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European Committee for Catholic Education

Comité Européen pour l'Enseignement Catholique

Europees Comité voor het Katholiek Onderwijs

Acts of the International Symposium

The Catholic School and the Intercultural and Interreligious Challenges

Brussels, 14-15 March 2019

Actes du colloque international

L'école catholique et les défis de l'interculturel et de l'interreligieux

Bruxelles, 14-15 mars 2019

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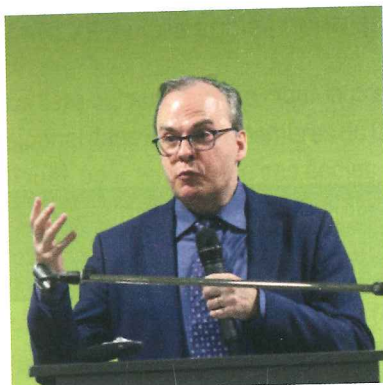
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Full professor at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven. Didier POLLEFEYT is both the initiator and the promoter of the *Enhancing Catholic School Identity project*. Jan BOUWENS studied philosophy in both Antwerp and Amsterdam, and theology in Leuven. Since 2007, he has held the position of chief academic researcher for the *Enhancing Catholic School Identity project* at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven.

Résumé
Évaluer et renforcer l'identité de l'école catholique. Vers une école catholique de dialogue recontextualisante

Le projet *Enhancing Catholic School Identity project* (ECSI) est un projet de recherche et d'implémentation visant à évaluer et à renforcer l'identité des écoles catholiques. Fondé en 2006 à la KU Leuven, en Belgique, l'ECSI offre le cadre théologique et une méthodologie théologique empirique et pratique permettant d'évaluer et de renforcer l'identité des organisations éducatives catholiques dans le monde. Situées dans des contextes culturels de plus en plus pluralistes, les écoles catholiques sont confrontées au défi de la recontextualisation de leur identité d'une manière culturellement plausible et théologiquement légitime.

À cette fin, l'ECSI a mis au point une série d'instruments empiriques qui permettent une analyse approfondie de l'identité actuelle, ainsi que souhaitée, d'une école, de manière statistiquement fiable. Après avoir décrit et interprété les résultats, les idées empiriques conduisent à des recommandations bien informées visant à développer l'identité des écoles catholiques. Reconnaissant le besoin urgent de renforcer l'identité d'une école catholique authentique dans un contexte de diversité croissante, l'ECSI promeut le modèle d'école catholique de dialogue de recontextualisation. De cette manière, les processus en cours d'(auto)évaluation constituent la base d'une dynamique permanente d'(auto)amélioration de l'identité des établissements d'enseignement catholiques. Le projet ECSI est mené à bien par le Centre de formation pédagogique de la Faculté de
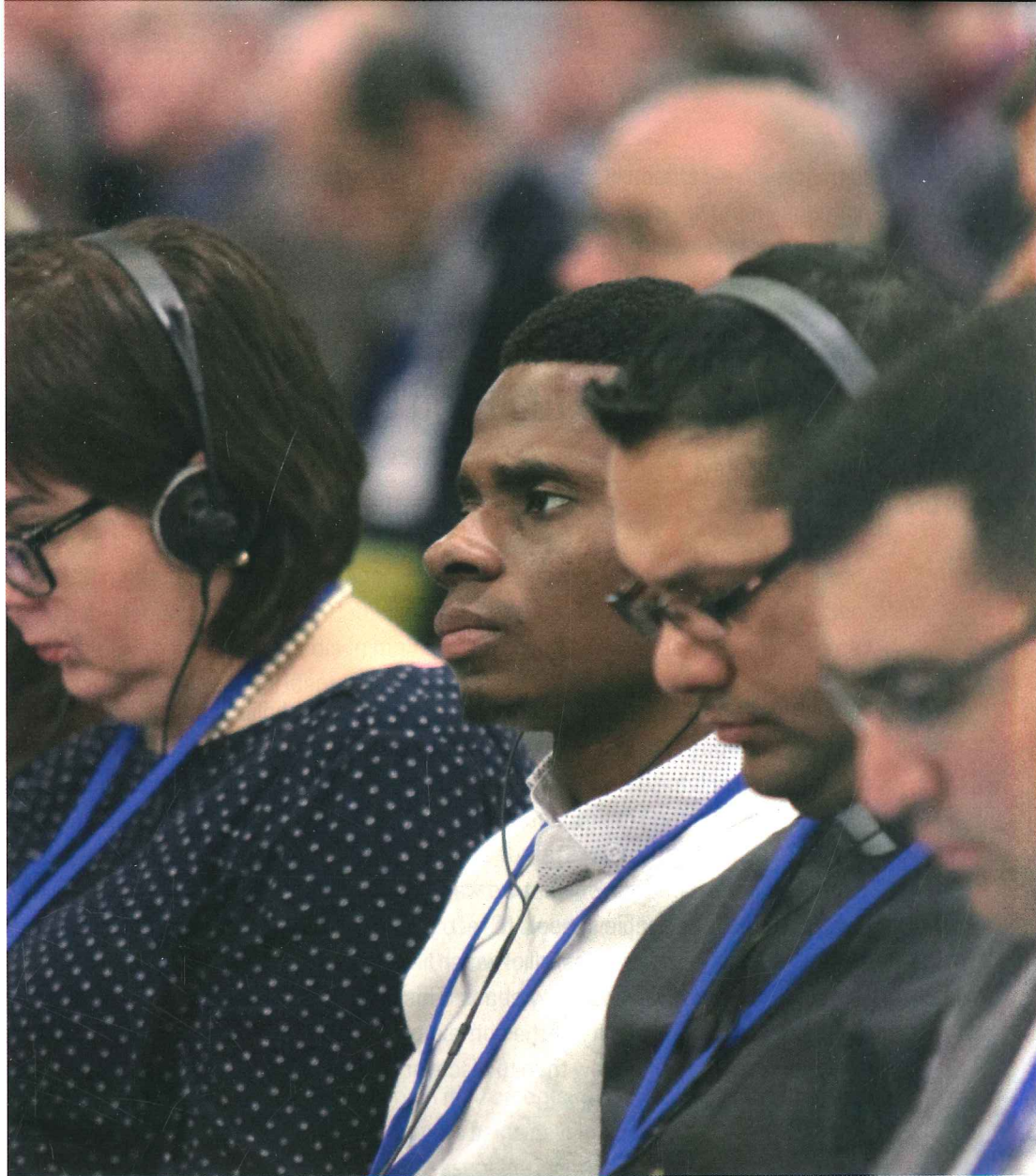
théologie et de sciences des religions de l'Université catholique de Leuven, en association avec les systèmes d'enseignement catholiques de Victoria, Queensland, Adélaïde et Parramatta, en Australie. De plus, depuis sa création, l'ECSI s'est largement impliqué dans l'éducation catholique en Flandre. De plus, de nouveaux partenariats internationaux sont en cours de développement, notamment aux États-Unis.

