

EDUCATION IN MISSION: MISSION IN EDUCATION

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**Australian Association of Mission Studies Conference
"The Christian Mission in the Public Square"
Canberra 2-5 October 2008**

Education in Mission - Mission in Education A Dialogue of Life and Action

Every community that wants to last beyond a single generation must concern itself with education. Education has to do with the maintenance of a community through the generations. This maintenance must assure enough continuity of vision, value, and perception so that the community sustains its self-identity. At the same time, such maintenance must assure enough freedom and novelty so that the community can survive in and be pertinent to new circumstances. Thus, education must attend both to processes of continuity and discontinuity in order to avoid fossilizing into irrelevance on the one hand, and relativising into disappearance on the other hand. (Brueggemann 1982, p 1).

Never before in the history of humankind have scholars in all disciplines (including theology) been so preoccupied as they are today, not only with the study of their disciplines, but with the meta-questions concerning these disciplines. (Bosch 1991, p 363).

Introduction

What happens when missiology and education enter into a dialogue? We are talking about a rich kind of dialogue – one that operates at the levels of the disciplines themselves, and at the practical level as well. Because we have not found evidence of indepth dialogue involving the disciplines of missiology and education, despite diligent searching including in settings beyond Australia, we have embarked on a project to do just that. This paper seeks to advance this dialogue. It does so by addressing two principal issues – the importance of “education in mission” and the importance of “mission in education”.

Part 1. Education in Mission

1.1 Identifying the Challenge

In the first passage quoted above, Brueggemann is introducing a discussion located at the interface of education and biblical studies. For Brueggemann the process of the formation of the canon of scripture, that is how the canon reached its present form, is important for education. In other words the process of canon formation, an intentional transmitting process, is a clue to the Biblical writers’ educational intentions about both what they understood and what they wanted to pass on to future generations. Brueggemann sees this as also vital in Church education. It is a point with which we agree and this insight we regard as having relevance in the area of mission studies or missiology as well as biblical studies.

As the Church community re-shapes understanding of its mission – an undertaking essential to its self-identity - it needs to do so with a clear sense of how it will pass on this understanding of identity and mission, what we might call “the faith”, to the next generation. How is the present generation to make sense of its experience of living in a globalised, secularised and pluralised world in the light of the tradition of a faith community that seeks to carry on Jesus’ mission - to be good news and to proclaim good news? This is an essential challenge in mission and therefore in Christian education both now and into the future.

The passage from Bosch reminds us of another important point. Both missiology and education are subject to the kind of in-depth questioning and exploration to which the wide-ranging political, social and economic changes of our time give rise. So much so that there are, inevitably, discontinuities as well as continuities to be found in some of the long-held assumptions of each discipline. It is our contention that, when two such distinct specialist disciplines as missiology and education meet each other in either academic dialogue or in practical projects, each has much to offer the other in regard to the questions raised above. When this occurs, we may expect some exciting new ground will begin to open up. However, there are currently comparatively few instances of such a dialogue taking place. This is a challenge that missiologists and educators need to address!

1.2 A Dialogue carried out in a Changing Context

In this presentation, we focus particularly on what missiology has to offer faith-based education. In practice, we have spent much of our professional lives engaged in faith-based education in Catholic schools and in the Catholic school systems established by Church authorities to support them. However, our interactions with missiologists from across the world at the recent IAMS (International Association of Mission Studies) Conference in Hungary, has convinced us that much of the discussion pursued in this paper is also relevant to faith-based education as carried out in other Christian Churches.

Both missiology and education as practised in Western countries have developed from assumptions that, in a globalised world and in an increasingly secularised and plural society, are being reshaped. For example, those present at this conference would be well aware of the paradigm shifts which have occurred across the Christian churches in regard to mission. Admittedly, in practice we Catholics still have much of our understanding of, and basic responses to, mission dominated by images of brave missionary specialists going to exotic and dangerous locations in other countries to proclaim the Word of God and build Church communities, supported financially and prayerfully by the home church. There is sound reason to suspect that Catholics are far from unique in having their imaginal horizon still framed by this understanding of mission. Whilst this image conveys something of the story of mission, as missiologists we are aware that today it is no longer the full story. In order to change perspective, an educational response is required.

