

The Catholic Education Resource Center

CERC

Especially in our own time — when it is not so much the Catholic Faith itself as the moral and social teachings derived from that faith that are under attack — we need to prepare Catholics for engagement in the world by providing them with effective apologetics, derived from a sound Christian anthropology, on the critical social and moral issues of the day.

“The Catholic Education Resource Center has developed an impressive collection of online articles, which offer uncompromising support for the Church's voice in contemporary society. The Internet is the new Areopagus and it is crucial that people of faith use this new medium to participate in the conversations that are shaping modern culture. I congratulate you on your work and pray that it may help educators and all members of the Church to understand and articulate the vision of life inspired by our faith.”

Most Reverend Raymond Roussin, SM
Archbishop of Vancouver, B.C.

Mr. Fraser Field and his colleagues have assembled an outstanding website that makes available a broad range of valuable resources which are loyal to Catholic teaching and up to date in every way. I encourage you to give serious attention to CERC's appeal. Your generosity will yield a great harvest in the generations to come.”

Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Denver, CO

*the facts in context
the Church in the world
the Faith in education
the latest, the best, the brightest
from outstanding writers, authors and journalists around the globe.*

www.catholiceducation.org

What's The Problem

"Christianity seems to be the Great Projection. Whatever evil we imagine running rampant amongst ourselves, and especially our ancestors, it is Christianity — not greed or lust or pride — that is to blame. The natural man, unfettered, is always good. It's that blasted Christ with his message of peace, love, humility, etc., that caused the battles of the past 2,000 years."

Elizabeth Nickson, National Post, Feb. 23, 2002

- Many thoughtful people in the United States and Canada are alarmed at a growing effort in diverse educational and cultural circles to paint Christianity as a blot on human existence.
- Whether it's CBC's Michael Enright declaring the Catholic Church to be "the greatest criminal organization outside the Mafia," or billboards going up around Washington and Toronto telling us "Because the bishops ban condoms, innocent people die," false and misleading information about the history and teachings of the Catholic Church have become standard fare in the United States and Canada today.
- That such indictments go largely unchallenged is surprising, especially in view of the fact that their particulars are almost always either plainly false or so stripped of context as to be purposefully misleading. But in the face of such attacks on their faith — their Church — most Catholics have been at a loss to know what to think, let alone what to say. As a rule, Catholics simply haven't had the facts or the arguments they need to challenge the misinformation.
- Simultaneously, in the public schools the important — indeed central — role Christianity has played in history and culture has been cut from the textbooks. The rich traditions of the Church and the remarkable moral, cultural, and intellectual contributions it has made to the betterment of mankind are today unknown — and as a consequence uncelebrated.
- Even Catholic schools have been affected. Outside the subject of religion, Catholic schools in the United States and Canada have come to rely almost exclusively on public school resources, resources which ignore the positive role Christianity has played in history and culture.

What's Our Solution

Alarmed at these developing trends, a group of concerned Catholic educators, academics, priests and others organized as the Catholic Education Resource Center in 1998.

Since its inception, the Catholic Education Resource Center has been dedicated to compiling an Internet resource library made up of the clearest, most accurate and convincing articles we can find on all aspects of the Church and her social and moral teachings. We have worked to make freely available and easily accessible a well-reasoned Catholic perspective on everything from social justice issues to history and religion, from sexuality to literature and politics, from the environment to parenting and the latest trends in education.

We believe Catholics need to be informed by the truth, so they can confidently represent the Church's teaching on the challenging issues of the day; so they can explain clearly and convincingly why homosexual marriage is an oxymoron as well as being a bad idea and why Galileo's run in with the Church isn't what almost everyone thinks it is.

Providing comment and perspective on Catholic issues has also been the goal of our popular email newsletter, the CERC Bi-Weekly Update. The update is a free service, listing all the new articles posted to the CERC site during the past two weeks and pointing readers to important editorials of interest from around the world, along with abstracts, hot links, and an editorial comment by the CERC Executive Officer.

Among the titles recently added to our web site library are:

Movie Review: We Were Soldiers

- Barbara Nicolosi - *Liguorian*

We Were Soldiers goes much farther than *Braveheart* in telling the story of a man of faith who lived a martyr's life in the name of duty and honor. In terms of cultural impact, this character is very cool, very smart, with integrity to burn, and very Catholic. We haven't seen the best we can be like this up on the screen since *A Man for All Seasons*.

10 Myths about Priestly Pedophilia

- *Crisis e-letter*

The media, egged on by a small group of dissenting Catholics, have been having a field day over the tragedy of priests involved in sexual abuse. And the reporting has been littered with falsehoods and outright fabrications. So *Crisis* magazine has put together a list of the ten most common false media claims — along with their fact-filled responses to them.

Freedom/License

- *Montague Brown from "The One Minute Philosopher"*

Wisdom, the virtue the ancient Greeks considered the foundation of good character, depends in large measure on our ability to make distinctions. Things that seem quite similar can turn out to be fundamentally different. In this excerpt from his book, the author explains why freedom and license must not be confused: freedom embraces responsibility and is guided by reason and virtue; license is choice without restraint.



Finding Frodo's Faith

- *Joseph Pearce - National Catholic Register*

The Lord of the Rings is every bit as Catholic as its author. It is not only written by a Catholic, it is so Catholic that only a Catholic could have written it.

Mother Teresa's Rosary

- *Unknown*

"Young man," inquired Mother Teresa, "do you say the rosary often?" "No, not really," he admitted. She took his hand, while her eyes probed his. Then she smiled. "Well, you will now." And she dropped her rosary into his palm.

