

Letter from the Director

Ignacio Restrepo Abondano

When you think about the definition of “educate”, numerous reflections come forward which lead to an undisguised pessimism. Derived from the Latin verb “educere” it has its most remote root in *extract*, which means that from a child or a young man who is a “rough diamond,” some edges and brightness are drawn that make him valuable within his family and within society. Inside the child and the young man as well as inside the adult, there is a capacity of human and intellectual perfection that is coming to light through a process of education exerted on him by family, school, university and ultimately by life. In fact, life polishes us with its realities and teaches us new things everyday that enrich our character and our knowledge.

And I mean pessimism in the task of educating, due to two factors, one structural and the other circumstantial. Nobody can deny that the social structures in which childhood is today, are not the most conducive for an education that primarily affects personality through values. The family is in crisis. It is not surprising that according to the result of a recent survey, in Colombia only 19% of the population is married. Moreover, there is child pregnancy with the delicate consequences that there will be for the child; the open union, unstable by its very nature, which actually leaves large percentages of infants in the care of only one of their parents (in the best of cases), if not abandoned, and increasing the number of nameless persons of the Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, or even worse off.

And now, to be in fashion, the courts are ready to accept a family between two people of the same sex, with the right to adopt children ... In all these circumstances, psychological and sociological traumas of children will make their education virtually impossible for the lack of a home they did not have and in case they have access to an educational institution, and are not adrift doing tricks on street corners, begging out of their own necessity or for the benefit of any exploiter that keeps them in his care at a beggarly wage, abusing them, and tuning them into criminals; they will eventually go to a reformatory or a jail, the worst of all schools in Colombia.

In the field of the circumstantial, the new drugs appearing every day, technologies distracting the student’s mental concentration even at the graduate level, as I have personally checked; the scandals in which radio, television and all modern media are specialized; the abuse of sex and violence scenes, whose responsibility the media in vain attempt to elude, by saying that “children must be accompanied by an adult,” an adult who usually is not present and, if he is, he does not worry - but in rare cases - to educate the child or young person about the atrocities that are shown, the internet porn sites, which yesterday reached a point of crisis even in a country as liberal as Britain, where the authorities seek how to censor, the daily massacres, theft and general decay of society which are leaving the child and the youth in a real vanomie of values and life skills.

No wonder, then, that professionals graduated from top universities finish in monumental scandals as we daily see. No doubt It was not an education in values and a true science, that lead them to a chain of corruption that seems to have no end in Colombia.