We live in a time of transition. One reason that this image of mission persists is because cross-cultural mission remains a “cutting edge” form of engagement for a missional Church. This work quite often requires commitment in circumstances of personal danger as the not infrequent deaths of those who so engage attests.

Furthermore, the reality is that there are still many communities that have not been introduced to Jesus Christ and his message of God's invitation to a loving personal relationship. Nor have they had opportunity to access his project of bringing human life and living into alignment with God's will or intention, a project which Jesus expressed by using the image of Kingdom. On the other hand, we experience a growing awareness, variously expressed in official Church documents and "trickling down" into the consciousness of the faithful, that God's mission is the *raison d'être* of the Church itself, giving communities life, shape and direction wherever they exist and whatever may be their expressed primary or public focus. Added to this, mission is slowly but surely being recognized as the fundamental responsibility of every disciple and each Christian community, and therefore is embedded in the total life of that community.

As evidence that the tide is turning, we see that mission is the domain of Church life which brings Christians together in a way that few other aspects of Church life can, historic doctrinal agreements notwithstanding. Of course, as has been admitted above, this new understanding is still manifest only within segments of the Church population, but that segment is growing. People are beginning to sense more clearly that because God's mission is the Church's *raison d'être*, it is incumbent on the churches to move forward together wherever humanly possible in order to be most effectively at the service of that mission. The dialogue that is taking place among Christians, to which this assembly gives witness, is happening in a unique ecclesial context.

1.3 Evaluating Christian Education

Education is also in a state of flux and it may take the further passage of history to provide the critical distance needed to evaluate present models. It too is being reshaped by dramatic changes in context. However, in faith-based schools the impetus for evaluation receives added energy and also assistance by being exposed to the same questioning as faces missiology, since faith-based schools exist solely to further the mission of the Christian community. Thus as the various dimensions of mission today come into clearer focus, the issues raised for education emerge more clearly in their turn. We shall return to this theme below.

The meta-questions facing education most commonly arise from the assumptions which educators, including parents, bring to their educational work. These are assumptions about

- the nature of the human person and the person within society
- the nature of knowledge and how it is constructed and made available
- the connection between education and the creation of life chances
- the place and role of the faith tradition within the educational process
- the role of education within the nation's economy
- the commodification of education
- educational leadership (who provides it, and how appropriate leadership can be assured?)

Over recent years, we have sought to deal with each of these questions within the programs of schools and educational systems, but from the perspective of missiology. The experience has given us some insight into the possible relationship between education and missiology and this is what we want now to share with you.

1.4 Christian Education in the Catholic Tradition

A central question in the dialogue between missiology and education is

How does an understanding of mission as God's mission, manifested definitively in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, throw light on the assumptions that underpin Christian education?

In Australia, Catholic education stands in the tradition of Archbishop Polding, the first Catholic bishop, who together with the other bishops of his time established Catholic education systems as we know them today. These initially utilised the services of members of religious orders, but increasingly since the 1970s, Catholic education is provided mostly by lay people. Constant across this tradition is Polding's notion of Catholic education as wholistic, that is, integrated. For Polding the absolute antithesis of Catholic education was an approach that saw Religious Education lessons added on to an otherwise secular education. He is famously quoted as outlining what he saw "Catholic education" to be in the following words:

Catholics do not believe that the education of a child is like a thing of mechanism that can be put together bit by bit. Now a morsel of instruction on religion, then of instruction in secular learning – separate parcels.... We hold that the subjects taught, the teacher and his (sic) faith, the rule and practice of the school day, all combine to produce results that we Catholics consider to be education. (Quoted in O'Farrell, 1985 p 149).

Catholic school education was to be an education in which a specific view of the world, of human history, and of the person-within-history would be experienced. And, as Polding's quotation makes clear, his initial expression of the identity of the Catholic school was in terms of an integrated curriculum. Polding's sentiments were to be re-echoed many times as Catholic education became definitively established. In his view, this integration was to occur through the personal capacity of the teacher, in the light of his/her sense of God and of God's purposes in the world. Whilst we now work with more sophisticated curriculum, Polding's recognition of the importance of the teacher in integrating faith and learning remains of central importance, and is the reason Catholic system leaders continue to invest heavily in the faith formation of teachers and leaders.

