests it more perfectly than any other creature."¹⁴³ Thomas affirms that each thing in nature possesses

¹⁴³ DeKonick, 85.

its own goodness individually but is ordered to the greater goodness of the cosmos. This view of the universe, and man's place in it, is meant to revolutionize every Christian's outlook. The overarching wisdom of God's providential plan is greater and farther reaching than any individual's claim to autonomy. The whole cosmos possess more of the goodness in God as a whole, and all its parts are ordered to that end in God. Man who is made in the likeness of God, is a part of this creation and participates in it by imaging a proportionate part of God's goodness.

Schools are meant to pass on this grander vision of natural difference. Arguments that propose a forced sense of equality, or sameness, appear flat in the face of Thomas' articulation of creation's goodness in its multiplicity. In light of this, Thomas' teaching is valuable in affirming the good of natural difference. He argues that each thing in creation is not the same, but possesses an inequality that is fitting to its proper place in the larger participation of all created things. He says, "Inequality comes from the perfection of the whole. The roof of a house differs from the foundation, not because it is made of other material; but in order that the house may be made perfect of different parts."¹⁴⁴ St. Paul illustrates the same principle when he describes his analogy for the body of Christ. He says, "For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose."¹⁴⁵ The differences he describes are part of what make the body what it is. Each part necessarily has to be different from the

¹⁴⁴ ST I.47.2.ad3.

¹⁴⁵ 1 Cor 12:14-18.

other. This difference is important to recognize in the face of the “sameness” modern equality demands.

Both Thomas and Paul use examples to signify the same reality: the paradox and beauty of creation both in the natural world and in the human race is that the Triune God intends a world of multiplicity that finds its unity within himself. The Catechism states, “The ultimate purpose of creation is that God ‘who is the creator of all things may at last become ‘all in all’, thus simultaneously assuring his own glory and our beatitude.”¹⁴⁶ This authentic understanding of natural difference acknowledges that unity preserves individuality but also orders it to the ultimate common good, which is God. Catholic schools are a source of unity in pursuing Christ which also safeguard and foster the individuality of their students. This view prevents Catholic schools from falling into collectivism or individualism that De Koninck warns against.

How is natural difference to be recognized in schools? Acknowledging Thomas’ understanding that creation manifests God’s goodness in a variety of ways, and affirming nature which includes differences in biological gender, ethnicity, gifts, and scholastic as well as creative potential in students, is a strong start. If all in the school seek their ordering in Christ then he becomes the yardstick and measuring rod of the school's essence. Within this context, it is his life and teachings which have been passed onto us that are the common pursuit. In this light, gender, ethnicity, and other differences take their place in the accidental ordering of the culture, rather than being the primary focus.

¹⁴⁶ CCC, 294.

Similarly, it is fitting that Catholic schools respond to the needs of each geographical and cultural area in which they are situated. By responding at the local level, schools not only attest to the excellence of subsidiarity, but they also reject modern culture's drive towards sameness. Some Catholic schools are highly selective and pride themselves on superior academics, while other parish schools aim to be strong, steady alternatives to public education. The multiplicity of needs that Catholic schools are meeting accurately and fittingly reflect Thomas' observation about creation. God's goodness reveals itself in natural differences in communities that support Catholic schools. Although all should be faithful to the magisterium and have Christ as the model and inspiration, it would be unfitting to say that every Catholic school is a standardized package that always responds to the same needs.

Regarding natural difference in individuals at Catholic schools, a person's identity vis a vis his dignity in Christ, should be accepted and affirmed unconditionally. The Church's vision of man as imaging his creator dictates that man possesses a fixed nature given to him from God. It is not something of his choosing, but it is the sum total of his gifts and choices that must be reckoned with. Poor moral choices that reflect a lack of virtue and a lack of maturity should be disciplined by families and in some cases schools, as well, while asserting the goodness of the person. Students in Catholic schools should, "be capable both of resisting the debilitating influence of relativism and of living up to the demands made on them by their Baptism."¹⁴⁷ The Church claims definite values about who the human person is and her vision of man founded on Christ.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ *The Catholic School*. 1977, 12.

