

Globalization and Its Challenges to Education

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We are experiencing a transition towards a *Global Society* that is *Interdependent* and oriented towards an ever-increasing *globalization* in all orders.¹ The international political field, economy, environment, information technology, mass-communications, culture, and the realm of ideas – all are moving towards this reality, affecting each and every one of the world's inhabitants.

Globalization is a reality that for better or for worse touches our lives in ways unknown before. Globalization cannot be understood as a singular condition or as a linear process. It is best thought of as a multi-dimensional phenomenon involving diverse domains of activity and interaction: *economic, political, social, cultural, technological and environmental*.

In the *economic domain*, globalization has its lights and shadows. It brings vast increases in global income, higher rate of return on capital and increased trade. It may be viewed positively, if it is interpreted as the increasing interdependence among nations in trade, investments, technology and human resources.

The single global market excludes worldwide masses from the system. Thus there is greater marginalization of the poor, greater inequalities between countries and between the rich and the poor within the same country. Globalization pays more attention to the

¹ Alexander King and Bertrand Schneider, *The First Global Revolution: A Report by the Council of the Club of Rome* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991), p. xix.

quantitative aspects of economic growth to the neglect of the qualitative aspects of human well being such as quality of life, sense of solidarity, cooperation among peoples and the building of the world into a common home for all.

In the *political domain*, globalization involves a historic shift from national governments and national electorates, towards more complex systems of regional and global governance. There are significant differences of interpretation and emphasis in the globalist, traditionalist and transformationalist accounts of the consequences of globalization for the modern state, and this should not be underestimated.²

The *globalists* see globalization as an inevitable development, which cannot be resisted or significantly influenced by human intervention, particularly through traditional political institutions as nation-states.

The optimists or positive globalists point to the benefits of globalization and see the results of globalizing influences as a change to be welcomed. They focus on the potential of stretched social relations to improve the quality of life, raise living standards and bring people together, which in turn promotes the sharing of cultures and understanding among the nations around the world – in a sense making us all world citizens through global communication. While they recognize the dangers of global pollution, positive globalizers argue that we could improve the situation, if we all took responsibility for reducing unsustainable levels of consumption. They point to the development of new technologies that are likely to reduce levels of pollution.

The pessimistic globalists, on the contrary, see the world as becoming less diverse and more homogeneous. They see the diminution of national identities and sovereignty negatively and point to the uneven consequences of globalization.

The *traditionalists* argue that the significance of globalization as a new phase has been exaggerated. They believe that most economic and social activities are regional rather than global and still see a significant role for nation states.

² David Held, *A Globalizing World? Culture, Economics, Politics*, (London: Routledge, 2000) pp. 169-177.

The *transformationalists* believe that globalization represents a significant shift but question the inevitability of its impacts. They argue that there is still significant scope for local, national and other agencies.

In the *socio-cultural domain*, globalization is seen to have originated from three independent processes, the information technology revolution, the economic crisis of both capitalism and statism, and their subsequent re-structuring; and the blooming of socio-cultural movements with the reactions they triggered. These are the blooming of cultural social movements, such as libertarianism, human rights, feminism, and environmentalism. The interaction between these processes and the reaction they triggered brought into being a new dominant social structure, the network society as well as the new information/global economy and a new culture.³

Globalization is seen to be not an economic phenomenon but has to do with the emergence of a 'world system'. Local transformation is as much part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space. In circumstances of accelerating globalization, the nation-state has become "*too small for the big problems of life and too big for the small problems of life.*" At the same time as social relations become laterally stretched, we see the strengthening of pressures for local autonomy and regional cultural identity.⁴

The *technological domain* cuts across all the other domains of human activity. This is due to the fact that globalization is the stretching, intensifying and speeding up of worldwide patterns of interconnectedness made possible by information and communication technology. The accelerating diffusion of television, the Internet, satellite and digital technologies has made instant communication possible across vast areas and involving growing numbers of people.

On the *environmental domain*, the global ecological crisis caused by the ozone depletion, climate change, rainforest destruction and environmental pollution is compounded by social, economic and

³ Manuel Castells cited by Hazel Henderson in *Beyond Globalization... Shaping a Sustainable Economy* (West Hartford CT: Kumarian Press, 1999) p. 2.

⁴ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (California, Stanford University Press, 1990) p. 64.

spiritual challenges that are equally daunting. As a reaction to this global ecological crisis, there seems to be an emerging era that is not a technological change but a change in human consciousness. There is an awakening of our unique capacity to be self-reflective seeing inter-connectedness and living systems. This is called the "Reflective/Living Systems Paradigm" as opposed to the "Industrialized/Materialistic Paradigm."⁵

What is happening in the world today because of globalization is described by means of a symbolic representation of the "*THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE*"⁶ This is the title of Friedman's best seller book on "*Understanding Globalization*." The conflict between the Lexus and the olive tree dramatically symbolizes the tension between the globalization system and the ancient forces of culture, geography, tradition and community. The olive tree represents everything that roots us. Olive trees speak of what anchor us, identify us and locate us in the world. This may consist in belonging to a family, a community, a tribe, a nation, a religion and most of all, a place called home. Olive trees are what give us the warmth of family, the joy of individuality, the intimacy of personal rituals, the depth of private relationships as well as the confidence to reach out and encounter others.

On the other hand, Lexus represents an equally fundamental age-old human drive, which is played out in today's globalization system. This is the drive for sustenance, improvement, prosperity and modernization. Thus Lexus represents the burgeoning global markets, financial institutions and information and communication technologies by which higher standards of living are pursued.

The challenge in this era of globalization both for countries and individuals is to find a healthy balance between preserving a sense of identity, home and community and doing what it takes to survive within the globalization system.⁷

⁵Duane Elgin with Coleen LeDrew, *Global Consciousness Change: Indicators of an Emerging Paradigm* (Website: www.awakeningeearth.org) 1997.

⁶ Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus And The Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000).