In making some points about the connection between the missional and educational paradigms as we know them in this country, we are aware that the worldview (outlook on life) contained in the Gospels is, and can only be, understood in specific contexts, in our case the Australian context. This is not to deny the perduring truth of the Gospel message, but simply to locate its reception and interpretation within the way of life of human communities. It is the reason that both a study of Australian culture and of the Australian Catholic mission narrative play an important part in our programs for teachers and leaders.

As with many other Christians, Catholics place great value on the significance of narrative in the unfolding of religious consciousness. For them narrative conveys meaning: it is the locus of God's disclosure and our response. Such an understanding was held within Israel and it also shaped Jesus' own religious consciousness. Another way of saying this is that a Gospel-based worldview is conditioned, and in this sense limited by, the meaning a community gives to it within its own narrative. This meaning can change across time.

Our discussion of Catholic Education is confined to the period in which it became established systemically, moving from the predominantly isolated efforts of individuals providing schooling for students who were Catholic, to organised efforts backed by bishops and religious orders (i.e. 1870s onwards). For almost a century Catholic education was shaped by the predominant paradigm of mission held within the Church community. Education was seen as the principal way in which the Church reached out to Catholic people – the policy was often “schools before churches”. We now live in different times and the issue for consideration is - When the paradigm of mission changed, what impact, if any, did this have on Catholic education?

1.5 “The Kingdom” - Recent Development in Catholic Thinking

The earlier mission paradigm reflected the predominance of Matthew's Gospel in Church life. In Matthew, the phrase Kingdom of heaven was used rather than Kingdom of God as in the other Gospels. Not surprisingly therefore Catholic theological understanding generally equated the Kingdom exclusively with spiritual realities. It also equated it with the Church. Thus, even if one said that the goal of Catholic schools was to produce disciples for the Kingdom, it would have meant to prepare them to be faithful members of the Church, and that would have said it all. The likelihood of any further deep or probing questions as to the purpose of the Church was remote because the answer would have been considered self-evident. This mindset was challenged only in the period leading up to Vatican Council II (1962-65).

An important corollary of this paradigm was that if one equates the Church with the Kingdom then there is little need to preach the Kingdom; rather one can preach the Church instead. In this way the “Kingdom” disappeared from the Catholic lexicon, to be rediscovered in some of the documents of Vatican II which take a more expansive view of “the Kingdom” and of Church in relation to it (for example the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* with its reliance on the parables of the kingdom).

Recently, we embarked on a particularly interesting study. Given that Catholic education is well served by magisterial documents, we set ourselves to analyse these in the light of a parallel resource viz the recent official documents on mission and evangelisation. We wanted to ascertain how far the educational documents have been influenced by the clear and identifiable shifts in mission understanding expressed in official teaching.

In this context it is important to note that the Vatican Council 11 document on education is entitled *Declaration on Christian Education* (not Catholic Education, as in later documents). Its formulation highlights, inter alia, a major tension within the commission charged with preparing it as to the major rationale for the Church being involved in education.

Previous Roman documents on education had argued that the basis of the Church's historical role in education was its capacity to direct the human person to his/her final end. The Vatican Council document took a different view arguing for the Church's role in education as based on the promotion of human dignity, and volunteering the Church's co-operation with all who work to this end. This change in approach highlighted the foundational principle on which Catholic social teaching also rests. From this principle all rights and duties re education are seen to flow. Human dignity is not here defined in terms of a person's final purpose, but deals particularly with the here and now. Catholic education does not exist firstly to serve the Church; rather the Church exists to serve humanity, through providing an education that helps people to come to a realisation of their worth and dignity, particularly those who are marginalised and least likely to come to such a realisation. In a very real way the foundational document on education of the modern Catholic magisterium expresses an understanding which aligns with the broader concept of the Kingdom of God, rather than simply the Church. It fits well with the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) and the unfolding of its seminal insights in later documents on mission and evangelization.

1.6 Kingdom, Mission and Evangelisation

There have been about six major documents on Catholic education published since Vatican Council II (the number depending on which documents one includes), and there is evidence that developments in the contemporary understanding of mission has had an influence on them. This is especially so in the key document *The Catholic School* (1977) scheduled initially to mark the decade since the close of Vatican Council 11. Its delay by two years meant it was produced after the Catholic "*magna carta*" on evangelization, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), in the period when the thinking in this document began to take root in Church theology and practice.

