

## the Catholic Educator

Recovering an Authentically Catholic  
Philosophy of Education

### Welcome!

Posted on February 18, 2011 by theCatholicEducator

Catholic schools in the United States are in dire straits. Catholic schools continue to close or consolidate. I've observed several of these consolidations and each time the schools have lost students. It also seems that more Catholic parents home school and that each year there are more independent private Catholic schools. Many schools are holding on for dear life and I'm afraid that economic and political realities in the the United States will contribute to the closure of many more in the next few years. The National Catholic Education Association reports the following [statistics](#):

"U. S. Catholic school enrollment reached its peak during the early 1960s when there were more than 5.2 million students in almost thirteen thousand schools across the nation. The 1970s and 1980s saw a steep decline in both the number of schools and students. By 1990, there were approximately 2.5 million students in 8,719 schools. From the mid 1990s though 2000, there was a steady enrollment increase (1.3%) despite continued closings of schools."

**"Between the 2000 and the 2010 school years, 1,603 schools were reported closed or consolidated (19.7%). The number of students declined by 533,697 (20.1 %).** The most seriously impacted have been elementary schools." *[emphasis mine]*

There are many reasons for such a drastic decline, not the least of which is, I believe, the loss of a clear and defining Catholic educational philosophy. However, other factors such as changing demographics, financial stresses, and declining Church attendance also have had tremendous impact on school enrollments.

The purpose of this blog is to consider and discuss ways, both theoretical and practical, to reverse this trend. Since it is my contention that the loss of an authentic Catholic educational philosophy plays a significant role in this decline – and that a renewal/recovery of such a philosophy can reverse this trend – I will spend much time blogging about this aspect. However, I would also like to consider and discuss other ideas related to the decline and flourishing of Catholic School in the United States.

Blessings!

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## 2 Responses to *Welcome!*



**Joseph** *says:*

February 19, 2011 at 9:51 am

Great idea for a blog! Have you heard about this school in Maryland?

<http://www.insidecatholic.com/feature/a-new-old-model-for-catholic-schools.html>

I really wish I had gone to one like it growing up.

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**The Catholic Educator** *says:*

February 19, 2011 at 11:35 am

Thanks for the compliment. And thank you for the link to an excellent article. Yeah, I wish I had that type of education myself. I received a typical Catholic K-12 school education (of the 70's and 80's) and a secular university education. I survived a university teacher education program; I was immediately at odds with my professors perceiving something was not right with the pablum they were offering. However, since there was no real exploration of educational philosophy outside of a hard-line promotion of modern educational theories, I did not understand the problems with the current theories and what could possibly replace them. During my twelve years of working in K-12 education, as both teacher and administrator, I have come to understand my early resistance to modern educational theories and the power of a classical liberal arts education.

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**the Catholic Educator**

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