Dans sa conférence, Didier Pollefeyt explore la théologie et la théorie pédagogique du projet *Enhancing Catholic School Identity*. Il explique également la méthodologie empirique à la base de l'ECSI, illustrée par les données statistiques recueillies dans les écoles catholiques de Flandre sur une période de dix ans. Après avoir promu le cours MOOC (*Massive Open Online Course*) récemment lancé sur l'ECSI, la conférence aboutira à un certain nombre de conclusions et de recommandations pertinentes pour tous ceux qui souhaitent promouvoir et développer l'identité des écoles catholiques au XXIe siècle.

Assessing and Enhancing Catholic School Identity: Towards a Recontextualising Catholic Dialogue School

Prof. Dr. Didier Pollefeyt
Drs. Jan Bouwens

I begin this contribution on "Assessing and Enhancing Catholic School Identity" with a brief description of the painting *Christ' Entry into Brussels in 1889* (1888). This famous painting by the Flemish artist James Ensor is currently at The Getty in Los Angeles. Do you see Christ entering in this picture into Brussels? Perhaps He is not so easy to spot, but He is there, slightly up and left of centre, entering the 'city gates' of Brussels. This is in fact a good paradigm of what we want to do with Catholic school education and identity, namely: to enable schools to recognise when and how it is that Christ enters into our schools, into our cities, all of which lie within a time characterised by plurality, by people wearing masks, and by chaos. This same concern for the complexity and multi-layered dimensionality of the context of Christ's arrival marks the opening into reading Ensor's painting. How then to discover Christ entering our schools and how to support schools in doing that?

https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/811/james-ensor-christ's-entry-into-brussels-in-1889-belgian-1888/, PD-US, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=57069056

After my introduction, I will present the three empirical instruments we developed to assess Catholic school identity. For each instrument, I will explain the theory and then discuss its applications and findings in the contexts of Flanders as well as in Australia. And finally, I will come to some conclusions and a summary and will finish again with Christ. When the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project started in 2006, it was the task of the bishops of the four dioceses in Victoria in Australia to develop instruments to "measure" Catholic school identity. At this moment, we see that the majority of Australia is working now with this ECSI methodology.

I. Framing the ECSI Methodology

The ECSI methodology has two stages. First, we help schools to "look into the mirror", to try to better understand their Catholic identity. We call this "assessing identity". Secondly, we try to support schools in maintaining their Catholic identity, what we call "enhancing Catholic school identity".

We have published our methodology in a book with the title *Identity in Dialogue*[1]. Our research for schools has also been adapted in the development of an instrument for measuring the identity of Catholic parishes in their relation with Catholic schools. Moreover, we contribute to the yearly publications that are made by the Office for Catholic Education in Flanders, including the book on the *Catholic Dialogue School*. In 2014, we presented our research for the first time to the *Congregation for Catholic Education* in the Vatican in Rome, in the presence of the rector of our university, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, in the presence of the former Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels, and the Bishop of Antwerp.

This contribution presents the three main instruments for assessing Catholic school identity, although there are other instruments being developed at this stage. For example, we are developing a *Charism Scale* to measure the identity of congregational schools, as well as the *Search for Parish Engagement Scale* (SPES) to measure the identity of Catholic parishes.

When we investigate a school, we analyse its identity from a quantitative as well as a qualitative methodological perspective. We perform survey research which is then analysed, alongside four qualitative research components such as the religious history of the school, an interview with the school leadership, pictures of the people, the architecture and the artwork in the school, and an analysis of printed documents of all kinds. The core of the research consists of quantitative and qualitative *assessment*, based upon which each school receives a report that contains its 'Catholic identity profile'. Based on the *assessment*, the school is in a good position to engage in the *enhancement* of its Catholic identity.

We have currently performed the research at some 1445 schools, mostly in Australia and Flanders, but also in the USA and the Philippines, in the Netherlands, in Germany, in France and in the United Kingdom.

I will show you today some data of the Catholic schools we have collected and analysed in Flanders, Belgium. Notice, in the figure above, the large number of secondary schools represented by the yellow dots, as well as the primary schools represented by light blue dots, higher education and universities by dark blue dots. The research has also been performed in all diocesan *Catholic Education Offices* in Flanders, as is represented by

1. D. Pollefeyt D. – J. Bouwens, *Identity in Dialogue. Assessing and enhancing Catholic school identity. Research methodology and research results in Catholic schools in Victoria, Australia* (Christian Religious Education and School Identity, 1), Zürich – Berlin, LIT-Verlag, 2014.
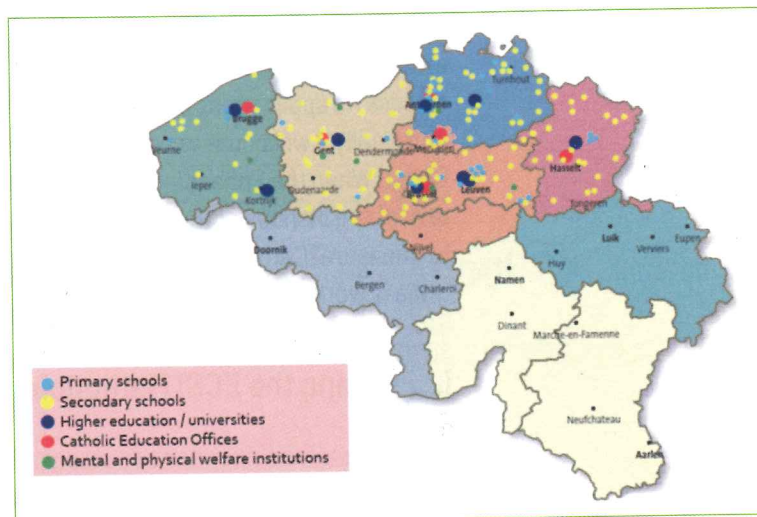
the red dots, and at mental and phycholog-
ical welfare institutions as represented by
green dots. All data is collected by our spe-
cialised website and processed in Leuven.
Each school or organisation receives a
unique report based on its own research
data.

I turn now to our methodology. What you
need to know to read the data is that we work
with a so-called "dual" measurement level'.
We simply ask each school: "What does your
school look like today?" We call this the *fac-
tual measurement level*. For example, people
can indicate to what degree their school is a
Catholic school. And secondly we ask: "What
is your dream for the school of the future?
What is your ideal school?" We call this the
normative measurement level.

The instruments analyse a manifold of sur-
vey questions that inquire about Catholic
school identity on both the factual and the
normative level. Next, we compare the fac-
tual with the normative level: what the school
looks like today in the eyes of the partici-
pants, and how the school is idealised in the
imagination of those same people for the
future. And in comparing these two levels,
we can draw some conclusions.