Evangelii Nuntiandi drew together many strands of discussion within the Church in a time of confusion about mission by developing a much richer understanding of the concept of the Kingdom of God as a key goal of mission. Evangelisation is seen as the mission of the Catholic Church and is understood as contributing to the realisation of God's Kingdom. The document recognises that our understanding of the Church's mission is always capable of further development and so it places a premium on Church renewal as a condition of authenticity in mission. The document is also important in construing human salvation as more than the final end of the individual, but also includes consideration of the individual in relation to his/her society and culture. *Evangelii Nuntiandi's* theology of mission is consistent with "Mission Dei" theology, without using that particular language.

The document contains lengthy discussions on the “evangelisation of culture” and memorable references to the relationships between faith, life and culture which also provide a major theme in *The Catholic School*.

A later document, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997), also bears the mark of the influence of a second major document in Catholic teaching on evangelisation - *Redemptoris Missio* 1991. The document is more explicitly missional, speaking of the need for the Catholic School to have a “missionary thrust” and to reach out to people in this spirit. It acknowledges the highly pluralised and multi-faith nature of many contemporary societies, as well as the fact that in Western societies many Christians have, to greater or lesser degree, lost touch with their Christian roots.

For those interested in following through the major themes in these documents, Archbishop Miller, former secretary of the Congregation of Catholic Education, has a very useful address, *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools* (2005), readily available via the internet. The address delivered at the Catholic University of America is structured around what he calls five marks of the Catholic school and offers a helpful way of engaging the major themes. We cannot do justice to his thinking here, but do recommend his paper as highly valuable in accessing the official Catholic heritage in regard to education, and providing a basis on which a missional understanding of faith-based education can rest.

1.7 Adding the Prophetic Dimension

In quoting the Vatican Council 11 document (*Declaration on Christian Education* n 9) and the restatement of important themes from the document issued to prepare for the third millennium (*Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the New Millennium* n 15) Archbishop Miller again draws attention to the particular focus of Catholic schooling towards “those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of faith”. Obviously these passages are missional in intent. They go well beyond any goal for Catholic schooling construed simply as an enculturation of Catholics into their faith tradition - vitally important as such a goal is to families and those who sponsor Catholic schools. The concern that Catholic schools particularly in Western countries address the needs of the marginalised is now widespread.

Archbishop Miller is adamant, as Polding was, that Catholic education must be integrated and integral. He could not be clearer nor more demanding in his vision of how the Gospel translates in educational terms, and for this reason, we would like to quote him at some length.

Because of the Gospel’s vital and guiding role in a Catholic school, we might be tempted to think that the identity and distinctiveness of Catholic education lies in the quality of its religious instruction, catechesis and pastoral activities. Nothing is further from the position of the Holy See. Rather the Catholic school is Catholic even apart from such programs and projects. It is Catholic because it undertakes to educate the whole person, addressing the requirements of his and her natural and supernatural

perfection. It is integral and Catholic because it provides an education in the intellectual and moral virtues, because it prepares for a fully human life at the service of others and for the life of the world to come. Thus, instruction should be authentically Catholic in content and methodology across the entire program of studies.

A Christian conception of human dignity is implicit in such a statement. Miller goes on to speak of education in terms of the essential principles of critique and evaluation which can only be taught across the whole curriculum and which involve every teacher. This discussion also takes us into both the areas of pedagogy¹ and the social construction of knowledge².

It is because a faith-based education involves every learning area that we have been involved in major curriculum projects that run across all learning areas. This presentation does not allow us to go into these in detail, but reference to an analysis of various approaches to faith-based curriculum in recent decades is D'Orsa, T. "In the Second Modernity it Takes the Whole Curriculum to Teach the Whole Gospel" (*Journal of Catholic School Studies* May-June 2008). The analysis was made to assist the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and contains a kind of *status questionis* in regard to the approaches undertaken in recent decades to ensure the whole of the formal curriculum in Catholic schools is a vehicle for evangelisation.

Part 11 - Mission in Education

2.1 Education as a Vehicle for Mission

Donal Dorr in his useful book *Mission in Today's World* (2000 pp 222-227) talks of education as a vehicle for evangelisation, and so for mission. The question is – In what sense is this so?