¹⁴⁸ *Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, "There is a tendency to forget that education always presupposes and involves a definite concept of man and life. To claim neutrality for schools signifies in practice, more times than not, banning all reference to religion from the cultural and

Catholic schools teach that real love requires recognizing what is true and good and a willingness to sacrifice for what is true and good. Insisting upon acceptance of attitudes or choices that are sinful, and therefore harmful for students' formation, rupture not only that student's life but also those of others. It is not true charity, and it ignores the suffering that comes with disarming such a position. According to Pope Benedict, there is a kind of intellectual charity involved in teaching and learning that the Christian life requires of teachers and students considering natural difference. He claims that, "intellectual charity calls the educator to recognize that the profound responsibility to lead the young to truth is nothing less than an act of love. In practice 'intellectual charity' upholds the essential unity of knowledge against the fragmentation which ensues when reason is detached from the pursuit of truth."¹⁴⁹ From Benedict's words, it's clear that appreciation for natural difference has other implications: it will require patience (the more authentic and deliberate form of tolerance): authentically forming one's conscience to know what is true (exercising and engaging the intellect and will): and ultimately cultivating a willingness to sacrifice, an element at the core of the Christian life which is required for love that is ordered. Living charity requires sacrificing one's preferences in order to acknowledge and affirm what is greater than preference. C.S. Lewis points this out when he says, "Despite enormous differences, it is 'the same all the way up'; that hierarchical inequality, the need for self-surrender, the willing sacrifice of self to others, and the thankful and loving (but unashamed) acceptance of others' sacrifice to us, hold sway in the realm beyond Nature. It is indeed only

educational field, whereas a correct pedagogical approach ought to be open to the more decisive sphere of ultimate objectives, attending not only to "how", but also to "why", overcoming any misunderstanding as regards the claim to neutrality in education, restoring to the educational process the unity which saves it from dispersion amid the meandering of knowledge and acquired facts, and focuses on the human person in his or her integral, transcendent, historical identity." 10.

¹⁴⁹Pope Benedict XVI, "Meeting with Catholic Educators". *Catholic University of America*. April 17, 2008.

love that makes the difference.”¹⁵⁰ Acknowledging these natural differences and equality found in the reality of creation will be the source of flourishing for the Catholic school.

e. Dependency

If there is an inequality between goods that Aquinas defends when acknowledging natural difference, this relationship also implies a dependency in the relationships between those goods. By definition dependency is, “the fact of having existence hanging upon, or conditioned by the existence of something else.”¹⁵¹ In terms of the conversation about Catholic schools, it means that each individual’s action is will have consequences for all those who are around him. Likewise, just as natural difference comes from differences in creation that are discovered, so dependency is “characterized by conditions that one does not choose.”¹⁵² The reliance that is inherent in dependency reinforces unity by creating a structure that makes people’s relationships within a school intelligible. Dependency reinforces unity through this structure.¹⁵³ Limitations and responsibilities, arise as a result of choices made by individuals and groups.¹⁵⁴ At first glance, this can appear confining. However, since school communities come together out of a desire to pursue the common good for the formation of children, these factors that are fixed and objective help to reinforce the identity and mission of a school. Being grounded in these realities creates a hierarchy of things to be done, tasks to be accomplished, that require the talents and ingenuity of all those in the school’s community. This structure that dependency produces also serves to discern what ideas should be welcomed into the community and what ideas does not

¹⁵⁰ C.S. Lewis. *Miracles*. (New York: Collier Books, 1947), 120.

¹⁵¹ Oxford English Dictionary, used by Catherine R. Pakaluk, "Dependence on God and Man: Toward a Catholic Constitution of Liberty," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 19, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 229.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

have a place there. The Catholic school's common vision of man and conformity to the Church's rich magisterium provide an opportunity for all to ground themselves in a common purpose.

Recalling Paul's argument in his analogy of the body of Christ, his explanation also implies that dependency emerges as a result of natural difference. While each part of the body serves a particular function, each part needs the other. He says, "As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable. But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another."¹⁵⁵ And also, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."¹⁵⁶ There is unity because all need each other to pursue the same end. Each part flourishes in its own function but also participates in the joys and sufferings of the other parts. These examples both pursue the excellence of the common good: a particular group of invested individuals each prospering at their own task and but needing each other to achieve a possible good. Pope Francis says, "Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other."¹⁵⁷ These passages from the Holy Father, and St. Paul indicate that no one can pursue the good alone. Each member is needed because of their differences.

¹⁵⁵ 1 Cor 12:20, 22, 24-25.

¹⁵⁶ 1 Cor 12:26.

¹⁵⁷ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, [On Care for our Common Home]. May 24, 2015. Holy See Website. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html, 86.