The Basics About Stem Cells

- *Maureen L. Condit - First Things*

Regrettably, much of the debate on stem cell research has taken place on emotional grounds, pitting the hope of curing heartrending medical conditions against the deeply held moral convictions of many Americans. Such arguments frequently ignore or mischaracterize the scientific facts.

Former Lesbian and Teacher Fights Homosexual Agenda in Schools

- L.A. Williams - *Agape*

When Linda Wall found out what was being taught in many U.S. schools about homosexuality, she was not only shocked and saddened, she was angry. A former lesbian and a former teacher, she knew she couldn't sit back and let it happen, especially in her home state of Virginia.

The Privilege of Life on Earth

- Interview with Dr. Guillermo Gonzalez

- *Catholic World Report*

Do you think that our Earth is an ordinary planet? Do you think that we have a "commonplace" sun, and live in a run-of-the-mill solar system, in an unremarkable galaxy? If so, think again, advises astrophysicist Guillermo Gonzalez.

www.catholiceducation.org

What's Our Track Record

From modest beginnings, CERC has emerged as one of the great new Internet apostolates in the Catholic Church, one that is filling a unique role in the Church's mission. The sophistication and quality of what we do has brought us high praise and big numbers. Visitors now click their way to articles on our site a quarter of a million times a month and our numbers continue to rise.

"CERC alleviates the information explosion which is so discouraging, by filtering the essential out of the massive daily output of written words... It is beginning to create a community of dedicated, thinking Catholics among people whom sheer North American distances would otherwise keep apart."

Janine Langan

William J. Bennett Professor of Christianity and Culture, University of Toronto

"Due to the extreme pressure of pastoral work, I'm afraid I simply don't have the time to regularly read all of the Catholic, Christian and secular news and information resources that I would like to. Your summary of important articles every couple of weeks is a Godsend — literally! It's a great help to be able to scan rapidly through your summaries, look at the articles which catch my interest, and get indepth information on a few areas which are of pastoral importance. I'm profoundly grateful for the work you do in putting out this Newsletter."

Rev. Peter J. Grant

Our Lady Of Lourdes Church, Winnfield, LA

"The Catholic Education Resource Center's Bi-Weekly Update is a welcome guest in my mailbox. It's arrival means a chance to catch up on quality cultural pieces I likely missed over the past two weeks. Thanks for a valuable product and feel free to send them more often!"

Kathryn Jean Lopez

Associate Editor, National Review

"Since I work in the 'front lines', teaching 16-18 year olds who have more questions about the Catholic faith than I have answers, CERC is the site I go to when I need material fast. It is also indispensable when I am working on unit planning, because I can select articles from a vast database of resources, confident that all have been published in reputable sources and that the copyright has been cleared for reprinting. I find myself cutting and pasting from two or three different articles for a single class. We are continually reminded as educators that the days of teaching straight out of the textbook are gone: CERC helps teachers offer so much more to their students than simply one resource."

Andrew McCracken

Notre Dame High School, Vancouver, B.C.

"This wealth of information about Catholicism in the broadest spectrum has been a treasure for me. I use the information that I get from this site in several arenas: my own public school classroom, my confirmation class, as a single mom of two young men, and for my own spiritual growth. This CERC Bi-Weekly Update is very important to me, and helps me reach many, many young people each week."

Cindy Cisneros McGilvrey, Wichita, Kansas

"The resources offered by CERC are of inestimable help to those of us involved in education. I frequently refer principals and teachers to articles collected and posted by CERC. I know that, were such a service not provided, I simply would not be able to so readily access the thought of so many writers. I am aware of no other group who are performing this service."

Johnston Smith

Superintendent (retired), Archdiocese of Winnipeg, Catholic School Board

"As a professor in a state university, I deal every day with young men and women who are seeking the truth — about themselves, about their world, and (even if they do not realize it) about God. I make every effort to bring them clear thinking about true values, values that will enable them to live good lives and become holy men and women. CERC has proven an invaluable resource for this work. Each semester I forward many articles and websites to my students from your bi-weekly updates on issues that are of interest to them personally, academically, or socially/politically. Sometimes there is no response, some issues we take up in class, sometimes there is a whirlwind of discussion. Always it is a great boon to both them and me. I should add that I also send CERC articles and sites to family, friends, and others."

Shannon McIntyre Skousgaard

Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies
George Mason University

"I believe that this project is one of the most promising of the past thirty years and will contribute greatly to the genuine renewal of Catholic education at all levels."

James Hitchcock

Catholic author and Professor of History
St. Louis University

What's Our Next Step

We would now like to launch the second phase of our initiative and begin developing resources for the Catholic schools. CERC has already gathered a team of top-notch Catholic teachers and academics for the purpose of creating teaching resources that will allow teachers, in a systematic way, to do in the classroom what we have been doing through our web site library and email newsletter.

Especially in our own time — when it is not so much the Catholic faith itself as the moral and social teachings derived from that faith that are under attack — we need to prepare our Catholic young people for engagement in the world, by providing them with effective apologetics, derived from a sound Christian anthropology, on the critical social and moral issues of the day.

The lessons we will be writing will aim to make our Catholic students proud bearers of the light and wisdom of the Church, but even more, they will aim to combine faith and reason so as to help our students become faith-based critical thinkers, able to navigate and discriminate effectively between what is true and false, what is good and bad, what is beautiful and ugly in their social and cultural lives.

But please visit our web site — www.catholiceducation.org — and see for yourself. And please support this initiative, with your prayers and with your financial contribution.

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