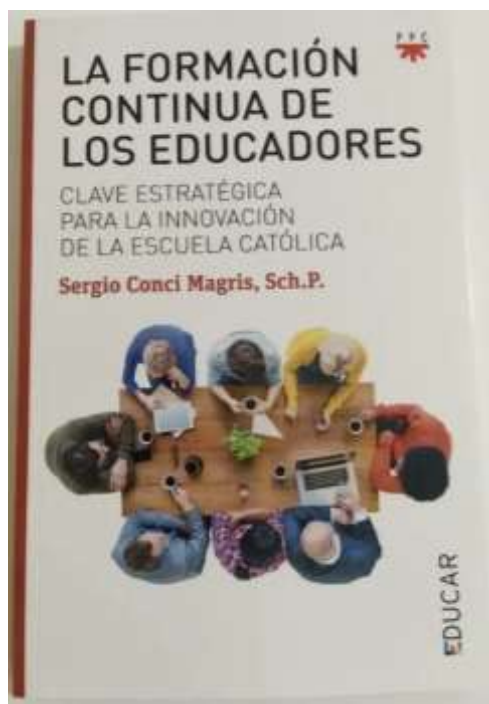


The continuous training of educators

A strategic key to innovation in Catholic schools

Book review. P. José Pascual Burgués



Sergio CONCI Sch. P. PPC Buenos Aires, 2021, 260 pp.

Fr. Sergio Conci Magris, an Argentinean Piarist, has been working for years in various initiatives of innovation and participation in the Calasanctian mission. The result of his studies and work is the doctoral thesis in Pedagogy that he has successfully defended at the University of Cuyo, and which is presented in this publication.

Quote from the back cover: "In recent decades there have been many debates about the Catholic school, its identity and its mission. It has become an arena of fierce disputes that call into question its *raison d'être* and many of the features that have been its identity for several centuries. These diatribes have contributed to the crisis of the Catholic school subsystem in the world and, although with particular characteristics, also in our country.

The identity of the Catholic school requires and deserves that we ask ourselves many questions: is the Catholic school still an evangelising option of the Church, is its identity confused or have the educational institutions neglected it in practice, is there a perception among the actors of the Argentinean educational system of this lack, can we find bibliography that currently raises this problem, how to solve the debates and the problems that are generated in this respect, do the problems come from outside and do we find them inside the Catholic schools? These and other consequent questions will be the subject of this book".

This book combines tradition and innovation, practice and theory, pastoral and academic. It appeals to and gathers the Calasanctian pedagogical wisdom to try to respond to the "educational emergency", and proposes as a strategic key to sustain and recreate the Catholic school the continuous teacher training in the foundational identity.

The author presents his reflection in two blocks. The first is entitled "The identity and mission of the Catholic school. Map and keys to resolving its crisis". In it, the author analyses the situation of the Catholic school, its identity, showing its challenges and problems today, and offering some keys to overcome the crisis. The second section is entitled "The fundamental strategic option. Clarification and possible paths for continuing teacher training in the identity of the Catholic school". The solution, as can be seen, lies in the ongoing training of educators.

We highlight one sentence from his conclusion, which would be like the summary of the whole book: "Catholic education is possible if a body of 'vocational' educators (in the Church) endowed with natural and supernatural means, who have travelled a path of Christian transformation, are ready to cooperate with charity and patience with the divine action to endow their pupils with all the virtues, considering that Christ is to be found in them. This determines that education is approached in a holistic and transcendent way and that the teacher training process is understood in a way that differs from many current approaches. Teacher education must

therefore be continuous and integral, vitally involved and accompanied by suitable people, Christocentric and Trinitarian, ecclesial and sacramental, purgative and illuminative. Its virtuous process is important: the study of the doctrine and the best way of transmitting it considering the capacity of the recipients, their ingenuity and their diligence".

Although the work is written in Argentina, and from the experience of the continuous formation of Piarist educators, the author generalises his reflection to refer to the whole Catholic School. And not only in Argentina, we add.

It is a work that, without doubt, can be of great interest to all those responsible for Catholic schools, who can find in it valid proposals to continue improving their task in our present time.