First, is the current policy of the school sup-
ported or not? The bigger the gap between
the factual and the normative, the less there
is support for the current identity of the
school, or for the way that identity is being
expressed. Secondly, looking to the norma-
tive level, we move to predict the future
development of the school. If there is no
intervention and the participants think in

- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- Higher education / universities
- Catholic Education Offices
- Mental and physical welfare institutions

School identity is measured on two levels:

- **FACTUAL LEVEL:**   the current practice in my school
  The way in which school members perceive and interpret the reality of their school as it
  unfolds today. The subjective perception by the respondents of the current practice in their
  school.

  "My school is a Catholic school."
  "All people in my school believe in God."
  "In my school, religious beliefs are a private matter."

- **NORMATIVE LEVEL:**   my ideal school
  The personal ideal perspectives of the school members regarding the perfect identity of
  (Catholic) schools. How the respondents would prefer their school to become in the future.

  "My ideal school is a Catholic school."
  "I'd like to go to a school where all people believe in God."
  "In my opinion, religious beliefs are a private matter."

Dual empirical measurement level:	NORMATIVE PREFERENCE
CURRENT PRACTICE (factual level) the current identity of a school, perceived by the respondents	**Our preference on theological grounds** 'hermeneutical theology' a post-critical belief style, symbolically mediated a recontextualisation of Catholic school identity a dialogue school model: identity in diversity the hermeneutical-communicative didactical model
IDEAL SCHOOL (normative level) perspectives on ideal school identity *empirical normativity*	*theological normativity*
Step 1 A neutral and objective description of the research results without reference to our normative preference; 'the graph put into words'	Step 2 Our evaluation and critique of the research results in the light of our normative preference Recommendations for future policy

this or that way, we can say the school will tend toward the picture depicted in the
normative responses of school members. Finally, with one foot firmly in the present
and another in the future, this new dual standpoint enables school leadership to reassess
and create new policy decisions that reflect the future they actually want to create in
a way that also speaks to the status quo. In sum, the first two survey elements are
descriptive. The third is evaluative.

Regarding the methodology, it is important that we distinguish two types of normativity
because there are a lot of discussions on normativity in Catholic education. The first
normativity, what we call *empirical normativity*, looks to comparison of current and
ideal practices, precisely as they are experienced and conceived by schools today.

Secondly, we look from a theological point of view, at how a school should look. We call this the *theological normativity*. We clearly distinguish the two from each other.

The normative preference we have — as I will make it clear in this contribution — is that a (1) *Catholic Dialogue School* (2) *Recontextualises* the Catholic faith, from a (3) *Post-Critical Belief perspective*. That will be the normative position, on which you can agree or not agree, depending on your own theological backgrounds. We begin on the empirical level by describing, as neutrally as possible, simply what we see in the school (empirical normativity). And then we evaluate from a theological perspective (theological normativity).

Sometimes we go to a school and we say to the principal of the school: "If this is the analysis of your school, in my honest academic analysis, you can no longer call this a Catholic school from a theological perspective". We are not sociologists, but we are theologians who use empirical data to reflect theologically on what we see happening in the school life. It is possible that a principal then will say to us: "That's not true, we are a Catholic school". I respond to him: "How then can you explain to me how you are a Catholic school?" And at that moment we have a dialogue on Catholic identity and a first goal is already realised (*Catholic Dialogue School*). A second possibility is that the principal is saying "So what? Then we are no longer a Catholic school." To be sure, this never happens. Catholicity is a strong brand, people like to be associated with being "Catholic", at least in ways that suit their own school brand. Our question of course is "How do you understand Catholicism?". The third possibility is that they say: "How can we move from what you see to a better, more authentic Catholic school?" Then we shift from assessing to enhancing Catholic school identity, and we have developed a lot of instruments for this. This concludes my framing of the ECSI methodology.

II. The Post-Critical Belief Scale

1. The PCB Scale in Theory

I will now turn to the first instrument that we have developed in collaboration with psychologists of religion at KU Leuven, the *Post-Critical Belief Scale*. We use this to assess the cognitive belief styles of school members, or to see how individual school members think about the Catholic faith in relation to their school experience as a whole.

The *Post-Critical Belief Scale* works with two axes. The first axis looks at believers and disbelievers. More specifically, it looks at how various school members come to and maintain their stance in relation to divine reality, with believers on the left side of centre. On the right side you have people who reject God as an ontological reality and see him as a human construction or interpretation. For this reason the first axis represents the spectrum of school member belief stances regarding the existence of a transcendent God. The second axis is the epistemological axis. Here we look not at what people believe, but how they believe. Do they believe in a literal way or do they believe in a symbolic way? Do they take for example the Genesis story in a literal way or do they take it in a symbolic way? In a literal way, a psychologist might say that religion serves as a reduction of anxiety, thus creating security. In a symbolic way, religion is a way to deal with the richness and the complexities of life.

Based on these two axes, there are four different belief types. The first is of course *Literal Belief*. Then there are those who grow to reject *Literal Belief*. Often as a reaction to *Literal Believers*, these *External Critics* "externalise" themselves from the *Literal Be-*

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lieving community and mobilise critique in order to reject belief outright, in a knee-jerk, reactionary way. Most people in the West do not adopt this *External Critique* stance, but instead opt for *Relativism*. They respect the diversity of religious worldviews, but they see them merely as human interpretations of reality with no ontological reference.

The fourth cognitive belief stance we distinguish is *Post-Critical Belief*. These are people who have lost their *Literal Belief*, who are aware of the critiques towards religion (*External Critique*), who know there is a diversity of possible religions (*Relativism*), but who nevertheless decide existentially to relate or re-relate to God as he is revealed in the Catholic tradition. We call this the *Post-Critical Belief*, i.e. after the critique, no longer a "first naiveté", but then what Paul Ricœur calls a "second naiveté".