Concretising the metaphor helps us to draw out what is at issue here. For example we might ask -

- In what directions is this vehicle being driven in the service of mission?
- Is the vehicle serviced regularly, and is the servicing adequate for the work the vehicle is expected to do?
- Is the "driver education" of those driving the vehicle (teachers and leaders) adequate to ensuring the vehicle maintains direction and "delivers the goods"?
- Is the load being carried reasonable?

¹ A useful reference is Dan White "Catholic Pedagogy: Nurturing Pilgrims or Educating Tourists?" *Journal of Catholic School Studies* May-June 2008.

² The issue of the social construction of knowledge in schools is taken up in D'Orsa, T. "Exploring the Essentials" *Discourse* February 2006.

- Is the current model adequate for the missional engagement which is the community's purpose or do we need to upgrade?

In pondering these questions, one must bear in mind that, while the practicalities of missional engagement are shaped by context, there are some overarching mission directions which are becoming very clear across all the Christian churches. As indicated earlier, **mission rather than doctrine**, is the fundamental point of convergence among Christian churches today. The questions above constitute an agenda that the dialogue between education and missiology must address. What does the contemporary paradigm of mission say to those whose prime aim is to affirm the human dignity and worth of young people through schooling? What does it say to the recognition that at the heart of the Gospel's application lies the service of others, and that it is through service that one's full humanity is achieved?

2.2 Contemporary Paradigms of Mission

In his classic work on mission theology (*Transforming Mission* 1991), the great Protestant missiologist David Bosch devotes a lengthy section to what he terms "Elements of an Emerging Missionary Paradigm", tracing thirteen overlapping understandings of mission as he edges closer to, but does not finally delineate, a new missional paradigm (pp 368-510).

He acknowledges the risk that, in pursuing a radical and comprehensive hermeneutic of mission, one may run the risk of viewing everything (and as a corollary nothing) in individual and communal Christian life as mission (Bosch p512). He wisely concludes, drawing on the words of Stackhouse (1988: 85), that we cannot define what is infinite.

Whoever we are, we are tempted to incarnate the Missio Dei in one-sidedness and reductionism. We should beware of any attempt at delineating mission too sharply. And perhaps one cannot do this by means of theoria (which involves "observation, reporting, interpretation, and critical evaluation) but only by means of poesis (which involves "imaginative creation and representation of evocative images").
(Bosch p512)

The risk of viewing everything as mission is a risk worth taking. If God's mission brings into existence and gives ongoing life to the Church community, every aspect of that community's life is in some sense missional. This is so because it is related to the Kingdom of God which is both global and local in scope and because it flows from baptism and the fundamental orientation baptism gives to Christian life. The community is missional when it is helping to further the Kingdom of God in its midst. Clearly this is occurring, potentially at least, when the faith community is educating, pastorally caring, gathering for worship, reconciling, engaging in social justice or ethical practice within or beyond its own community. Is there a missional paradigm which can draw together all these dimensions of evangelisation?

Although Bosch, who died in 1992, did not spell out one overarching missional paradigm, the work he pursued has continued. In today's globalised world with its unconscionable gaps between rich and poor there has emerged in the work of Bevans and Schroeder a paradigm for contemporary mission which acts as a meta-image

embracing many of the ways of expressing mission which are relevant in various situations. This is the paradigm of mission as **prophetic dialogue**.