⁷ *Ibid.*

Today, this phenomenon of globalization is considered to be mostly a “*GLOBALIZATION-FROM-ABOVE*.” This is also known as the “*New World Order*”, based on the leading states, transnational businesses and political elites. On the other hand, “*GLOBALIZATION-FROM-BELOW*” is described as an array of transnational forces animated by environmental concerns, human rights, hostility to patriarchy and a vision of human community based on the unity of diverse cultures seeking an end to poverty, oppression, humiliation, and collective violence. It is not inclined towards a new world order but towards a “One-World Community.”⁸

On the whole, globalization has come to mean different things to many different people. Some people see it as offering new opportunities, others as offering particular threats. Life today is difficult to understand without knowing the way globalization works.

Challenges Posed to Society by Globalization in the 21st Century

A central feature of the global situation is the enormous increase in the totality of human activity that has led to a huge rise in the demand for raw materials and energy. Much of this is due to the rapid, though uneven, growth of the world population in the past century. This situation radically modified the basic total demands of food, housing, education and health services. Concomitantly, all would like to have access to consumer products proper to the economy of consumerism, impelled by the natural expectations of people who are becoming more and more aware of their rights and better informed as well, thanks to the knowledge extension and advances in communications.

There is an even more powerful factor in the growth of human activity – the increased consumption per capita that economic growth has made possible. A clear evidence of this phenomenon is the proliferation of mass-produced goods spawned by the factories of the industrialized world. We live, indeed, in a consumerist society. But there is still another consumption of human, material and energy resources particularly for military purposes as a source of

⁸ Jeremy Brecher, John Brown Childs, and Jill Cutler, *Global Visions: Beyond the New World Order* (Boston, South End Press, 1993) p. ix-xvii.

work and profit for some developed countries. It is indeed incomprehensible that such a criminally wasteful use of resources is tolerated in the face of extensive hunger, poverty, disease and underdevelopment.

The growth of the economies has been accompanied by an alarming deterioration of the biosphere with serious consequences to the climate, food production, and availability of potable water. The market economy is devoid of a frame of social reference, operating so often at the cost of underdevelopment, insensitive to international cooperation and alien to the indispensable solidarity among countries.

With the miseries of underdevelopment, a form of superdevelopment is emerging that is equally inadmissible. This superdevelopment consists in an excessive availability of material goods for the benefit of certain social groups and makes people slaves of possession and immediate gratification, with no other horizon than the multiplication or continual replacement of things owned with others that are still better. This has also come to be known as the civilization of consumption or "*consumerism*", which involves so much throwing away.

In the absence of programs for saving and their massive recycling, the aforesaid series of problems will become the greatest threats to human survival in this new millennium. Environmental concerns must become a necessary part of education in the new millennium. Sustainable development is imperative. A new design for living based on a reduction of waste, respect for bio-diversity, socio-economic diversity, and cultural diversity that transcends outmoded concepts of sovereignty must be aimed for.

We are becoming one world, which is expressed at times in terms like the "*global village*" or "*globalization*" to describe the process. Many factors are pulling the world into greater interdependence, reconfigured international relations, new sources of information technology, the internet, new cultural forms, international environmental and health initiatives, new market structures that transcend political borders.

There is an exponential growth of scientific and technological knowledge including the new information technology and the bio-

technologies. We are living in an age of unprecedented intellectual discovery, an era in which knowledge doubles every 12 to 15 years in the sciences alone. As a result of increasingly fruitful scientific research, the new technologies hold out increasingly bright prospects for confronting the challenges of sustainable development. However, it is precisely those countries most in need of them who have difficulty using them to solve their problems. The tremendous disparity existing among countries in the matter of technological advancement and human welfare aggravates this situation. This has come to be called the *"digital divide"*.

There are likewise, astronomical debts, both internal and external, beginning with the more powerful economically and followed by the overwhelming debt of the developing countries. These developing countries have very scarce participation in the global economy, which thrives increasingly on alternative raw materials and applies mercilessly the principles of competitiveness.

This is the new scenario presented by the twenty first century. We are at the turn of a new historical era. Not only do new problems arise, which are political, social, economic, and environmental, but other local events acquire a global dimension owing to the all-pervasive mass media.

Challenges Posed by Globalization to Education in the 21st Century

The changes shaking the world at the dawn of this new millennium are complex and cannot be interpreted simplistically. At the dawn of the 21st century, there is a responsibility that education has to assume since all education takes place in society and has close links with it. All matters concerning humanity such as: sustainable development – including the environment – the building and strengthening of peace, understanding among peoples, democracy, freedom and human rights, as well as everything connected with changes in work processes and in the nature of economic activities and with the extraordinary development of the new information and communication technologies have their repercussions in the way education must take place.

Now, together with the tragic consequences brought about by globalization, there is however a bright hope in the realization of the centrality of man to find solutions for the aforesaid problems. The "*birth of a new humanism*" as expressed in the Vatican II documents is coming out in bold relief. This new humanism is linked with scientific progress. Pope Paul VI, in his *Populorum Progressio* spoke of the "*search for a new humanism which will enable man to find himself anew by embracing the high values of friendship, prayer and contemplation.*" (PP, 20) This new humanism can be said to have stemmed from the importance of the scientific and technological mentality in our days. Now the scientific problems are also closely related with human problems. The understanding of these relationships, the attempt to clarify and define them serves as the basis of the new humanism.

The actual scientific and technological dimension of our world provokes radical transformations, which justify a new understanding and evaluation of man and humanity as a whole. This does not mean that the old and eternal human values should be discarded, rather the new values should be so ordained as to enable man to find himself in the place that corresponds to him in our world today as we have been ushered into the new millennium.

It is noteworthy that this new humanism is a *humanism for all*. In this connection, Vatican II says that in the new humanism "*man is defined before all else by his responsibility to his brothers at the court of history*" (GS, 55). Thus the new humanism must include in its program the promotion of every human person without any distinction of social classes, creeds, races, nationalities, and sexes.