Dirk Hutsebaut — prominent KU Leuven Emeritus Professor in the field of the Psychology of Religion and inventor of this scale — placed a *yellow dot* on *Post-Critical Belief* to mark it as the normative position. It represents someone with mature belief, someone who is in second naiveté, who tries to get as close as possible to the divine, while at the same time also being aware that he can never literally reach the divine.
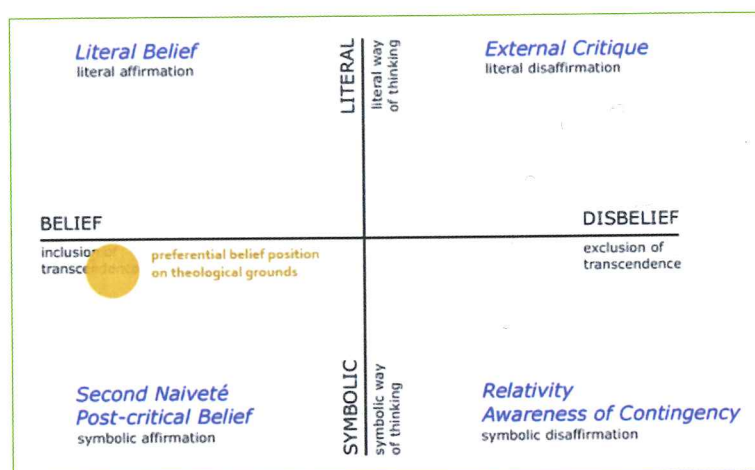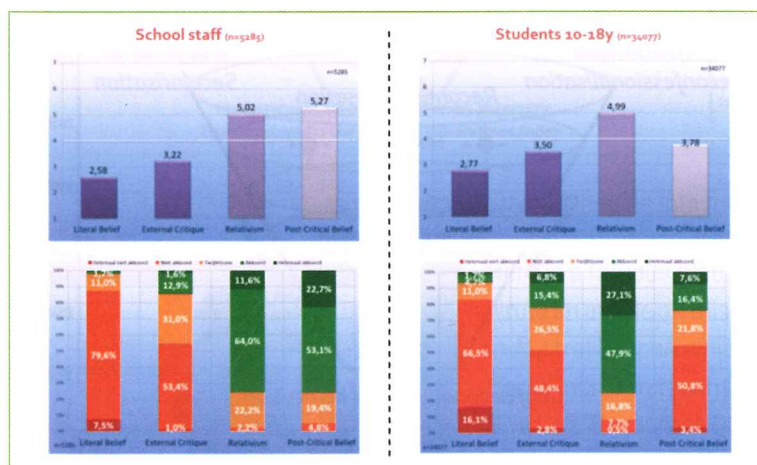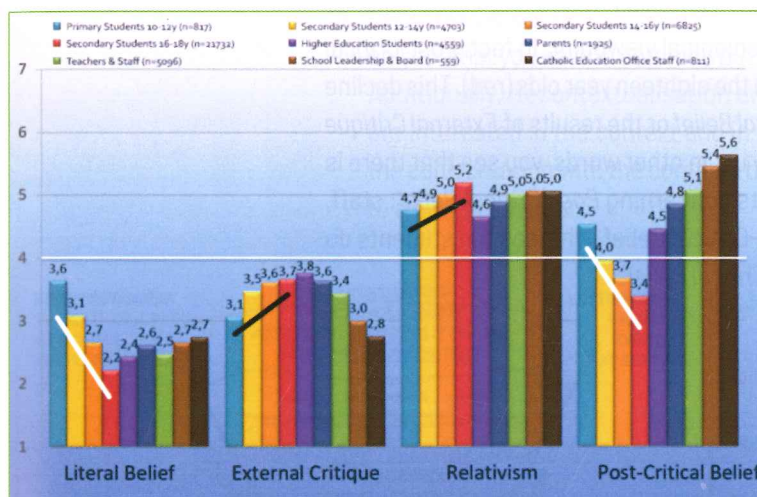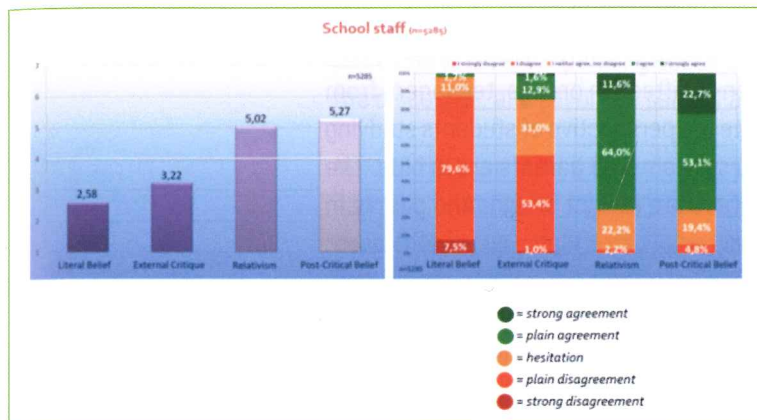

My point is that the more you have people in the *Post-Critical Belief* quadrant, the easier it will be to construct a contemporary Catholic school identity. To summarise it in another way, I look to how these different viewpoints relate to God:

1. In *Literal Belief*, you have a closed community with a direct access to God.
2. In atheism or *External Critique*, God is not available.
3. In *Relativism*, you have many nice things like sports, like Christianity, like music, but they do not converge in religious experience. They just diverge.
4. *Post-Critical Believers* are much more difficult to represent. You have a God. There is an ontological referent. But it is a God that you cannot see. Or, in the case of Judaism, you may not even pronounce His name. In Christianity, God is incarnated, he became flesh. Moreover, God is triune (he is one and three), meaning that there is dialogue in God himself. If we speak about *Dialogue Schools*, it is not because it is a pragmatism, an answer to the call of pluralising context, but because we believe that our god is a dialogical God. Then you have a faith community which is not closed, but open and inclusive. That faith community offers mediations that invite us to stand in a living relationship with the three living gods. And these mediations do not diverge, they converge in a possible religious experience and that is — for example, for Catholics, the sacraments, the Bible, Mary, but also human experiences, the sciences, ethics, the saints — all can contribute to creating such an environment where people are invited to stand and to be in a relationship with the living God.

It is this perspective that we use to define what is an authentic Catholic school in our view, and that is how we define this from our ECSI perspective. If you like to realise this kind of school, you need people with *Post-Critical Belief*.

2. The PCB Scale in Practice

Now let us have a look how this scale operates in practice, taking the case of Flanders. You have seen the schools we have analysed, from which we received the data from the school staff. In the last ten years, we did some research on the *Post-Critical Belief Scale*. You see the four belief styles on the left and on the right. I will help you to interpret these data.

We see, then, that the staff at the school have high *Post-Critical Belief*, and that this is the strongest cognitive belief style in their respondent group. Additionally, we see a high positive result on *Relativism*. But *Post-Critical Belief* is stronger than *Relativism*. So to put it together, the staff in Catholic schools in Flanders have an engagement towards the faith, but with an openness towards other religions and other worldviews. In fact, these two belief styles are in competition with each other and at the moment *Relativism* is overshadowed by *Post-Critical Belief*. You will see later that the school will shift from a *Catholic Dialogue School* to a *Colourful School*. You also see that on average twenty percent of school staff hesitate about *Post-Critical Belief*. These people are mainly coming from *External Critique*, which is negative. Moreover, they have a support from fifteen percent in the staff, these are radical atheists. Finally, in Catholic schools you can see that *Literal Belief* is almost absent.

Next, we compare this staff data with that of the students. On the left we can see the school staff results, and on the right side you can see the data of students in Flanders between ten and eighteen years old. To give an idea of the magnitude, this graph describes over thirty-four thousand students, which I think is very significant. What you see is that *Relativism* is the only positive belief style. However, it is lower with the students than with the adults. So, we should not complain about the *Relativism* of the students because it reflects and is even lower than the Relativism demonstrated by the staff. What we can see is that with the students, *Post-Critical Belief* is no longer positive. Additionally, what you see is that there is a lot of diversity among the students in Flemish Catholic schools. One quarter show support for *Post-Critical Belief*, and more than half of them rejected it. You can also see an increase in *External Critique* which is nearly positive, through support from a quarter of

the young people. This is a perspective developed somewhat by Richard Dawkins where people adopt a very radical and critical position towards religion. In parallel, *Literal Belief* here is very weak.