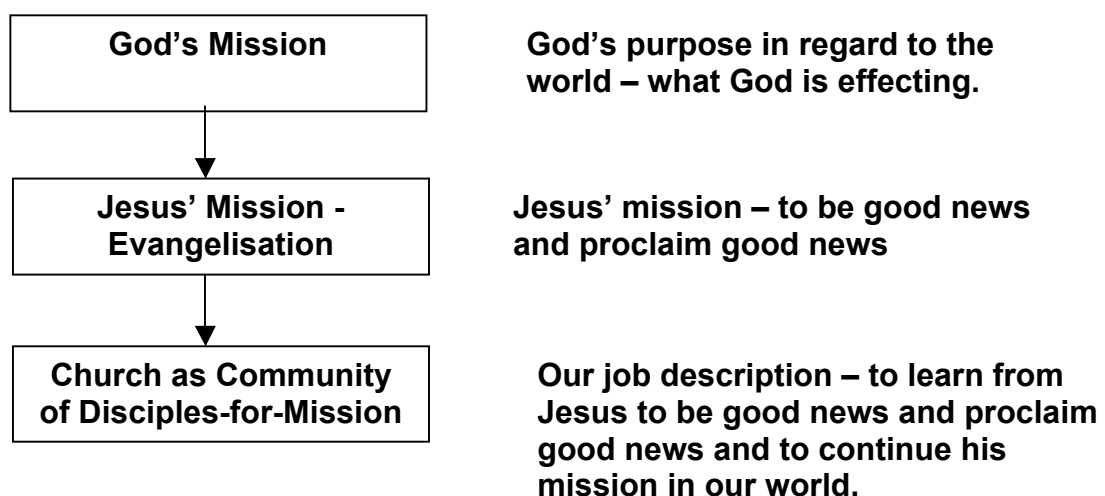
In bringing their own excellent contribution to contemporary mission theology, *Constants in Context* (2006) to a close, Bevans and Shroeder devote a lengthy chapter to this paradigm. Mission as prophetic dialogue is what they call a “stereophonic” paradigm containing many elements, a truly meta-construct well capable, in our view, of holding together the elements of contemporary ministries on behalf of Jesus’ own project the Kingdom of God (bearing always in mind that the criterion of the Kingdom is that society’s marginalised have an honoured place). It is this missional paradigm that we employ in conceptualising mission today in educational terms (see below). The model adds depth to both the content and the process of the entire educational endeavour.

2.3 “Mission” and “Evangelisation”

In moving to fill out concretely what exactly we are trying to do in Catholic educational systems at the interface of missiology and education, we would like to focus briefly on the word widely used in Catholic circles viz *evangelisation*. We are aware of overlaps and differences in the ways Christian denominations use this and similar words. In Catholic thinking evangelisation refers to the mission of the Church. We also note that within the Catholic tradition there are different emphases in how evangelisation is understood. The term can for example have a narrow meaning roughly equivalent to proclamation or a broader definition as found in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. In reading Catholic material it is necessary to ask which understanding is being used!

In our work we make the connection and distinction between mission and evangelization thus -

Linking the Concepts



The mission of the Christian community, a community formed for mission, is to evangelise i.e. to bring good news. This is done in a variety of ways which we call dimensions of evangelisation and therefore of mission. These dimensions will have different shapes and emphases according to the situation or context. All are clearly evident in the Gospels themselves³.

In our courses we work with six dimensions of evangelisation –

- witness,
- proclamation
- pastoral ministry
- dialogue,
- inculturation
- liberation, sub-divided into
 - personal liberation
 - justice, peace, and reconciliation, and
 - the integrity of creation

If we return to Donal Dorr’s idea of education as a vehicle for mission, we have been able to work with teachers and leaders showing how education, in both the formal curriculum and in all the learning experiences that occur in the school community, is such a remarkable vehicle for mission.

We ask - If education is a vehicle for mission then in what direction should it be steered? The initial intuitions of Polding and his colleague bishops that the answer lies in providing an integrated experience in which the teacher is also a witness was important in giving Catholic education an initial trajectory. We would argue that this trajectory is appropriate to all Christian education. Of course schools are much more sophisticated environments now than they were in the 1870s. They are large and complex organizations with their own internal cultures. Providing an integrated experience now involves co-opting this culture in the service of mission.

A key concept in this process is that of “school as learning community” as distinct from the alternative of school as institution. “School as learning community” implies that schools can take on some of the qualities that define community – shared values, common goals and mutual commitments. Moving in this direction in our highly pluralised society is quite a challenge. It forces school communities to confront issues that otherwise could easily be avoided. It gives leadership to the involvement of all sections of the school community in the learning process that results in an articulation of what it stands for, what it hopes to achieve for young people and how it intends to do this.

These understandings are now spelled out in mission statements and translated through strategic plans. This has been a major development of the past twenty years and has led to significant renewal in education. A focus on mission has brought with it the need to direct the attention of the community beyond itself to those in society

³ See for example the dimensions of evangelisation in *Mission as Prophetic Dialogue* Ch 12 in Bevans and Shroeder 2004 pp 348-395. Although time and space does not allow us to deal with this in detail, it is important to note that all these dimensions have clearly discernible roots in the Gospels.

who are needy or marginalised. It also focuses on the need for mission-oriented communities to be concerned about the state of their society and to work with others to bring about social transformation.