This new humanism will also try to extend efficaciously the sharing of material and cultural wealth in ever-widening social strata. However, not even the availability of the many real benefits provided in recent times by science and technology, particularly, information technology coupled with telecommunications giving rise to the Internet, the cyber space and the like can bring about freedom from every form of slavery. There is a better understanding today of authentic human development. "*Development, which is not only economic, must also be oriented according to the reality and vocation of man seen in his totality, namely, according to his*

interior dimension" (SRS, 28). Education or the access to moral and cultural values is still seen as the most decisive factor in the social advancement of people.

In its program for the promotion of men and women, the new humanism will have to approach individuals and groups with a keen sense of responsibility before the concrete realities of family, professional and social life of others. Here, priority should be given to the satisfaction of the just aspirations of the social categories that are more deprived and underprivileged.

This new humanism is certainly not closed in upon man but open to the *Transcendent*. In fact, it is humanism with a clear Christian lineage. It is interesting to note that in the *Vancouver Declaration on Survival in the 21st Century*, we find some conditions of this new humanism underscored in the following statements:

The present critical situation of man's occupancy of the planet requires new visions, rooted in a variety of cultures, in contemplating the future:

The perception of an organic macrocosm that recaptures the rhythms of life would allow man to reintegrate himself with nature and understand his relationship in space and time to all life and the physical world.

Recognition that a human being is an aspect of the process that gives form to the universe enlarges man's image of himself and allows him to transcend the egoism that is the principal cause of disharmony among his fellows and between mankind and nature.

The overcoming of fragmentation of the body-mind-spirit unity, brought about by unbalanced emphasis on any one over the others, allows man to discover within himself the reflection of the cosmos and its supreme unifying principle.

"Such visions change the conception of man in nature and call for a radical transformation of models of development; the elimination of poverty, introduction of new learning processes, educational systems and mental attitudes; implementation of better forms of redistribution to ensure social equity; a new design for living based on a reduction of waste; respect for bio-diversity, socio-economic diversity and cultural diversity that transcend outmoded concepts of sovereignty."

A Renewed Concept of Education

As a result of the emergence of a new humanism, there arises a need for a broader concept of education. In a situation of rapid and radical change with challenging international relationships, young people must be educated for a flexible and informed response. They are to live in the new millennium as citizens of a global village, where there is practically instant communication and information. They are mutually interdependent as members of a single human family and responsible for the finite resources of our planet.

Education, in its broadest meaning, is the integral development of the human personality. Thus education sets man before us as a primordial reality. The human person is central in the concerns of education. Education, when formulating its aims, mapping out its objectives, programmes and methodologies, centers all and bases all on the concept of the human person.

We need a type of education capable of situating the educand in the center of all development, increasing the self-awareness of his capabilities. This is an education that believes in the educand's tendency towards his own self-fulfillment; that which fosters in him a sound mental stability and openness to others; that which is capable of forging new ways of growth for his conscience.

We need therefore an education that is not only concerned with imparting knowledge and information, but also with the total development of the whole person. The concern in education will not be simply teaching an accepted body of knowledge – this body of knowledge only too often becomes outmoded – rather students will be made to participate actively in the learning process and thus be equipped with the skills, curiosity and courage to continually seek out, learn and evaluate what they learn.

The educational process, obviously enough, cannot be limited to what is properly intellectual. Moral and emotional strengths are just as essential. A sense of control over one's life and a wholesome self-esteem are necessary ingredients for young people to achieve their goals.

In an education in keeping with these ideals, inner freedom takes priority both as a means and as the goal of the entire process. Education should be able to help man to pose more freely the

question on the meaning of life. This would require a formation in values, which will stir man to remove obstacles of fear and prejudices before the mystery of being and personal becoming.

From the ontological perspective, to educate means to foster positively in the individual the gradual fulfillment of his capacity to be himself the very principle of his actions, to assume the responsibility of his own deeds within the social context. In this kind of education where the subject is respected, and thus maintains his category as a person, there is certainly the needed openness to the Transcendent.

As an essential part of this affirmation of the educand's personality, we find those conditioning communitarian realities in which he is born and where he develops himself. The way he achieves a self-concept that is more internalized and more fulfilling is conditioned by how the community to which he belongs lives the values. This is the reason why the communitarian dimensions of personal growth towards maturity are considered very important in education.

Educating for responsible participation, encouraging the manifestation of sentiments of solidarity, fostering fraternal relationships, deepening in the sense of collaboration and taking an active part in social and political affairs in a spirit of corresponsibility are communitarian dimensions in education needing special attention.

In short, the long-range goal of education is to form persons capable of self-government and of being open to take on commitments ever more profound and universal. This type of education is aimed at the communitarian transformation of society and of nature itself brought about in a deeply committed solidarity with others. In this perspective, a personalizing type of education considers the community as the necessary ground from which to learn that social behavior geared towards service to the entire community.

Education thus understood could never be brought about in only one educative environment. Rather, it will take place within the family, in the school, among the religious groups, in the means of social communications, in one's work, in athletic organizations, political parties, neighborhood associations, in centers for leisure time and in all those groups which manifest or try to discover values.

The new thrust in education is not simply the critical transmission of a particular culture but more of an education that promotes a dialogue between cultures. This is an education that tries to build bridges across cultures for mutual understanding and international cooperation with a view to creating a lasting peace. The trend is towards a more universal perspective in education.

In discussing any aspect of learning and education, not to mention research in science, social science or the humanities, the centrality of the individual teacher and scholar, working with individual learners in different undertakings must always be borne in mind.

Experience shows that the tradition and ethos of a school and especially the enthusiasm and personal gifts of the teacher can inspire a pupil to glimpse wider horizons and to embark into a process of personal growth. It is one of the teacher's tasks to help develop their pupil's ability to form relationships and to be part of a living and loving community. This part of the teacher's job is highly skilled. It is vitally important yet sometimes lost sight of. One of the secrets here is to recognize that a school is not simply an institution, but rather an educative community.

In this era of globalization there is a need to expand on the view that education is simply a formal process of instruction based on a theory of learning of imparting knowledge to one or more students. For the process of learning can occur with or without formal institutional education. Knowledge accumulation and the accumulation of skills for using information and communication technologies will increasingly occur outside the traditional institutions of formal education. Learning in the workplace and through collaborations that somehow span the global and at other times involve tightly knit local communities with similar interests will become more commonplace.

