

# The Work of Resurrection

-January 2023-

*"Hurry then, take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your institute is, before all, to sanctify youth."*

*-Basil Moreau, Christian Education, 1856*

None of us in the educational world wants to end up like the [teacher from Charlie Brown](#). We want to be relevant! We want to speak so as to be heard! While it can be very easy, indeed, to get stuck in a rut of just barking out a series of words class after class with no real meaning, there are practical steps we can take to ensure that we will in fact show up to our classrooms every day as "prophets who speak in the service of God's kingdom" (*Constitutions*, 45):

- We can spend the summer engaging the curriculum. Does it make sense? Is it well organized? Are we personally invested in it? Are we excited about it? Perhaps we need to talk to colleagues in our department or at other schools about the classes we teach. Whatever the case may be, a good product at the beginning of the school year should inspire confidence in us and allow us to share our lessons with great zeal and intentionality.
- The human mind is like a net with many layers which catch various nuances of things that are read and heard. Being rigorous lesson-planners can allow our minds to develop a clearly defined understanding of the ideas we are trying to communicate and thus help us to deliver those ideas effectively to our students. Maybe we could consider having a designated time each week to write detailed lesson plans for the following week. We could review those lesson plans the day before and the morning of the given lesson, using our imaginations to catch the details of how our words might best land with students.
- It is easy to forget that all communication is a two way street! How many teachers' lounges have we found ourselves in being bombarded with the negativity of how students don't listen and how "kids these days..." or "kids these days..."?! Such experiences should motivate us to simply figure out the psychological landscape of our students: How does a fourteen-year-old think? What kinds of instructions would make sense for a sophomore in high school? What are the kinds of questions and activities that would motivate juniors? If I don't speak in a way that can be received by my audience, can I really blame my students for not listening?
- If we think back to our own human experiences, we can probably recall a time in our lives when we felt supported and loved by another human being and what a difference this made in our lives. Similarly, when kids feel connected, they are relaxed, their interactions become very natural, and learning practically happens by absorption. What if we greeted each student by name at the beginning of the period and as they exited the classroom? What if we started to learn about their interests and backgrounds? What if we took time out of the class period to celebrate accomplishments or just enjoy one another's company?

I can remember feeling frustrated that my five classes of ninth-graders were not listening to me! It was the middle of the year and I didn't know what to do. After a period of vocational discernment (at the conclusion of which my call to be a Holy Cross Educator was confirmed), I began to practice intentionality. I would get to school early and write a detailed schedule for the day on the board. We would honor it as a class. Any necessary adjustments were made as the school day progressed. I learned how my students used words, understood words, interpreted words and processed words. Soon enough I was speaking their language and finally felt like we were engaging in real dialogue where transformation and growth were possible.

Since "the Spirit of the Lord may choose any of us to speak the truths our students need to hear" (*Constitutions*, 81), we just might want to consider the awesome responsibility that is laid upon us in the teaching business. May we thus grow in our ability to "proclaim the Kingdom" (*Constitutions*, 56) and "announce God's rule" (*Constitutions*, 43) in the otherwise ordinary circumstances of our instruction.