What is at issue is whether the use of “mission” is a reflection of the influence of secular organizational theory or of the translation of a theological construct into practical strategic objectives. Our experience has shown that, even when communities have formulated statements of mission initially as a consequence of theological understanding, they may readily become subverted by the secular organizational paradigm. Instead of mission understood as God’s purpose in sending Jesus into the world, a purpose which the Christian community takes forward in Jesus’ name, mission becomes simply a statement of general educational purpose with little theological depth- part of the school’s rhetoric. This tendency needs to be strenuously resisted and challenged.

Good leaders are aware of the possibility of subversion and ensure that it does not occur. They recognize that processes of school renewal (often termed school development) are graced opportunities. With such recognition, God’s work can occur, a mission which goes far beyond any secular organizational paradigm.

The integrated nature of the experience promoted in learning communities begins with an affirmation of the dignity of the individual and his/her incorporation into a community that values learning. This aim is not seen as an end in itself but as a step towards joining with others to bring about social and cultural transformation in a particular context. The quality of life promoted in the school and reflected in its culture provides a plausibility structure for belief in the possibility of social transformation and the “evangelisation of the culture” of the wider society. The nature of the “integrated experience” that underpins Catholic education has expanded as the conception of mission has taken root in the fertile soil generated by the complexities of our current context.

2.4 Mission Studies adapted for Teachers and School Leaders

Probably the best way to show you how we go about this work with leaders is to refer to the two foundational courses in *Mission Studies* that we have developed especially for educators (see Appendix). These are being used with slight variations within various tertiary institutions as part of their ongoing work with teachers.

The Broken Bay Institute in Sydney has shown considerable leadership in building up a missiological faculty with the needs of faith-based schools as a particular focus. Other theologates which have included these units linking missiology and education are Catholic Institute of Sydney and Yarra Theological Union Melbourne. Diocesan school systems are beginning to include such mission studies in the diocesan component of the Australian Catholic University’s Masters of Educational Leadership program (dioceses are able to offer four units themselves provided those units are approved by ACU). The ACU approach to the structure of their Masters in educational leadership offers dioceses flexibility in enabling them to put their own stamp on the ongoing education of their leaders.

Across the two courses the overarching theme of mission as prophetic dialogue is pursued as a kind of lens throwing light on the whole evangelising enterprise as pursued in local contexts . Two objectives are basic to our purpose –

- (i) to build up a sound basis of knowledge about mission and its various dimensions (sound conceptual base)
- (ii) to examine the implications of these for the work of educators in Catholic schools (translating concepts into action).

In Australia's multi-cultural and multi-faith society, education in mission and mission in education have extraordinary power to further the kind of dialogue which can enhance both societal and ecclesial cohesion at several levels. For example, in undertaking with parents the education of a child, a school has a privileged role in the conversations which inevitably take place in the course of that project. Another name for conversation between equal partners is dialogue. In such dialogue an understanding of the Christian view of the world and a responsiveness to God and God's Kingdom project, can be fostered. Young people have a chance to see their Christian faith as contributing to the great human projects of our time, as well as anchoring them in a loving relationship with God.

In concluding, we would like to invite as many missiologists and educators as possible to participate in an ongoing exploration of the interface between missiology and education. Our experience to date has shown us that this is an enormously rewarding exercise. And it is ongoing. As contexts change, further insights are developed, and can be put at the disposal of the wider community. For us, mission gives education a rich matrix within which it can respond to the times, and an unerring reference in dealing with its own meta-questions. The alternative is to be solely at the mercy of political and social agendas which may have little in common with Jesus' vision of God's Kingdom.

As Brueggemann reminded us at the outset, Christian educators are inheritors of the Biblical process of education which occurred with the laying down of the canon of Scripture. Such rich heritage is a source of energy in collaborating with those who continue to recreate the narrative of God's mission in the unfolding of our history. We confidently work with our colleague educators in Catholic education so as to bring each small flow of the local educational narrative into the great stream of God's purpose within human history. Our goal is that education will make its appropriate and significant contribution to the Gospel being constituted with a unique Australian character in individuals and communities.