To go further, we detailed these graphs and classified the results in ten distinct groups corresponding to specific colours: children from nine to twelve in blue, pupils from twelve to thirteen in yellow, those from fourteen to fifteen in orange, teenagers from sixteen to eighteen in red. We see also investigate the perspective of students studying education in universities and higher education schools. The parents are in blue. The teachers are in green. The school board members are in light brown. And people in educational policy institutions are in dark brown.

Let us now take a step back and survey the results of the school. What you can see is that *Relativism* is supported by almost everyone across all groups. That means that groups show a kind of positive openness to diversity. Secondly, *Literal Belief* drastically decreases from primary to secondary school, and remains relatively low among the adults. Importantly, *Literal Belief* does not transform itself into *Post-Critical Belief* as the students age, which is not good from a theological viewpoint. In fact, *Post-Critical Belief* drops off from primary school (blue) until the eighteen year olds (red). This decline is even more drastic than the downturn of *Literal Belief* or the results of *External Critique* which, by contrast, strengthen as people grow up. In other words, you see that there is a big gap between the adults and the students concerning *Post-Critical Belief*: staff, leadership and parents very high level of Post-Critical Belief, whereas the students do not seem convinced at this moment by *Post-Critical Belief*.

III. The Melbourne Scale

1. The Melbourne Scale in Theory

We will now go to the second attitude scale, the *Melbourne Scale* — so-called because our entire research project started in Melbourne in Australia. There we develop the way schools deal theologically with their own identity. The *Melbourne Scale* is based on the work of my colleague, professor Lieven Boeve who wrote, among others, one important article on the different conceptual ways Catholic schools can present themselves. In fact, it is on the basis of his analysis that we created the empirical instrument now known as the *Melbourne Scale*.
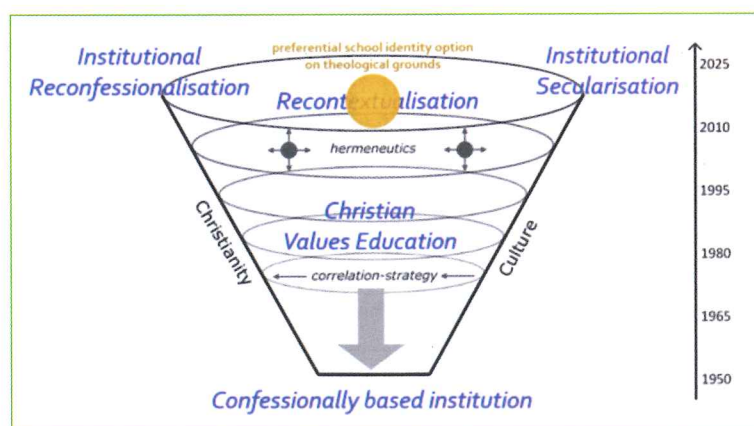
Here you can see the *Melbourne Scale* framework. Most Catholic schools were created in a context where it was evident to have confessional schools. The two "legs" of the *Melbourne Scale* are increasingly "opening up", which represents the process of *Secularisation*. Since the sixties we have attempted to "bridge the gap" between Christianity and culture, through correlation strategies that try to bring culture and Christianity towards each other. What we see today is that this gap becomes bigger and bigger, and bridging the gap is becoming more and more problematic. Correlation has thus changed

into interruption. Nevertheless, there remains attempts today to render the Christian message more clear by connecting it to elements of human culture. We call this *Christian Values Education* because it is often by reducing the Christian message to universal values that you create a kind of common denominator which holds the school together. By contrast, if the gap is growing, the situation becomes more and more stressful and it creates pressure. Speaking about values begins to supplant any Christian framing in the discourse, and all for the sake of an apparent expediency.

Next to that, we have the process of pluralisation which shows that other worldviews and religions enter to occupy a space of our society and of our Catholic schools. In that case, there is no longer a gap to be bridged because you are in a context where Catholicity is reduced to one among many perspectives, even in the Catholic school. There are three ways to respond to this:

1. *Secularisation* – to give up the Catholic faith (often silently);
2. *Reconfessionalisation* – to resist by reintroducing the Catholic faith in its pureness and offer it to all people in school without regard for it being understood;
3. *Recontextualisation* – which differs from *Christian Values Education* in that look not only to what you have in common but also to what is peculiar to the Catholic tradition. Additionally, Recontextualisation differs from *Reconfessionalisation* because you are interested in the context and in the dialogue with the context. It is precisely in the confrontation with the contexts that you reinvent, that you translate the message to a new generation.
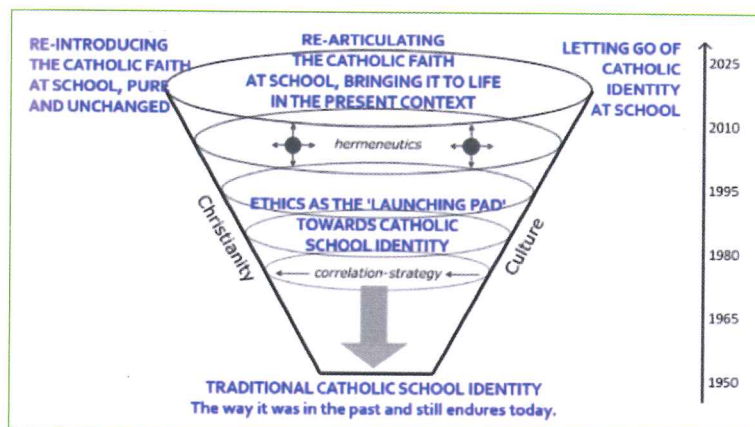
If you look to how the Catholic tradition has worked for 2000 years, we think that theologically there has always been a dynamic of *Recontextualisation*. Therefore, it is our task today to *Recontextualise* the Catholic faith in our schools. Some examples to illustrate this is the Christian cross which has uniquely endured without equivalent or replacement for centuries. The cross is an example of passive confessionality because its existence, in a school, for example, or on a prayer table, does not guarantee recognition of its significance, instead blending into the background of the daily life of school members.

Here is a famous picture from our research. A bishop in Australia even wrote an article on this. This is a prayer table in a primary Catholic school in Australia, upon which you see a confessional statue of Mother Mary. Below icon, the teacher has placed three values: "Do Your Best"; "Never Give Up"; "Encourage Others". It is a very good example of *Christian Values Education* because the teacher tried to reconnect, to correlate Catholic confessionality with human values. This works very well as long as you are situated in a strong Catholic culture. The danger is when connection between the two elements to be weak. For instance, I am sure I can find at KU Leuven a museologist or a mariologist who would say that these values are a good summary of Mariology. So, there is a kind of reductionism at work here. What we observe is that when students get older, they take home the values, they become important citizens because they

studied at the best Catholic schools in Australia, but they leave the values at home and become *Secularised*. So that is the danger of *Christian Values Education* — that, in the long-term, it weakens the link between Christianity and culture because this link is too superficial.

