



Educating Children to Embrace God's Will

On Monday Evenings, June 18, 1962, Milwaukee

You see... the children become another reason or another means by which father and mother rediscover each other. Then the child becomes a source of unity, not a source of division between father and mother.

I do not think I should go into this in any more detail. You only need to remember that education means staying in constant living contact. Of course, if I have no life, I will not be able to pass on life. If I do not have any religious life, then I cannot impart to my child any religious life. If I do not lead a moral life, then I cannot impart to my child any moral life. Then, at the very most, I will provide nice clothes and a good school. But on the inside it will be me in one corner and the child in another. Then we don't even know the ABCs of the art of education!

Now I think we can let this definition stand. I do not want to spend more time on it even though the definition is of great importance and is a very good indicator of our educational activity.

Now comes a second definition, a more scholarly one: *I must help my child to be able to decide independently and autonomously to love God and to do His will.*

Independently and autonomously. The child must be able to act of his own free will and make his own decisions. You see, if I want to make an examination of conscience and know "Is my child truly educated?" then I must ask myself, "If my child were drafted into the army, how would he do"?

Would he be able to assert himself, to remain faithful to the good and noble things he has been taught? Would he be able to hold his course even if every other soldier has a totally different view of things than him? You see, practically speaking, the measuring rod which you can use to tell if you did a good job of educating is if the child can swim against the stream. *Against* the stream. That is a proof that he or she can stand interiorly, that he or she is a pillar, a firm personality. (...)

If it is true that Schoenstatt stands in the plan of God as a pronounced movement of educators and education, then we can assume that in God's plan there will also be the needed grace, that in God's plan we will receive the charism of being able to be true educators. In practical terms this implied that through the covenant of love with the Blessed Mother made in the spirit of the family, we have the right to receive from her special grace to become true educators. And it is of great importance to trust that we receive this special grace, for education is impossible without grace.

Questions:

- ❖ Have we, as parents, made any efforts to educate our children to observe, compare, evaluate, judge, and decide on their own? When and how can we lead them to stand firm before the sweeping flow of influences? Have we only taught them to submit, and keep their ideas to themselves? Or, are we ready to listen and exchange ideas when differences of opinions arise?