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APPENDIX

Program 1: Catholic Schools on the Frontier of Mission

This is a theology of mission for educators. It is structured in three parts.

Part 1. Laying the Foundations. Given that schools communities are located on the new frontier (defined by the new globalisation with its accompanying new multiculturalism and multi-faith dimensions, secularisation and pluralism) new skills of survival are needed. We need to learn to “do mission theology”. By way of illustration we would expect that students would become aware of the impact of globalisation on areas of life which might at first seem surprising. As the whole world is being drawn into an increasingly integrated market, many areas of life are being commodified which were not so before. Even education itself becomes a service commodity the quality of which can be improved by exposure to market forces. Those espousing this view have their own idea of quality which they seek to build into the design of the mandated curriculum, either implicitly or explicitly. We try to lead our students to a healthy “hermeneutic of suspicion” in looking at mandated curriculum proposals to ascertain whose interests they serve. Teachers in faith-based schools are called upon to exercise a prophetic ministry on behalf of their colleagues when they serve on curriculum committees and to ensure the continuance of the freedom to teach the curriculum in accordance with one’s faith world-view. This is an example of missional work in a secular culture.

The first program includes input on the basics of “doing theology” which involves the various components of mission theology e.g.

- (i) individual’s and community’s experience,
- (ii) Scripture,
- (iii) Catholic teaching on mission
- (iv) experience of other Church communities
- (v) capacity for analysis, reflection, synthesis and action

Attention is given to the nature of the frontier which involves the capacity to understand and analyse culture, with particular attention to Australian culture, as well as studies in globalisation, secularisation and pluralism in the second modernity (a term we prefer to post-modernity) (cf Shreiter 2008)

Part Two: Mission and Discipleship – Going Deeper into Our Tradition In order to get perspective on the present missional environment, students are given a broad introduction to the major eras of Christian mission and the opportunities given to the Church by the forces which catapulted the Church into each new era. The evidence that we are in a new missional era is examined. The key role which culture has played in taking the Christian community forward in the past and the significant new cultural realities now playing their part are also included. Some cultural models are examined. A study of mission in the Acts of the Apostles is included.

A significant element of the first course is tracing the developments of mission thinking within the Catholic Church in recent decades. This helps to locate the group’s own work as theologians and practitioners and to give confidence as the community attempts to remain attuned to the Holy Spirit.

Some depth study is done on the Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God in the Synoptics.

Part Three – God's Kingdom and Our School. Finally, a brief introduction is given to the domains of evangelisation (which are to assume more significance in the second course). This provides an opportunity for students to begin to conceptualise what they are learning in terms of the various aspects of the school's work, and some workshopping is done to assist in that.

The major assignment for the course requires students to develop their own theology of mission suited to their own missional involvement.

2.3.2 Program 2. *Walking with Mystery – Education as Evangelization*

The second course also has three main sections.

Part One: Catholic Identity and the Mission of the Catholic School. Within the course narrative is dealt with as an important key to identity in Scriptural terms, and in terms of the story of the community itself – how it has construed its own identity in trying to respond to the Gospel call to discipleship in a particular time and place, and across time. Students are introduced to various studies about how young people construe their identity as Christians. The links between narrative and identity are made.

A particular study is done on the various approaches which have been developed within Catholic school systems in recent decades to ensure that the whole curriculum is a vehicle for mission.

Part Two - Articulating the Mission of the Catholic School. This section deals with the mission of the Catholic school within official documentation. It also deals with the various approaches that are or have been used in recent times to develop mission statements, that is to articulate the mission of the community. Students learn to identify the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary models. Work is done on the school as faith community and on the faith development of young people and the missional implications of this. The study of the Kingdom of God undertaken in the first course is enriched by a study of the Kingdom in Paul which leads to a study of both justice and peace in the Bible.

Part Three - Educational Initiatives. In this section participants take each of the dimensions of evangelisation (as given above) and carry out a detailed study on how the school can be effective as a "vehicle for mission" in one or more of these. We have been delighted with some of the work done by students to date. A project which is done over a period of time on a particular dimension forms the major assignment for the course. Such assignments combine practical work in the school with a serious engagement with the literature of the course which is a challenging selection of readings to which school people would certainly not normally have access.