As the store of knowledge expands throughout the world, all of the world's peoples should have as much access as possible. The role of knowledge within the economy is leading to a whole range of new industries and new developments in biotechnology, new materials in science, informatics, computer science, etc. There is a

felt need as well highly trained technical persons but with a humanistic formation as well.

With regards to the term “education” there is a spectrum of views ranging from the narrow view of education as that which goes on in schools and universities to a definition of education as all those experiences that affect the growth and development of a person throughout life. The former view has tended to give way, with increased recognition of the crucially important part those informal experiences and relationships play in what and how an individual learns.

In the UNESCO’s vision of education in the new millennium, the four pillars of education found in its report entitled: “*Learning: the Treasure Within*,” the school system must be directed more toward personal fulfillment. Thus the four pillars of education were identified as follows:

⇨ *Learning to know*: This type of learning is both a means and an end. A means to understand the world around us as well as an end, the joy of knowing.

⇨ *Learning to do*: This requires not only learning an occupational skill but also a personal competence to deal with many situations and work in teams.

⇨ *Learning to live together*: Developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence. Thus education must tend to be at the service of avoiding conflicts or resolve them peacefully by developing respect for other cultures and their spiritual values.

⇨ *Learning to be*: All human beings must be enabled to develop independent critical thinking and form their own judgment, in order to determine for themselves what they believe they should do in the different circumstances of life.

Education is seen as a ferment of the ongoing maturity of personality. The UNESCO International Commission on Education in the 21st Century gives this interesting definition of Education: “*Education is above all an inner journey.*”

The Role of Catholic Teachers in the Renewed Concept of Education

At the outset allow me to use the terms teacher and educator interchangeably. However, strictly speaking, any one who contributes to integral human formation is an educator and a teacher is one who has made integral human formation his or her very profession.

Each type of education, evidently, is influenced by a particular concept of what it means to be a human person. The Document of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education on *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* states that in today's pluralistic world, the Catholic educator must consciously inspire his or her activity with the Christian concept of the human person, in communion with the Magisterium of the Church (LCS, 18)

The Christian concept of the human person includes the defense of human rights, the dignity of the human person as a son or daughter of God, made into His image and likeness. It also attributes to the human person with the fullest liberty, freed from sin itself by Christ. Likewise, every man or woman has a most exalted destiny, which is the definitive and total possession of God Himself through love. (LCS, 18)

Christian education calls for establishing the closest possible relationship of solidarity among persons through mutual love and the building of community. Finally, it proposes the mystery of the Incarnation as the key to the true upliftment of men and women. Christ, the Incarnate Son of God is for all men and women the inexhaustible source of personal and communitarian perfection. (LCS, 18)

Saint Pedro Poveda, a recognized humanist and educator, had pointedly marked this truth when he said:

*"The Incarnation, properly understood, the Person of Christ, His nature and His life, give those who understand it a sure pattern for becoming holy, with the truest holiness while at the same time human; with the true humanism."*⁹

⁹ Pedro Poveda, *Staunch Friends of God* (trans. Teresita L. Barcelon, Manila, 1998) p. 100.

Pope John Paul II, in his address to the participants in the first joint session of the Pontifical Academies last November 28, 1996, underlines the fact that the mystery of the Incarnation has given a tremendous impetus to man's thought and artistic genius over the past 2000 years and that he must still contribute to "*creating a Christian humanism, presenting the humanity of Christ as the model for the generations of the new millennium. A splendid programme: to create beauty, to draw from the good, to understand and express the truth.*" He further declared: "*Faith in Christ, the Incarnate Word, leads us to see man in a new light. In a certain sense it enables us to believe in man, created in the image and likeness of God, at once a microcosm of the world and an icon of God.*"

The vocation of every Catholic educator includes the work of ongoing social development: to form men and women with a keen social awareness and a profound civic and social responsibility who would work for the improvement of social structures to make them more conformed to the principles of the Gospel. (*LCS*, 19)

In the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, Pope John Paul II calls upon Catholic Universities to include in their research activities, "*a study of serious contemporary problems in areas such as the dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level.*" (*ECE*, 32)

One can easily see how the renewed concept of education in the world today is greatly enhanced when the Christian concept of the human person guides the formulation of its aims, objectives, programmes, methodologies, and activities.

Pope John Paul II, speaking to a group of educators, said that they are fulfilling one of the most important and delicate tasks for the future of the Church and society and added that "*the first and essential duty of culture, in general, as well as of every culture is education.*"

Cultural Development, An Essential Task of Education

There is an enormous increase and a new consciousness as well of the complexity of the natural and social world, which must first be better understood. We also need to harness the immense promise of scientific and technological discoveries to create better learning systems by providing access to expanding universes of both information and ways of seeing. We need to create a greater awareness that each and every one of us lives in a world system in which many problems can be solved in a global scale. It also means our capacity to understand the circumstances and even the motives of others who live far away in different social, economic, political and cultural worlds. The time has come to devise new and effective ways of opening the human mind to think globally and to operate efficiently on a worldwide scale.

In this era of globalization it is imperative to reactivate and innovate our traditional concerns for international understanding, the teaching of respect for individual human rights throughout the world and peace making. If we have to devise more interactive ways to open the human mind to the global system around us, then we should expand further the reach of global education to include a broader perspective. It is of paramount importance to view development in all countries, whether rich or poor, from the new and multidisciplinary vantage point of sustainability. In other words, our traditional concerns for learning to understand and empathize with strangers, even in our own lands as a further step in our commitment to human rights and peace must now be expanded to include the complex global issues concerning humankind vis-à-vis the natural environment.

We find ourselves at a time when development will be based on what is today absolutely indispensable for human dignity: the alleviation of poverty, based on the quality of human resources. This means it must be based on education. There is only one way and that is development with a human face, it is the respect for human dignity through education, the giver of real freedom.

