

I have only recently come to realize the very active role that a Catholic education has had in shaping me as a person; and will probably never be able to acknowledge just how many aspects of my life this blessing has touched. I can, however, speak to a particular lesson which stands out to me because of the scale and speed at which it corrected my life, and the efficacious way in which it stirred improvement in everything else. My religious education is affecting my life because it taught me to firmly direct my life towards Christ. The way it accomplished this was by first teaching me to understand and see the beauty in education. I fought this truth for a very long time, but by the grace of God, eventually submitted to and was rebuilt by it. This renewed enthusiasm to learn overpowered the pessimism that had developed and held me back in school and everyday life and replaced it with the intention to live for Christ.

As most pure things in our world, the beauty in education comes from the purpose God assigned to it. In each person, there is a fundamental longing for God, as we have been made for Him. Additionally, we know there is an undeniable fulfillment in the pursuit of truth because of its ability to enrich both mind and soul. St. Theresa Benedicta of the Cross made the connection when she said, "All those who seek truth, seek God, whether this is clear to them or not." Learning for the sake of learning is so natural to the human person, but this right is denied us by this disordered world which holds education over us as a privilege. To an ADHD athlete like myself, education had been still worse: a burden. This misunderstanding has been bred into so many by the corrupt intentions of a bureaucratic corporation (sometimes referred to as the American education system) and it all but crushed my innate desire to learn. I accepted the anxiety inducing "gravity" of good test scores to be the core of my schooling. The moment I was taught the true purpose of learning in Christian Morality my junior year, remains the moment I matured the most. I was empowered by Corinthians 3:23 which calls us to work, in everything, for God, not human masters. While this simple improvement in association with learning was a substantial effect in and of itself, it was by no means the only one. Armed with this decidedly better outlook, I improved exponentially in my grades and wellbeing and was freed to begin the crucial step in any faith journey, of centering my whole life on Christ.

By word and example, my Catholic middle and high school taught us to order our lives around Christ rather than our journey with Christ being fit into a schedule. In my thirteen years of attending Catholic school, I have witnessed the richness of the faith buildup an innumerable amount of non-Catholic and Catholic students alike. The way in which The Faith incorporates education, as the true, rudimentary development of the soul, is what has contributed most especially to the strengthening of my own faith. I received the confidence to entrust my life into the care of The Faith and because of this have stopped thinking of my faith life and "normal" life as two different realities. My worldview now makes more sense than it ever has before. This is because it is now rooted in a firm belief. It is solidified around something that I am confident in, the unfailing love of God. In an increasing turbulent world, where there are so many other ways of living that advertise themselves as easier and more rewarding than the one Christ puts before us, I am unafraid. Because of the truth I have been taught. Because of how I have been taught.

Because of my religious education, I am striving to follow Christ in everything I do.