Thus I summarise my critiques of *Christian Values Education*:

1. It is ineffective because the gap between Christianity and culture becomes too wide and the students often resist.
2. It is predictable. After 15 years of Religious Education classes, they have learned to anticipate that "Jesus" is "the answer". A big problem with many Religious Education classes is that they are too flat and boring. They is not complex enough, nor do they respond to the digital mind of many young people today. We need a more complex model.
3. It is counterproductive because the students can just leave the statue at the school. They can disconnect, and they *Secularise*. Moreover, theologically speaking, it is reductive because it reduces the Catholic tradition to human values, while Catholic tradition is much more than that.

We can illustrate *Secularisation thusly*: pictured here, school leaders decided to solve a lack of bicycle parking space in a Catholic school by partitioning space within the chapel, effectively enclosing the space where brothers give the Eucharist by an indoor parking lot. Even if we find humour in this photo, it demonstrates literally *Secularisation* entering our sacred spaces. We think that values education in the long-term can end with such results as this.

Looking at the *Melbourne Scale*, *Reconfessionalisation* is the opposite approach. It represents the beauty of the Catholic tradition as it is: unchanged and uncompromised.

Let us now look at *Recontextualisation*. I think that Pope Francis is also looking for another model and that he is a real *Recontextualiser* by renewing, refreshing, translating the faith in a new context. "We must be bold enough", he says "to discover new signs and new symbols, new flesh to embody and communicate the word, and different forms of beauty which are valued in different cultural settings, including those unconventional modes of beauty which may mean little to the evangelisers, yet prove particularly attractive for others"[2].

We have collected many other examples such as this statue entitled *Homeless Jesus* by Canadian sculptor and Catholic Timothy Schmaltz. And for us, this is a world-famous example of a *Recontextualisation* of the Catholic faith depicting a homeless Jesus. In *Recontextualisation*, there should be five things at work:

1. A text of the tradition put in a new context;
2. A Catholic component;
3. A cultural component;
4. A deep interaction between the Catholic and cultural components, an should be an intimate encounter of the Gospel in a new context, not like the superficial example above of Mary surrounded by value statements like "Never Give Up"; and
5. These encounters should involve existential transformation that invites people also to receive, also in a Catholic school context, a revelation.

2. Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhoration Evangelii Gaudium of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*, n. 167, November 24, 2013, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html [accessed 29/05/2019]

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2. The Melbourne Scale in Practice

The following is the data of the same group in Flanders.
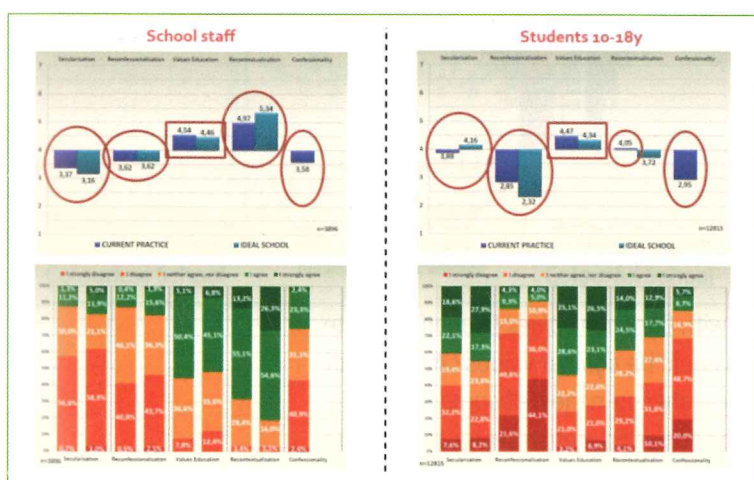
If you look at the school staff graph, you can see five school types: (1) *Secularisation*, (2) *Reconfessionalisation*, (3) *Christian Values Education*, (4) *Recontextualisation*, and (5) *Confessionality*. The blue colour stands for the factual level (what the staff sees) and the green for the normative level (what the staff wants).

First, look at *Confessionality*: How much of the Catholic tradition is still recognised in the school? You can see that school type is present but under pressure. The school staff admit it is disappearing. If you look at the students, they do not see the *Confessionality* of the school anymore. So, there is a gap in perception between the two groups, meaning that you can put tons of crosses throughout the school that will have no impact, as the students cannot read the meaning of their deep Christian meaning. The *Confessionality* is very low.

Secondly, do the schools want to *Secularise*? You can see from the factual to the normative level that the school staff in Flanders do not want to *Secularise* the Catholic schools. There is a resistance growing from the factual to the normative level, even though 16.9% support it. If you look at the students, however you see that the resistance against *Secularisation* has disappeared. Or, to put it in another way, there is a lot of discussion as half want to continue to be a Catholic school while the other half resists. How do we solve this? Should we *Reconfessionalise* our Catholic schools? There is discussion among the staff, who are divided on the *Reconfessionalisation*: 46.2% reject, 36.6% hesitate and 17.5% think that it is time to *Reconfessionalise* the Catholic schools.

However, if you look at the students' side, we notice that if you would try this strategy in the Catholic schools in Flanders, you would meet enormous resistance. As you can see from the factual to the normative level, almost all students reject this, except for 9.0% of the students who would like to *Reconfessionalise* Catholic schools. There is also a way forward which holds good news from a theological perspective, that being: attempt to *Recontextualise* the Catholic identity of the school. In other words, if you present Catholic faith to your staff, in a dialogical way, in an open way with respect towards plurality, then you see there is massive support among teachers, among staff, among principals in Catholic schools. Almost nobody rejects this option.

Are the students open to this? To answer, we have to look at the right graph, where we see two things:

1. In Flanders, the staff is too optimistic. The students do not see the Recontextualisation that the staff thinks exist. So, there is a lot of work to be done at this point.
2. On the normative level, you see that the students hesitate. 41.9% of them reject *Recontextualisation* while others are open. So, the students are saying to us, to the adults, through this data that they see what *Recontextualisation* means. In other words, it shows that they are open to it. Staff can give it a try, do their best and perhaps the students will be convinced.