Education, alone, cannot solve the problems besetting our world today, but it can play its part of equipping the next generation with more insight, greater competence and deeper motivation than has so far been done.

Environmental Education, A Facet of Cultural Development

Through the initiatives of UNESCO, we find developing around the world what has come to be called *environmental education*, which is one facet of *cultural development*.

Obviously enough, cultural development includes such facets as economic, social and political aside from the environmental. However, the focus of the discussion here will be the need to build peace between people and the biosphere, the environment. This would require the education of the people.

There is for instance, a very important issue, which, as has been noted, cannot be divided into different portions like a cake. Scientists view with certain apprehensions the various initiatives related to the ozone layer; the others, concerning the sea level; and still others, concerning the warming of the climate – the greenhouse effect. These issues are all interrelated and must be taken up globally. Environment is a key global issue that cannot be dealt with in isolation but through concerted action.

Increased community-based capacities to think of the world as a multiple set of interactive systems can also help us face these problems realistically. We will be in a better position to use resources in investments that will lead to more far-reaching and permanent solutions. Political will is essential, not only in considering sustainable development as a call to action but also in solving underlying problems of illiteracy and ignorance. A new, informed civic culture must be created for the global community as a whole.

In the formation of the said culture, the following words from *Centesimus Annus* appear to be most relevant and a wise guideline: *"All human activity takes place within a culture and interacts with culture. For an adequate formation of culture, the whole man is required, whereby he exercises his creativity, intelligence, and knowledge of the world and people. Furthermore, he displays his capacity for self-control, personal sacrifice, solidarity and readiness to promote the common good. Thus, the first and most important task is accomplished within man's heart."* (CA, 51)

Environmental Education With a Christian Vision

Environmental education, as has already been noted, is simply one facet of cultural development. It is a part of what UNESCO calls an Education for Life, or of an Integral Education which sees the educand not only as a recipient of information and knowledge of academic subjects but also includes other aspects that contribute to the development of the human person like abilities of a practical nature in different areas which society demands. These are education for peace, for health, for equality of the sexes, for consumer's education and of course for *environmental education*. The educative horizon in this kind of education is to promote the autonomy of the students not only in the cognitive or intellectual aspects but in his or her moral and social aspects as well. This will have to culminate in the development of the student's proper identity and the elaboration of a project of life imbued with values.

One of the requirements of *environmental education*, is the study of the sciences, which at the same time calls for a responsible use of technology. Now a Christian vision of reality could offer an even deeper motivation for its effective implementation.

Science education today with an emphasis on developing an ideal scientific literacy or a "*citizens' science*" needs to be included in environmental education since an important part of this new agenda is the study of the effects of science with its attendant technology on society. Moreover, the fact that science is a human activity, which depends on human resources, culture and the genius of individuals, makes it all the more a must for environmental education.

Science and technology are indeed indispensable for the attainment of the goals of environmental education. Notwithstanding, experience has shown that they can succeed only through an integration of science and culture, which leads to a sense of purpose.

A Christian vision of man can enrich and guide such environment-related projects and protect them from losing an authentic human direction. Pope John Paul II in his Message of Peace in 1990, very incisively pointed out that: "*when the ecological crisis is set within the broader context of the search for peace in society, we can understand better the importance of giving attention to what*

the earth and its atmosphere is trying to tell us: namely, that there is order in the universe which must be respected, and that the human person endowed with the capability of choosing freely, has the responsibility to preserve the order for the well-being of future generations."

If we fail to redirect science and technology to fundamental needs, as pointed out in the aforementioned Vancouver Declaration, the advances in informatics, biotechnology and genetic engineering will lead to irreversible consequences detrimental to the future of human life. We cannot take for granted either the increased power of modern technology to reprocess, and in many ways, destroy the natural world. Here is a clarion call for a responsible use of technology.

Environmental education is envisioned to equip us all in the future to understand the problems, exercise judgment in political decisions about the issues and to see and accept the need for changes in one's personal life that must be made if we are not to damage the very environment on which our life depends.

Environmentalists today tend to draw their insights from science, politics and philosophy and discover the changing attitudes towards nature and humankind's place on earth. They are less concerned with finding specific solutions than with defining man's role in the natural world. Here again, we see the need for education.

An environmental education as discussed above can be pursued not simply as a secular but more of a Christian task. What is important is for the Christian educator to possess a Christian world vision. As Vatican II states: *"The faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and value of creation, and how to relate it to the praise of God."* (LG, 36)

The Catholic Teacher and Environmental Education

A teacher with a Christian vision is one who has a positive affirming attitude to life; all human life is made to the image and likeness of the Creator. Harmony must exist between humankind and the natural world. This emerges from the understanding of the interdependence of human beings and the rest of creation. This

call to stewardship is a privilege bestowed on humankind by God and is therefore a responsibility that cannot be taken lightly. If men and women are caring and cultivate harmony in all their dealings with each other and the earth itself, then they grow in the image and likeness of God.¹⁰

A teacher with a Christian vision, likewise, lives the transparent Presence of God in the world itself and believes in the transcendence of our existence, loving life in oneself and in others even as Christ preached and practiced; he or she knows as well that he is called to respond responsibly to all of life, illumined by hope in the Risen Lord.

A Catholic teacher gradually forms this Christian vision of the world through a continuing and profound religious education, with a prayerful life as well. Moreover, we know that an education in a faith-context “*forms men and women capable of rational and critical judgment and conscious of the transcendental dignity of the human person.*” (ECE, 49)

In environmental education then, and in fact, in education in general, we can see the far-reaching role that a Christian educator can play. This is why the Church calls upon the lay faithful “*to be present as signs of courage and intellectual creativity in the privileged places of culture, that is, the world of education – school and university – in places of scientific and technological research, the areas of artistic creativity and work in the humanities.*” (CFL, 44)

Response of Higher Education to the Challenges of the XXIst Century

Higher Education, which includes Colleges in the tertiary level and more particularly Universities, are considered the cradle of future decision-makers and change agents of society, since they have the age-old responsibility in *training leaders for society*. They are uniquely able to provide the breadth of training to equip them for a world in which interrelations among the economic, technological, ethical and social issues are of extreme importance.