Aquinas' view of tolerance provides a distinction that could be helpful in light of the contours of dependency. In answering a question about how non-Christian rites are to be treated in civic society, he cites an example that argues for the legalization of prostitution. It seems a little awkward that one of the Church's most immanent theologians appears to be arguing for protecting or even cooperating with sin. In his response, he says, "Although God is all-powerful and supremely good, nevertheless he allows certain evils to take place in the universe, which he might prevent, lest, without them, greater goods might be forfeited, or greater evils ensue."¹⁵⁸ He argues that it is realistic in some cases to legalize prostitution claiming that those in authority have to weigh the "goods to be lost, [against] certain greater evils be incurred."¹⁵⁹ Aquinas recognizes that tolerating prostitution and making it a legalized industry puts boundaries around it and exacts obligations from it. To bring this view of tolerance back to Catholic schools, Thomas' paradigm indicates that school administrators and faculty have to determine through the virtues of prudence and charity how to preserve what is good against the threat of greater evils in order to protect the interdependency of the community. The dependency recognized in a school affirms that the choices that the administration and faculty make will have consequences on the common good, which includes the entire student body and their families. The terms equality and tolerance have an important place within the Church's patrimony, but have to be vetted by school administrators to prevent contorting these terms into a presumptuous acquiescence to sin that neither prepares the students to persevere in hope as he pursues true good and avoids evil, nor helps him to pursue his place in contributing to the common good of the earthly city. Thomas's articulation of tolerance reveals an authentic roadmap for those striving to ground themselves in the truth.

¹⁵⁸ ST.II-II.10.11.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

How is dependency revealed in a Catholic education? Since dependency is distinguished by elements out of one's control, it acknowledges not only that I am my "brother's keeper,"¹⁶⁰ but that each is needed to fulfill their proper role. Dependency fosters authentic reliance on the gifts and talents of others, both within the administration and faculty, but also in the student body. Dependency can be a source of ingenuity to solve practical problems but also is a source of fraternal charity which informs school culture. There have been several news stories about failing Catholic schools that return to studying the classics. In doing so, they formulate a mission rooted in a deep patrimony that recognizes the common good of man and his transcendent nature, and recognizes current students' dependency on past generations. This is not the only source of rejuvenation for failing schools but it proves that returning to a clear articulation of the common good, which fittingly orders man towards temporal and supernatural ends proves to be a fruitful source of renewal.¹⁶¹ As a result, Catholic Schools should see dependency as an asset to be capitalized upon rather than an element to be superseded by self-sufficiency.

Dependency in the relationship between teachers and students should also be considered, if only briefly. In the earlier articulation of Augustine and Thomas' thought about education, they affirmed the need for teachers to perfectly embody the principles of their field, and for students to be docile enough to allow themselves to be taught these principles, which implicitly and

¹⁶⁰ See note 130.

¹⁶¹ Anthony Esolen. "A Parish School Turns Failure into Success" November 18, 2015. <http://www.crisismagazine.com/2015/a-parish-school-turns-failure-into-success>. Mary Wisniewski. "Struggling Catholic schools strategize to draw new students." *Reuters* Website. Accessed April 13, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-education-catholic-idUSBRE9410PN20130502>

explicitly include the life of virtue. These are part of the circumstances of dependency, which students cannot choose. This relationship makes the student dependent upon his teacher. This dynamic of this dependency should be grounded in virtue in order for both to flourish. Each need the intellectual virtues to grasp the truth about what one is teaching and what one is learning, but their interactions must be charitable, patient, and just.

Lastly, natural difference and dependency together manifest in Catholic schools and the Christian life as a commitment to charity. Since charity is loving God as he is in himself, and loving one's neighbor as one loves God, it has a fitting role to play within the dynamic of these two terms.¹⁶² St. Catherine of Siena highlights the relationship between these two concepts and charity as she echoes the words of God the Father to her, "I could easily have created men possessed of all that they should need both for body and soul, but I wish that one should have need of the other... Whether man will or no, he cannot help making an act of love."¹⁶³ Pakaluk observes, "Love is constituted by gifts between unequals—persons dependent upon each other. If we are not different, I need nothing from you. If we are not unequal, I cannot give anything to you."¹⁶⁴ These observations indicate that in order for charity to be real, there must be real inequalities present. Likewise, if we are different and self-sufficient, then charity becomes pity and lacks the grace to heal man's nature and bring him into friendship with God and neighbor. This kind of reliance on one another is desired by God for man's good and plays a part in ordering the civic society towards the heavenly Jerusalem. Modern man's ideas about equality and tolerance attempt to undermine this dependency and create a society of radically autonomous

¹⁶² CCC, 1822.