Obviously, what is interesting is that students agree on *Christian Values Education*. But staff uses *Christian Values Education* to *Recontextualise* while the students use *Christian Values Education* to *Secularise*. So, you can see how dangerous *Christian Values Education* could be if used as a compromise in Catholic schools.
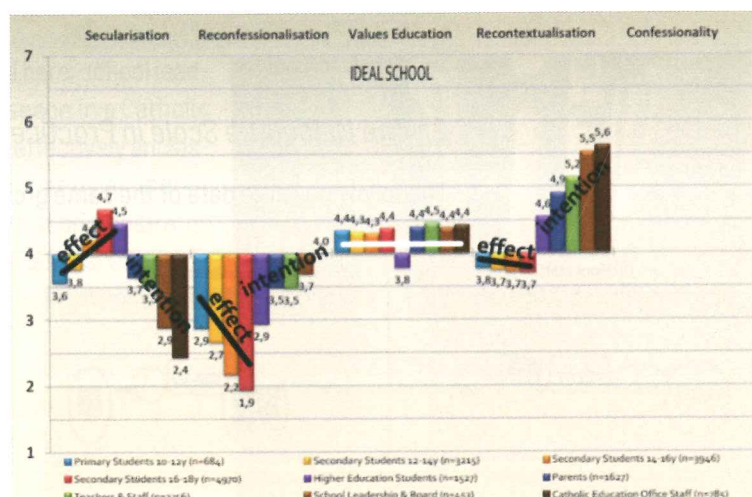

To summarise, it is very easy for a school to stay with *Christian Values Education* (white centre line) because everyone likes values. Who could be against values? And a lot of principals like to stay at that level because if they go higher up in the *Melbourne Scale* then, there is more discussion in the school. So, *Christian Values Education* seems to be a safe option. Everyone wants it. If you look at adults, they want to combine *Christian Values Education* with *Recontextualisation*, especially those dealing with leadership in Catholic schools. They do not want to be in *Confessionalisation*, they want to *Recontextualise*. Moreover, they are supported by the principals of the schools by the teachers and the parents. On the other hand, young people are hesitant about *Recontextualisation*, the older they get the more hesitant they are. But it must be noted that the rejection of *Recontextualisation* is not high, meaning that there is also some openness. At the same time, you see that all adults reject *Secularisation* and *Reconfessionalisation* and that the principals of the schools are a little bit more open to *Reconfessionalisation* than the teachers and the students are. Now look at another perspective in this graph which is *Christian Values Education*. What is the effect of *Christian Values Education* on the students? They also like *Christian Values Education*, but the effect is not *Recontextualisation*. The result is that they resist *Reconfessionalisation* and *Recontextualisation* and embrace *Secularisation*. So, while the adults think that you can use *Christian Values Education* to *Recontextualise* the school, the students use or misuse values to escape and to Secularise.

So, my message is: discontinue with mono-correlational *Values Education*. The reason is that in *Christian Values Education* the integration between the text and context is not deep enough, is too superficial or is often too mechanical. So that is why we say there is a distinction between the intention of the adults for *Christian Values Education*, (namely a monocorrelation to *Reconfessionalise* the school), and what the effects are on the students who use *Christian Values Education* (namely escaping *Reconfessionalisation* and *Secularizing*). This is because in *Christian Values Education* you often get an horizontalisation of the Catholic faith. That is why we think that today, if you want to work on Catholic school identity, you have to shift from *Christian Values Education* to *Recontextualisation*. That is the answer to the threats of *Secularisation* with the *Melbourne Scale*.

IV. The Victoria Scale

1. *The* Victoria Scale *in Theory*

The third attitude scale is called the *Victoria Scale*, referring to the dioceses in Victoria, Australia, as a whole. It shows how to deal with diversity in Catholic schools, in relation to their Catholic identity.
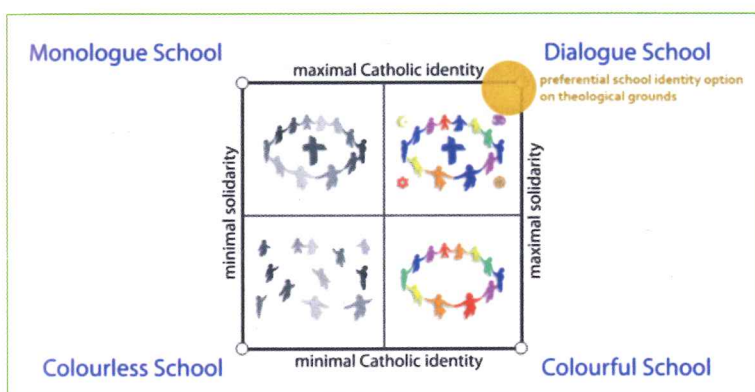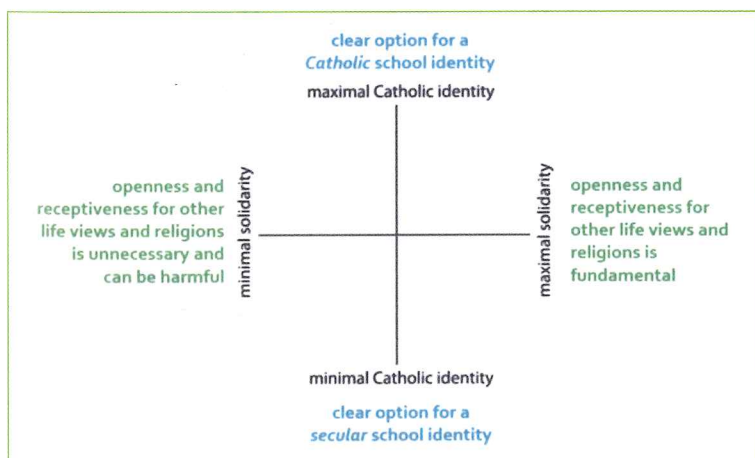

The vertical axis analyses to what extent the school is Catholic, while the horizontal axis examines the school's openness towards cultural, religious, and ethical diversity.

Based on these two axes, the scale defines four different school types:

1. The *Monologue School*: A school with maximal Catholic identity and minimal solidarity.
2. The *Colourless School*: A school with a minimal Catholic identity and minimal solidarity. It must be noted that we have a tendency toward *Colourlessness* in our Flemish Catholic schools today.
3. The *Colourful School*: A school with a minimal Catholic identity, but with a big openness for plurality.
4. The *Dialogue School*: A school that tries to combine a high Catholic identity with a great openness towards diversity, implying dialogue, et cetera.