¹⁰ Sean McDonagh. *To Care for the Earth: A Call for a New Theology* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1990) pp. 122-123.

Universities be *centers for research*. Their research activities can be a source of accurate and relevant information and dispassionate thinking about society's problems. To do this, the universities could establish linkages between academic research and industrial research, where the latter can produce wealth and give assistance to the needy as well.

One of the concerns of university instruction must be to communicate to future researchers a sense of responsibility to society. Universities are deciding to a great extent the future of the nation where they are located, specifically because they have the highest intellectual reserves in their respective countries, which supply the ever-growing knowledge and trained manpower. No other institution of the intellect is better equipped to cope with the aim of contributing to a sustainable development based on scientific rigor than the universities.

The quality and extension of the university's impact upon society impose upon it moral duties and an enormous responsibility in the developing countries confronted by rapid changes resulting from the overwhelming influence of science and technology. Considering hunger, disease, illiteracy still so prevalent in many countries, the powers-that-be need sound advice to redirect the use of science and technology for the benefit of the less privileged in society and that they be pursued in line with environmental concerns.

No matter how important applied research may be, if a strong financial assistance is available the highest priority should still be given to basic research, for this is the most enduring contribution of universities to society, one they are uniquely fitted to make.

One of the important challenges that information and communication technologies pose to higher education is the fact that it will no longer be the main source of information and knowledge. We are living in an age of unprecedented dissemination of knowledge. When students will be familiarized with the use of these technologies, access to information will no longer need the presence of teachers, although the teacher's action remains to be an indispensable source of knowledge and understanding. The teacher's role will be changed as well as the form and character of higher education. The consequent *new role of university mentors* will be

that of "*a knowledge broker, a cognitive expert and an evaluator working in a team.*" (Delacote, 1996)

One of the new approaches to higher education in this 21st century is the "*Virtual University*" or the "*Virtual Classroom*". This new development allows students' access to learning experiences with richness in content and simulation that has not been achieved perhaps by the conventional classrooms. The World Wide Web is customized to become an educational environment that can support collaborative learning and knowledge construction, which provide special tools for both learners and educators. There is a further development of this new type of education in our knowledge – based society better known as *E-Learning*.

Politicians require high quality advice in matters and areas such as education, public welfare, health, new technologies, energy and many others. Scientists and experts can bring into the political scene a wealth of experience and wisdom, independence of thought, critical views, disinterestedness, and broadness of outlook that would be for humanity's welfare.

The universities of our times are called upon to *interpret new cultures* in a lucid and critical manner. This should be at the core of their social function and their role as *social critics*. Teaching, learning and pursuing research must be enriched with new cultural perceptions. Universities must become credible and competent partners in the on-going dialogue about emerging cultures, both at the national and international level, for their authority in this respect is not only intellectual but moral as well.

The university should be the staunchest bastion for the *synthesis of knowledge* and of human culture sustained by two pillars: *the humanities and science*. The rapid development of informatics, genetic engineering and all pervasive instant communication put into the students' hands keys to dominate nature and an enormous recourse to power. In the era of globalization it is important to educate not only in the sciences and technology, even if they are of critical importance. These disciplines correspond solely to the *homo faber*, the first level of human enterprise enabling people to adjust to their changing material environment in order to survive but there is a danger of just transforming people into

“globally competitive workers.” The more profoundly human activity of searching for the truth, the quest for meaning, the creation of beauty would require the arts, literature, the humanities and social sciences.

The university is called upon *to offer solid human formation*. The university forms professionals and specialists, but above, it should develop men and women into integral persons. They are human beings before they are professionals. Thus university education must first of all be humanistic. There is a *birth of a new humanism* with a strong ethical component accentuating the centrality of the human person and a genuine respect for the spiritual values of the different cultures. In this regard, there is a call upon Institutes of higher learning specializing in Information Technology to give the humanistic formation of their students its utmost importance, as well.¹¹

The university is called upon to share actively in *promoting a civilization of peace*. In this era of increasing globalization, an education for peace also requires an *education for the dialogue of cultures*. This type of education tries to bring about changes in content, in the methods and in the social context of education in order to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age.

Universities are also called upon to reconcile mass higher education with maintaining the highest standards in scholarship and research. In the re-engineering of education, critical balances need to be maintained: *Growth vs. equity; internationalism vs. relevance; technological modernity vs. cultural preservation; individual development vs. cohesion*. (Delors, 1998)

In a world where so much poverty prevails especially in the developing countries, the university must take an *option of social service to society*, which may be rendered through its community outreach programs in marginalized areas. Aside from contributing to development, the students' involvement in these programs would greatly help in their acquiring a keen social awareness.

¹¹ Pope John Paul II, *Address on the occasion of the Jubilee of the University with the theme: “The University for a New Humanism”* Rome, Sept.3-10, 2000, cited by Bernardo Villegas in his book: *The Philippine Advantage*. (Metro Manila: Inkwell Publishing Company, Inc., 2001).

In the Philippine setting, for instance, the demands of the new millennium would require the growth of higher education through *partnership of the university, government and industry*. This however is possible only if these sectors agree on a common purpose: *to be of service to the community they serve*. The challenge to higher education then is to be able to produce Renaissance men and women, morally upright and balanced persons, comfortable with the different cultures and sensitive to international standards. There is a need to form men and women ready to face both the positive and negative aspects of globalization. The leaders, managers and agents of change must be equipped with the right knowledge, skills and be knowledgeable workers able to function in the information age.¹²

Responsibilities of Catholic Higher Education

The aforementioned formidable tasks can be assumed seriously and systematically from the vantage point of Catholic Higher Education, particularly of Catholic Universities. A Catholic University, by the very fact that it is a university is called upon to assume the aforesaid responsibilities.

