

FULLY

ALIVE

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A vision of education
in Assumption Schools

John 10:10

... Thy Kingdom Come ...

*“The glory of God
is man fully alive
and the life of such a person
consists in the vision of
GOD.”*

Irenaeus

FULLY ALIVE

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ASSUMPTION EDUCATION

The Assumption Sisters
began their work of education
in Grahamstown in 1850.

This work has changed and grown
over the years:

the spirit of Assumption education
may now be found in schools,
adult education,
health education
and informal education.

THIS IS WHAT WE STAND FOR ...

As educators
in Assumption spirit
we offer Catholic education
which means
education that is centred on
Jesus Christ.

Learning to live the values
of the Kingdom of God
that he taught and lived
is what Catholic education is about.

*“I came that they may have life,
and have it to the full,”* (Jn 10:10)
is how Jesus once described his mission.

So those whom we educate are challenged,
guided and led,
to develop their gifts:
intellectual, physical, practical,
social and spiritual.

Each one is set the goal of becoming
“fully alive”.

This is a continuous process
in which the acquisition
of knowledge, attitudes and skills
plays an essential part.
For knowledge is needed
if the process of human growth
is to develop people
who are not content to be consumers
but want to make a meaningful contrition
to their world and to transform it
in responsible service.

Using all the educational means
at our disposal
we encourage each one to reach
his or her full potential.
The ultimate goal of education
is the gradual growth of the person
into a happy caring and mature member
of the human community,

one who, through the continuous development
of gifts of mind and heart,
learns to live in the service of others.

True happiness
is not found in things but in persons
and, as the new Testament makes clear,
especially in the Divine Persons ...
So ... a loving relationship with God
an acceptance of one's own
graced uniqueness and
a respect for and acceptance of others
is the basis of education
for a happy and fulfilled human life.

COMMUNITY ...

Our aim is to promote
genuine community
where all share with one another
the vision of life
which Christ gave us.

A COMMUNITY WHERE ALL ARE RESPECTED ...

The members of our education community
are drawn from diverse
social and cultural backgrounds.
Each one is valued as a person;
gifts of intellect, capabilities,
social status or wealth
are irrelevant to one's value
as a human being.

Co-operation rather than competition
is encouraged.

Seeing good in others,
being generous in praise,
practising forgiveness,
promoting reconciliation
and helping one another when possible
are qualities we try to foster.

As an educational community
 we are encouraged
 to look out on the wider society
 of the parish, the province,
 the country, the world itself,
 and to form a realistic idea
 of conditions there,
 how human beings are affected,
 and to see what is called for from us
 to make the world
 a better and happier place for others.

We try to bear witness simply and clearly
 to the love of God for all people
 and to our love for God.

So those whom we educate are encouraged
 to support and become personally involved
 in works of charity,
 to grow in understanding of
 and practical concern
 for the rights of individuals and families,
 issues of national and international

peace and justice,
 so that they become
 fired with zeal to live and to extend
 the values of Christ
 In their own family, workplace
 and social environment.

A COMMUNITY WHERE GOD IS KNOWN AND LOVED

The foundation of the Gospel
 and frequent encounter with Christ,
 risen and present among us,
 gives Catholic education its purpose.
 It is contact with Him
 that creates in the community
 an atmosphere permeated with
 the Gospel spirit of freedom and love.

A COMMUNITY WHERE I ACCEPT MYSELF ...

We strive to lead those whom we educate
 to a deep relationship with Christ,
 with a well-formed conscience,
 and the ability and willingness

to choose freely in their lives
 what is right and good,
 and to take responsibility
 for their decisions and actions.
 They are helped to grow in
 acceptance of self,
 as created and loved by God,
 and so also in acceptance of others,
 in which jealousy and ambition
 give way to generous sharing
 of gifts and abilities.
 To develop such attitudes
 self-discipline is required.

Leisure forms an integral part
 of human life and education in the
 constructive use of it
 is vital for human growth.

Many leisure activities involve
 the use of mass media so help
 is given in the critical evaluation
 and selective use of it.

Catholic education
 tries to help people grow
 in acceptance of their true selves.

All effort towards genuine
 human development,
 and not merely academic giftedness,
 is an essential component of education.

IN CONCLUSION ...

Assumption education
 is committed to the development
 of the whole person,
 since in Christ, the perfect man,
 all human values find their fulfilment
 and unity.

