



Renewing Catholic Schools:

How to Regain a Catholic Vision in a Secular Age

STUDY GUIDE

prepared by R. Jared Staudt

CHAPTER ONE | INTRODUCTION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- Do you feel a pressing need for renewal? What do you think is most needed for the renewal of our schools?
- How do we transmit our Catholic heritage in a way that speaks to our own time?
- How do we become more mission driven even as we face new practical difficulties?
- What do you think is most distinctive about Catholic education in terms of both a spiritual mission and also pedagogy?
- What are your convictions about the Catholic faith and the nature of Catholic education?

CHAPTER TWO | TREASURES OLD & NEW: LOOKING TO OUR PAST TO RENEW OUR VISION

- How would you describe the current crisis of Catholic education? How can it be used for the good in terms of what it can teach us and how we can respond?
- Boethius had to answer the question, who are you? How would you answer the question, what is Catholic education?
- How do St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Bl. Basil Moreau help us to answer the previous question?
- How can we help our students to order and prioritize the knowledge they acquire?
- What are ways to share the Church's unique vision of education, including its relation to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and evangelization, with our teachers and parents?

CHAPTER THREE | WHOSE STANDARDS, GOD'S OR THE STATE'S?: THE CASE FOR THE HOLY SEE'S TEACHING ON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- For each of the Five Essential Marks of Catholic Schools, cite two ways in which your school manifests the mark and one or more obstacles to more fully embodying it.
 1. Inspired by a Supernatural Vision
 2. Founded on a Christian Anthropology
 3. Animated by Communion and Community
 4. Imbued with a Catholic Worldview Throughout the Curriculum
 5. Sustained by Gospel Witness

CHAPTER FOUR | EDUCATING THE WHOLE PERSON: A SACRAMENTAL APPROACH

- Why is anthropology—an understanding of who we are as a body-soul unity—important for education? How does this anthropology inform our pedagogy?
- Do you agree that the body has been overlooked in education? If so, how can that be remedied through physical education and other areas of formation?
- How can we engage the emotions and imagination more effectively? How do they support the formation of the mind?
- How can art and beauty be harnessed to form the student more holistically?
- How do the stories of history and literature help form identity and morality?



Renewing Catholic Schools:

How to Regain a Catholic Vision in a Secular Age

STUDY GUIDE

prepared by R. Jared Staudt

CHAPTER FIVE | THE CLASSICAL LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

- Although Catholic schools are liberal arts schools, what are the connotations of the term “liberal arts” and how can we help people to understand it better?
- Do you agree that we have underestimated what students are capable of doing? In what ways?
- How can we use the liberal arts to strengthen clarity and power of thought and expression?
- What do you think of the quote from St. John Henry Newman on page 57?
- Why are deep, careful reading and mathematical skills important for Catholic education?

CHAPTER SIX | TEACHING THE CATHOLIC TRADITION

- What are some core ways that the Catholic schools live their distinct mission?
- How can we help our students to know God and relate to him as a person not just an idea that we teach?
- What can we learn from the way God teaches us?
- Why does the Catholic school need to relate faith and culture and what are the practical implications of doing so for students? (It may help to define culture.)
- What are the ways in which we can help our students to become missionary disciples?

CHAPTER SEVEN | THE WELL-FORMED GRADUATE

- How would you describe an ideal graduate from your school?
- What are your markers of success?
- Do your students have an opportunity to think through life’s Big Questions? Is the curriculum set up for this?
- How can the school help students to form more profound life goals and a sense of vocation?
- How can we help our teachers to be compelling role models and mentors?

CHAPTER EIGHT | DEVELOPING AS A TEACHER: TO TEACH AS JESUS DID

- How can we help teachers form a deeper sense of vocation and mission in their teaching?
- Why is the answer “you’ll need this for high school” not the right response to a student?
- How would you describe the key characteristics of teaching as an art?
- What are the most important ways of imitating Jesus as a teacher?
- Which of the seven tips stands out to you the most and why? Why is lifelong learning important for every teacher?



Renewing Catholic Schools:

How to Regain a Catholic Vision in a Secular Age

STUDY GUIDE

prepared by R. Jared Staudt

CHAPTER NINE | FORMING AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- What is the difference between thinking of the school as an institution and as a community?
- Has this book been a kind of retreat experience in thinking about the nature of Catholic education? Why or why not?
- On page 98, what do you think about the quote about why the Church has established her own schools? Does it provide any insight for your own school?
- How can a school provide joy for its students by offering a familial community?
- How can the parent-school relationship be rekindled? How can we invite parents to partner with us in carrying out the school's mission?

CHAPTER TEN | STORIES OF SUCCESSFUL RENEWAL

- Did these accounts give you any inspiration for things you could do at your own school?
- What insights do you find in Michael Van Hecke's five points on pages 109-111?
- In relation to Lourdes's story, how often do you have Mass? Would it help draw everyone into mission to increase its frequency?
- How does Holy Innocent's story speak to concerns like, "I can't do this" or "this is only for certain kinds of students"?
- How does St. Mary's account help us think about forming a coherent and mission-focused curriculum plan?

CONCLUSION | TO CHANGE A SCHOOL

- Why does our mission of faith have to come first in the school? How do the goal of life and goal of education go hand in hand?
- What does a Catholic-inspired curriculum and pedagogy look like?
- How can we form a stronger Catholic environment and culture in our schools?
- How can we strengthen formation for teachers in the Catholic liberal arts tradition?
- How can we communicate more effectively with parents on the mission of Catholic education?

OVERALL

What are your major takeaways from the book?

Are there any practical points you can implement immediately?

What questions do you still have?