The Catholic University has the duty as well as the honor to offer confidently its *service to the search for truth*. It is as duty-bound to the human, as human, as it is to God and in this sense, also to the Church. The Catholic University has a unique and irreplaceable role to play precisely because it is a beacon of trust in the power of reason and in the compatibility and harmony between the two avenues to truth: *faith and reason*, in the midst of a skeptical and pragmatically oriented world.¹³

At the dawn of the third millennium, a Catholic University is called upon to serve the Church and society to which it belongs. It must pursue its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The university

¹² Tamerlane R. Lana, O.P., *Thoughts and Messages, Just from the Heart* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2002) pp. 596-597.

¹³ Cardinal Daneels, *Catholic University* – Presentation at the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (Washington, DC, January 28, 2001 from accu@accunet.org).

community composed of professors, students, administrators and non-academic staff, have their respective roles oriented towards maintaining and strengthening the Catholic character of the institution. The source of unity of the university community *"springs from a common dedication to truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and of message Christ which gives the institution its distinctive character."* (ECE, 21)

University professors are expected to continuously improve their competence and endeavor to set the content, objectives, methods, and results of research in an individual discipline within the framework of a coherent world vision. Christian professors are to be witnesses and educators of authentic Christian life, which is the result of integration between faith and life, between professional competence and Christian wisdom. They should be men and women of faith and of prayer as well. The students are challenged to combine excellence in humanistic and cultural development in their educational undertaking. Most especially, they must continue the search for truth and for meaning throughout their lives, inasmuch as *"the human spirit must be cultivated in such a way that there results growth in its ability to wonder, to understand, to contemplate, to make personal judgments, and to develop a religious, moral and social sense."* (GS, 59)

Responsibility of Catholic Universities Towards Evangelization

Catholic Universities, inasmuch as they belong to the Church, participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church. They must contribute to the new evangelization as well, in the fundamental activities of university life – teaching, research and community service. They should influence through the power of the Gospel criteria, judgment about scale of values, thought patterns and styles of life for people in a specific time. Their activities must be re-invigorated by greater openness to the Gospel as it comes to us through the Church. Likewise, Catholic doctrine, ethics, spirituality are to be *"vitally present and operative"* in all university pursuits. (ECE, 13)

The Catholic Universities in Asia, in particular, need to integrate Interreligious dialogue in its task of evangelization. The dis-

harmonies in the Asian world today can be challenged by a spirituality of harmony that is found propitious in preparing for an interreligious dialogue, which is "*a part of the Church's evangelizing mission.*" "*Dialogue is based on hope and love and will bear fruit in the Spirit.*" (RM, 55; 56)

Authentic evangelization must move from a dialogue of service to a deeper dialogue of life and heart. (*Ecclesia in Asia*, 31) Only Christians who are well prepared and deeply immersed in the mystery of Christ and who are happy in their faith community can without undue risk and with hope of positive fruit engage in interreligious dialogue based on doctrine.

In this age of globalization, fruit of the great strides made in Information and communication technology whose primary engine is the Internet, Catholic Universities, in sharing in the Church's evangelizing mission, take into account that the Church sees the Internet as a new forum for proclaiming the Gospel today. In the words of the Holy Father:¹⁴ "*The new world of cyberspace is a summons to the great adventure of using its potential to proclaim the Gospel message.*" Though he cautioned the use of the Internet with "*understanding and wisdom, fruit of a contemplative eye upon the world.*" He spoke of using it "*in favor of the globalization of human development and solidarity, objectives closely linked to the Church's evangelizing mission.*"

Responsibility of Schools, Colleges and Universities Towards Development

The need for an all out support for development in the present world has been a recurrent call by the Church. Pope Paul VI, in his Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* stated: "*The social question has become worldwide.... Today the peoples in hunger are making a dramatic appeal to the peoples blessed with abundance.*" (PP, 3) Pope John Paul II, in his Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, recalling the 20th anniversary of *Populorum Progressio* noted: "*The hopes for development, at that time so lively, today appear very far*

¹⁴ *Message of the Holy Father for the 36th World Communications Day*, published in Boletín Ecclesiástico De Filipinas, Vol.LXXVIII, No. 829, March-April 2002.

from being realized.” (SRS, 12) And in the Encyclical Centesimus Annus, commemorating the first centennial of Rerum Novarum, there is again a call for a concerted worldwide effort to promote development. (CA, 58)

Globalization must be put to advantage by making the process enhance respect for the dignity of every individual person. It must foster the unity of the human family. Catholic Colleges and Universities alone cannot be expected to erect structures of worldwide morality, but they can do serious research and promote dialogue among policy makers regarding the global realities we face. Research and policy analysis can provide the foundation for developing a political economy that allows the poor to share in economic development.

As part of its conscious response to the environmental and cultural issues created by globalization, the Church in its educational agenda for the new millennium has called for efforts at the university level within different regions for regional concerns to have serious intellectual engagement *“In its service to society, a Catholic University will relate especially to the academic, cultural and scientific world of the region in which it is located. Original forms of dialogue and collaboration are to be encouraged between the Catholic Universities and other Universities of the nation on behalf of development, of understanding between cultures and of the defense of nature in accordance with an awareness of the international ecological situation.” (ECE, 37)*

Globalization must be put to advantage by making the process enhance respect for the dignity of every individual person. It must foster the unity of the human family. Globalization can generate opportunities for creativity and initiative in Catholic Colleges and Schools.

Catholic Schools and Colleges can help form their students to be well-rounded persons providing them with the knowledge and skills to make a difference in society, with the moral and ethical courage to make difficult decisions and a faith commitment to fashion a more humane global community.

There is a need for training young leaders as stakeholders within the globalization process. As it intensifies, globalization

makes young people increasingly dependent upon public and collective practices of those generations that precede them. For this reason, it is now absolutely crucial for the young people, especially young leaders to ask if they are becoming more the victims or the beneficiaries of the globalization process.

We cannot just teach about globalization as if it were a simple uncontroversial matter, as if the answers to the thorny question it throws up were cut and dried. For young people to engage with a subject matter like this, they need to be involved in value judgments and decisions for themselves about how the world, their world, should be run.