¹⁶³ Pakaluk, 237.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

individuals who are all the same, all self-sufficient. St. Catherine implies this would lead to deep unhappiness for man, and could even impede the achievement of his final end.

m. An Objection

Some argue that behavior or ideas that are objectively at odds with Church teaching should be accepted in Catholic schools for the sake of affirming natural difference, or diversity. To take this further, others assert that this makes tolerance the civic virtue “par excellence in a multicultural society.”¹⁶⁵ Acting on same-sex attraction, viewing pornography, using contraception, supporting underage drinking, and hiring faculty who are asserting views at odds with the Church: these are not authentic natural differences, nor should they be given tacit acceptance in schools. Those who participate in affirming these concepts rupture their witness and can lead their students away from the eternal life for which they are striving. True justice in the light of natural difference is an objective determination to give to others what is due to them based on human nature and within the context of formation in a Catholic school. As a result, justice encompasses recognizing inequality without requiring or demanding “sameness,” for the sake of the common good of the whole. It is a violation of justice and the common good to assert that every individual’s preference receive the same dignity or attention. Some differences are more true and ordered to the common good than others. Natural difference is ordered to the good of the whole, rather than asserted of itself.

¹⁶⁵ Frank Willems, “Citizenship education in Religious Schools: an analysis of Tolerance in Catholic Schools from a virtue ethical point of view.” *Journal of Beliefs and Values*. Vol. 31, No. 2, (August 2010): 216.

A key part of educational formation is that man has to acknowledge that his own desires have to be vetted against the virtuous life in Christ and the common good. The modern world's call for equality presupposes that justice necessarily makes every value the same. This is not an authentic measure of what is owed to someone else, nor are those in Catholic education obligated to cede to this definition of justice. Rights and duties are owed and paid based on nature.¹⁶⁶ The culture of formation in a Catholic school makes demands about justice that society will sometimes fail to perceive or acknowledge, but which are nevertheless true because they are rooted in acknowledging what is intelligible about man's nature. As a result, the culture of formation in a Catholic school and the justice that the modern world demands requires that the Catholic schools be fearless about proclaiming the Church's doctrines about who God is and who man is, which are based on observation from the effects of creation, and which will really point man towards his greatest good here below and above. Direct or indirect affirmation of positions at odds with Church teaching cannot be tolerated as equal goods, but rather should be vetted through Thomas' paradigm of tolerance. Students cannot be free to seek what is good if they cannot distinguish what true goods are. All goods are not equal. These distinctions that are so crucial during students' formative years require that the administration and faculty approach any student or student group with prudence and charity, but always calling them to what is real, objective and true.

n. Integrating the Terms

Relativism's call for the acceptance of the "sameness" of ideas, is an insufficient means to pursue justice for the human race. Rather what the modern world is seeking is authentic justice

¹⁶⁶ See note 165 above.

which is not subject to the caprice of individuals, nor coerced by large political bodies, but instituted by God. Natural difference affirms that inequality can be good and is a reflection of God's creation. It provides a criterion that not all ideas are the same, and that persons have to be separated from ideas. It also serves as a check on notions that are not in line with the Catholic school's understanding of man. By ordering the parts of the school's life to the common good, the concept of natural difference can recognize the true differences between people without demanding "sameness," or compromising the dignity that modern "equality" seeks to preserve. Using Thomas' practical application of tolerance and the concept of dependency can help schools to fight the modern understanding that wants to assert private goods as the measure of all. Dependency will help administrators, parents, and faculty to discern the true needs of the school community on an individual basis, but always in light of the whole. Dependence is an opportunity to exercise charity while recognizing and affirming the truth of natural difference. This perception rehabilitates the true meaning of tolerance while respecting authentic justice. Lewis encapsulates the school's response to modernity when he says, "Sameness is to be found most among the most 'natural' men, not among those who surrender to Christ. How monotonously alike all the great tyrants and conquerors have been: how gloriously different are the saints."¹⁶⁷ Reclaiming authentic equality and tolerance through natural difference and dependency, are true paths of justice which form the foundation of a Catholic school which seeks to affirm the common good.

Tracing the Catholic school's understanding of man's nature directed to the common good, gives schools a deeper and more authentic understanding of true equality and tolerance through natural

¹⁶⁷ Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 190.

difference and dependency. All these terms properly understood can adequately counter the modern culture's demands for justice. Since the Catholic school has a care for "the whole of man's life, even the secular part,"¹⁶⁸ she deeply understands the way students learn. As a result, the Church's affirmation of natural difference in Catholic schools answers in a more complex and just way the "sameness" that relativism demands. Natural difference proves to be a concept that should be affirmed as real, and a chance to see limitation as a gift and opportunity, rather than seeing all ideas or persons as flattened or equalized. Likewise, dependence articulates the structure built for the unity which keeps the school directed towards the common good. These two characteristics lead to trust in authentic authority,¹⁶⁹ and foster the wonder for true learning. Grounded in charity, students in Catholic schools should find their highest values in their interdependence and pursuit of the common good, ultimately in Christ. In pursuing knowledge and love of Christ as a common good, each Catholic school has an opportunity affirm natural difference and dependency. A school that does so is recognizing the reality that God has made.