Mary's Assumption into heaven assures us
 that all our human endeavour
 to guide those whom we educate
 to fullness of life will be transformed
 by God into His glory.

PART 11

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The values of Assumption education have a specific interpretation in the community of the school. This community is made up of pupils, staff, parents, and, in the wider sense, past pupils, governing bodies – in fact, all who are associated with the school.

STAFF

At the core of a school community is that staff – teaching and ancillary. The dedication, contribution and interest of each member to a large extent makes the school what it is.

TEACHING STAFF

Teaching staff members need the opportunity to share their outlook and vision with one another at regular staff meetings. They can also benefit greatly by periodic days devoted to staff development and to a growth in understanding of the role of the teacher in a Catholic school. The influence of their values and behaviour on the children is a constant challenge to the teachers. They have a responsibility to identify with the school and uphold its values – that is, the values taught by Jesus Christ – in the situations of everyday life.

Teachers are expected to work hard at the task of leading their pupils to the discovery of truth. This involves careful preparation, clearly defined goals, and keeping abreast of current trends in education by means of on-going study. Regular testing and assessment of pupils is essential so as to give direction and encouragement to the pupils' study. It is also important for each teacher to work in collaboration with others so as to ensure holistic approach to the pupils as persons as well as to the learning process. Regular reports should be given to parents and they should be involved as closely as possible in the life and work of the school.

Teachers are mindful that the less academically gifted need help and encouragement and need to discover their true abilities.

ANCILLARY STAFF

Closely involved in the life of the school are the members of the ancillary staff: secretaries, accountants, cleaners, groundsmen and other assistants. Their contribution, often hidden, makes possible the smooth running of the school.

PARENTS

Parents' meetings, social gatherings, informal discussions with parents, and the involvement of parents in the PTA help them to exercise their responsibility as members of the school community. They are the prime educators of their children and it is in collaboration with

them that the Catholic school helps the child to grow into human wholeness in Christ.

PUPILS

Each pupil is valued and respected as a unique human being. Pupils, especially senior pupils, have a responsibility to uphold the values and standards of the school and to help it to develop into a community that both nurtures and reaches out. There is also the wider school community of which Governing Bodies and Education Departments form a part. Past pupils form a special part of the wider school community and the staff tries to keep in touch with them to support them in their effort to live out the values on which their education was based. Past pupils, in their turn,

can contribute in a variety of ways to the life of the school. The school itself never forgets that it is part of the community of the parish, the church, society, and reviews from time to time the implications of this mutual bond. The co-operation of all members of the school community is essential for the development of the spirit which should characterise our Catholic Schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

The school community needs to be continually fed and stimulated by its source of life: the saving word of Christ. Pupils, and where possible, other members of the school community, are led to a reverent and prayerful familiarity with Scripture

in which God lovingly meets them
and speaks with them.

Through the liturgical
and sacramental life of the school,
they are given a milieu
in which they can make
and gradually deepen
their response of faith.

Sound catechetical instruction is essential,
for pupils need to grasp
the simple but solid truths of the faith.

Adequate and quality time
must be given to this subject.

The deepening of personal spirituality
through annual retreat days,
the formation of apostolic
or spiritual groups is encouraged.

School assemblies, participation
in the Eucharist, reception
of the Sacrament of Reconciliation,
prayer during school
(especially the Angelus)

are some ways of promoting a lived faith
in the school.

Faith and life have to be integrated.

For this it is vital
that the moral conscience of pupils
be developed.

Pupils, especially in higher classes,
need help in learning to deal
with contemporary ethical problems.

They need to grasp those Gospel values
which alone give meaning to human life,
and, in the light of these,

to see life

in the contact of God's loving plan.

Specialist speakers
on contemporary moral issues
can greatly help pupils
to grow in this area.

The school has a framework
of healthy discipline
so structured as to lead
to the self-discipline

so essential in adult life.

Practice in applying themselves

to learning, perseverance

in tasks which they are set,

the physical discipline of sport

as well as its emphasis on teamwork,

are all means by which pupils learn

to exercise that self-discipline

which shows itself in courteous,

responsible and loving action,

and a mature acceptance of self and others.

Genuine warmth and compassion

support those who experience difficulties.

Christ is the foundation of

the Catholic School.

On this foundation, the community

of the school is built

and grows together in love

that reaches out to the whole of

God's world.