In the case of Catholic colleges and universities, we should now be confronted with the question: To what purposes are the sciences and the arts that they teach going to serve? What sensitivity to social justice, dedication to the common good is being instilled upon the students? Catholic Higher Education, in particular, produce specialists, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, teachers, nurses and theologians. There is a need to ask if they have been formed as persons who are deeply concerned about progress for the disadvantaged. The students' formation in the Social Teachings of the Church and their active participation in the various community outreach programs organized by the university are expected to create a social sensitivity in them. We can then justly anticipate that the men and women formed this way will have a service mentality and "love of preference for the poor."

For the world of the new century, it is no longer enough to make education a personal, individual quest. We have to understand how our lives are vitally linked to Earth and all who live in it. The idea of community is expanded from purely human to total life community. Since our decisions resonate through this single moral ecology, we must understand ourselves as citizens of a global community whose decisions shape the world for better or for worse.

This calls for a commitment to solidarity within new emerging global realities. Solidarity is the virtue, the habit of the heart, which binds us emotionally and practically to the world. Solidarity combines a sense of justice with active compassion. It makes us aware that the quality of our lives is intrinsically linked with the quality of the lives of others, especially those who are most threatened or

left out. Solidarity combines rigorous intellectual inquiry with personal contact and commitment. This means that educating the whole person necessarily includes educating for justice, because none of us can truly flourish while others are being shattered or excluded. I cannot be whole if most of the world is broken. To deliver economic prosperity and human rights, governments are accountable for ensuring the common good. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, articulated this well: *"If globalization is to succeed, it must succeed for poor and rich alike. It must deliver rights no less than riches. It must provide social justice and equity no less than economic prosperity and enhanced communication."*¹⁵

With regard to the global market systems, it is important to note that the assumption made that all human behavior is motivated by economic enlightened self-interest is not really correct. In a free market system the person can become merely a consuming and producing entity, not a full human being. Educators must address the complexities of human motivation and the ambiguities of markets. We must ask how it is possible to advance the benefits of globalization while eradicating the deep contradictions in the distribution of resources, wealth and power.¹⁶

In the UNESCO Report, we read that at the dawn of this 21st century, 1.3 billion people live in absolute poverty. Some experts even estimate that 2.5 billion survive with \$2 per day. Over 800 million persons are suffering from hunger and malnutrition and over a billion have no access to health services or basic education; 1.4 billion are deprived of drinking water; 1.2 billion are not even connected to electricity networks and more than 4.5 billion do not have basic telecommunication. Thus they have no means of access to the new technologies, the very keys to tomorrow's economy and the possibility of distance education.¹⁷

¹⁵ Paul I. Locatelli, S.J. *Education for Globalization*, (America, May 20, 2002) Copyright America Press, 2002.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Jerome Binde "A New Humanism for the Third Millennium," in the Month at the UNESCO, No. 34, July-September, 1999, p. 14.

There is a call for measures to bridge the “digital divide”, which separates the rich and the poor on the basis of access to the new information and communication technologies. There is however a caution pointed out in making information and communication technology available to as many people as possible. All the measures to be adopted must respect three basic principles, namely “the importance of truth, the dignity of the human person and the promotion of the common good.” In this connection, another “divide”, which operates to the disadvantage of women, needs to be closed as well. The extension of basic communication service to the entire population of developing countries is a matter of justice. The information and communication technologies propel and sustain the process of globalization, leading to a situation where commerce and communication are freed from the restraints of national frontiers. Although the motive of this is to create wealth and promote development, the distribution of benefits has been unequal. While some countries as well as corporations and individuals have greatly increased their wealth, others have been unable to keep up or have even become poorer. It is even worse since it is perceived that globalization has been imposed upon some countries. It is a process in which they are unable to participate in an effective way. The words of Pope John Paul II were brought to the fore to conclude the address of Archbishop Foley: *“This growing sense of international solidarity offers the United Nations System a unique opportunity to contribute to the globalization of solidarity by serving as a meeting place for States and civil society in a convergence of the varied interests and needs.”*¹⁸

Without question, the flow of capital and technology and information into the poorest countries would create economic value for the people and improve their absolute standard of living. But without just political and economic systems, it is unlikely that the quality of life of ordinary people in these poorest countries will improve. In the process of globalization, we are gaining new understanding of our world. People are not motivated by economic

¹⁸ Archbishop John P. Foley, *Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations dedicated to Information and Communications Technology*. June 17-18, 2002, New York.

enlightened self-interest alone. Love of family and tradition, the appeal of a common cause, generosity and benevolence, responsibility for future generations, religious faith and nationalism are also important, as well as fear of uncertainty, ethnic and racial defensiveness, ancient grievances, prejudice and yearning for a simpler, pre-modern world.¹⁹

The best things in life happen only when we share them in common: conversation, family, friendship, art, education, celebration and ritual. The purpose of global politics is to expand our moral sympathies so that we experience solidarity with peoples of other cultures, so that their flourishing is seen as an integral part of our own. The tradition of Catholic social teaching insists that all those who are excluded from participation in society due to poverty, illness, hunger and homelessness make an urgent claim on us. Those properly educated in solidarity are in the best position to raise those questions.²⁰

The challenge of globalization at the dawn of the new millennium will require a response from Catholic teachers and educators of schools of all levels, marked by competence, skill, disinterested service, a sense of interdependence and concern for an all encompassing human progress. We know its ultimate secret: *the ingenuity, justice and love preached by the Gospel.*

Let me close this attempt to describe and understand the phenomenon of globalization and the challenges posed by this extremely complex reality to Schools, Colleges and Universities by saying that with earnest efforts and dedication of the educative communities making these institutions of learning, these challenges could be transformed into "*great opportunities for creativity and initiative*" to fulfill their avowed mission of service to society and thus serve as a beacon of hope at the dawn of the 21st century. □

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¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, Locatelli.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Abbreviations of Church Documents

Populorum Progressio	PP
Gaudium et Spes	GS
Sollicitudo Rei Socialis	SRS
Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith	LCS
Ex Corde Ecclesiae	ECE
Centesimus Annus	CA
Lumen Gentium	LG
Christifideles Laici	CFL