¹⁶⁸ See note 2.

¹⁶⁹ The relationship between the roles of natural difference and dependency in light of authentic authority is a question worth pursuing, but outside the scope of this particular work.

- Aquinas, Thomas. *The Summa Theologica*. Benzinger Brothers, 1947. Dominican House of Studies Website. Accessed January 30, 2017.
<http://dhspriory.org/thomas/english/summa/index.html>.
- "Question Eleven: The Teacher." *In Truth*. Translated by Robert William Schmidt. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008.
- Aristotle. *The Metaphysics*. Transl. W.D. Ross. Internet Classics Archive. Accessed May 3, 2017, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.1.i.html>
- *Nichomachean Ethics*. Transl. by Christopher Rowe, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Associated Press. "San Francisco Catholic School Teachers Rally Against Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone's 'Morality Clauses.'" *Huffington Post*. Accessed April 12, 2017.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/21/san-francisco-catholic-teachers-morality-clause_n_7357962.html.
- Augustine. *Against the Academicians; The Teacher*. Transl. Peter King. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 1995.
- Soliloquies: Augustine's Inner Dialogue*, Transl. Kim Paffenroth. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2000.
- Confessions*. Translated by F. J. Sheed. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006.
- The Confessions of St. Augustine*. Transl. E. B. Pusey. Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1853.
- Beckwith, Francis and Gregory Koukl. *Relativism: Feet Planted Firmly in Mid-Air*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- Benedict XVI, Pope. "*A New Humanism Integral and Transcendent*", May 25, 2011. EWTN Website. Accessed April 8, 2017.
<http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/b16newhuman.Htm>.
- Benedict XVI, Pope. "*Meeting with Catholic Educators*." Apostolic Journey to the United States of America. April 17, 2008. Accessed February 16, 2016.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2008/april/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080417_cath-univ-washington.html.

--as Joseph Ratzinger. "Homily of His Eminence Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger Dean of the College of Cardinals." April 18, 2005. Holy See Website. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/gpII/documents/homily-pro-eligendo-pontifice_20050418_en.html.

Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Holy See. Accessed May 3, 2017. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM.

"Catholic School Honoring Pro-abortion Official, Pro-lifers Plan Protest." Catholic News Agency Website. Accessed April 12, 2017. http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic_school_honoring_proabortion_official_prolifers_plan_protest/.

Cessario, O.P. Romanus. *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

De Koninck, Charles. "The Primacy of the Common Good Against the Personalists." *The Writings of Charles De Koninck: Volume Two*. Edited and Translated by Ralph McInerny. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.

Esolen, Anthony. "A Parish School Turns Failure into Success" November 18, 2015. *Crisis Magazine*. Accessed May 3, 2017, <http://www.crisismagazine.com/2015/a-parish-school-turns-failure-into-success>.

Francis, Pope. *Lumen Fidei*. [Light of Faith] June 29, 2013. Holy See Website. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html.

-- *Laudato Si* [On Care for our Common Home]. May 24, 2015. Holy See Website. Accessed May 3, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

Jefferson Fish, "Tolerance, Acceptance, Understanding". *Psychology Today* Website. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/looking-in-the-cultural-mirror/201402/tolerance-acceptance-understanding>, accessed February 22, 2016.

Journet, Charles Cardinal. *The Mass*. Notre Dame: St. Augustine's Press, 2008.

Glenn, Paul J. *A Tour of the Summa*. St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book, 1960.

Goyette, John. "On the Transcendence of the Political Common Good." *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (2013): 133-155.

Guernsey, Daniel. "Transgendered Teachers in Catholic Schools." *Crisis Magazine*. Crisis Magazine Website. Accessed February 16, 2017. <http://www.crisismagazine.com/2016/transgender-teachers-catholic-schools>

Lewis, C.S. "Learning in Wartime." *The Weight of Glory*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

-- *Miracles*. New York: Collier Books, 1947.

-- *Mere Christianity*. New York: Macmillan, 1952.

Long, Steven A. "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Their Indispensability for the Christian Moral Life: Grace as *Motus*," *Nova et Vetera English Edition*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2013): 357–73.

Mullady, Brian. *Christian Social Order*, New Hope: New Hope Publications, 2015.

Oxford English Dictionary. "Equality", "Tolerance." Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
<http://www.oed.com/>. Accessed February 21, 2016.