What is typical of the *Dialogue School* is that the Catholic tradition takes a privileged position in the *Dialogue*. Even if other religions are welcomed, they are all invited to *Dialogue* with the Catholic perspective. And this is different from the *Colourful School* where there is *Relativism*, where there is no preferred worldview. To be very clear, in our view, only the *Dialogue School* is a Catholic school. A *Colourful School* in our analysis cannot be considered as a Catholic school. In Flanders,
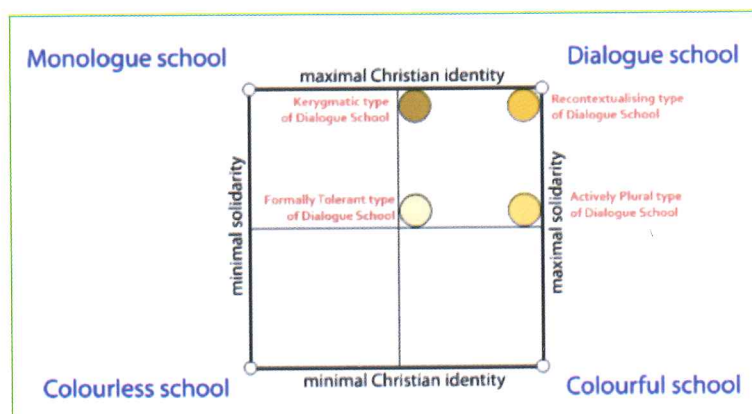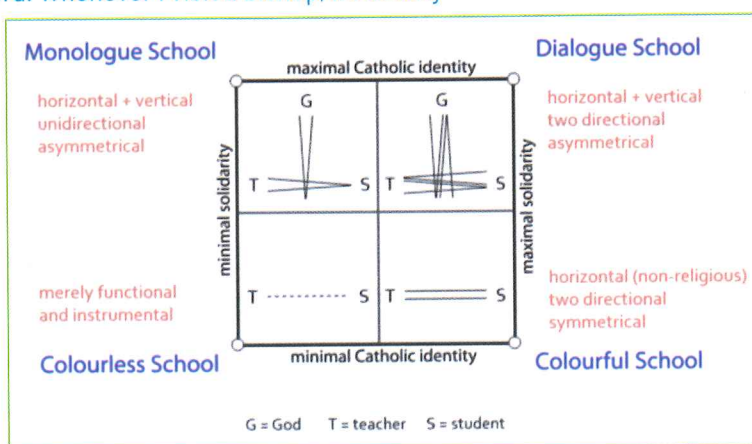
this is why we speak about the *Catholic Dialogue School*, to highlight the privilege of the Catholic tradition as a partner in the *Dialogue*.

Pedagogically, there is also a difference between the school types. In a *Colourless School*, the relation between the teacher and the student is absent. The teacher may not intervene in the lives of the students, while in the *Colourful School*, there is only a horizontal, symmetrical relation between the student and the teacher. In other words, the teacher has no authority over the students, nor does the student over the teacher — that is, a symmetrical relationship. In a *Monologue School*, the asymmetry is unidirectional and at the same time asymmetrical, meaning that the teacher is above the students, like God is above the human being. The pedagogy of a *Catholic Dialogue School* works with a two-directional, asymmetrical pedagogical relation. So, the teacher is in an asymmetrical relation with the students, but the student is also higher than the teacher. The speaker becomes listener, and the listener becomes the speaker. In other words, there is a mutual asymmetry. This is also true in the relation with the divine: God is above me, but at the same time I am also a *Dialogue* partner discussing, questioning and *Dialoguing* with God. So, this is an environment that is more pedagogical compared to the three other school identity options in the *Victoria Scale*.

What is more, in our research we have found four subtypes in the *Catholic Dialogue School*. The first subtype is the *Kerygmatic* type of *Dialogue School*. What do we mean by that? We mean that the Dialogue is used as a medium to announce the Catholic faith. This model is very asymmetrical: one person usually speaks, and the others have to listen. A lot of people in the church think about dialogue in a *Kerygmatic* way. In Australia, for example, most primary schools are of the *Kerygmatic* type. Sometimes I make a joke about visiting a bishop: we have an open talk and there is *Dialogue* between us, but at the end he wants to have the last word. Whenever I visit a bishop, he usually concludes the *Dialogue* by giving a summary in his own words, after which I may leave the room. This is as example of *Kerygmatic Dialogue*.

That is different from *Recontextualising Dialogue* where you have two partners who speak and listen to each other, meaning that the two parties are open to be changed by the other and to be changed by the context. So, in *Recontextualisation*, it is not only the context that changes, it is the tradition itself which develops itself through the *Dialogue* with the context.

A third option, which we noticed that was very popular in Flanders, is the *Colourful* or *Actively-Plural Dialogue School*. If you enter a school today and you explain the *Victoria Scale* to a principal, he will say "We are there at the position of the *Colourful Dialogue School*." At this point, if you remember, we know that *Post-Critical Belief* is higher than *Relativism*. These two concepts are very

Monologue School — maximal Catholic identity — Dialogue School

horizontal + vertical unidirectional asymmetrical

horizontal + vertical two directional asymmetrical

merely functional and instrumental

horizontal (non-religious) two directional symmetrical

Colourless School — minimal Catholic identity — Colourful School

minimal solidarity / maximal solidarity

G = God   T = teacher   S = student

Monologue school — maximal Christian identity — Dialogue school

Kerygmatic type of Dialogue School

Recontextualising type of Dialogue School

Formally Tolerant type of Dialogue School

Actively Plural type of Dialogue School

Colourless school — minimal Christian identity — Colourful school

minimal solidarity / maximal solidarity

close to each other and that means that the yellow dot shifts from left to right: at the moment *Relativism* overtakes *Post-Critical Belief* among your staff, then the golden dot will shift below the horizontal axis and you will be in a *Colourful School*. This is why we think it is really important to deal with spirituality and promote *Post-Critical* spirituality among the staff as this works as an answer to all the processes of *Secularisation* and pluralisation.

A fourth option is called the *Formally-Tolerant Dialogue School*. Many schools in Flanders are coming from *Monologue School* type and then shift to *Colourful* or *Colourless School* categories, effectively "skipping over" this corner of the scale. This is the challenge and what we try to do with our schools is to invite them to *Recontextualising Dialogue* with the Catholic tradition.

We found an inspiring quote from Pope Francis about the way he prefers to look at *Dialogue*: "Dialogue is born when I am capable of recognizing others as a gift of God and accept they have something to tell me"[3]. There is a mutual asymmetry at work here.
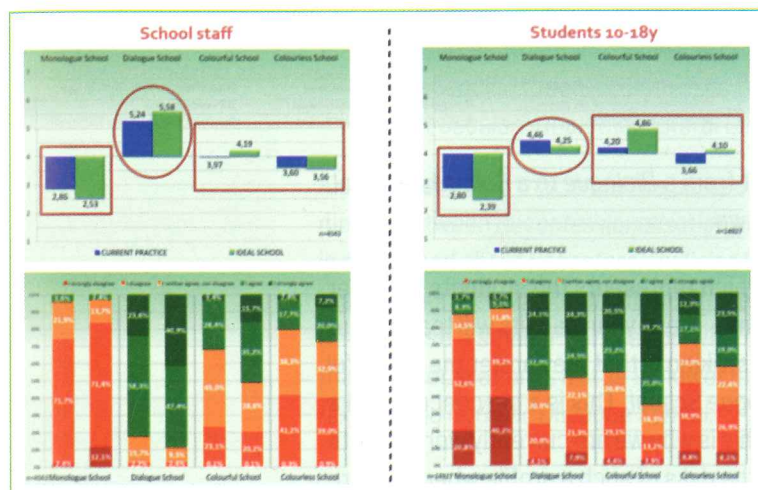
In fact, in the document *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love* by the Congregation for Catholic Education, the word "mutual" is mentioned no less than nineteen times ("mutual enrichment", "mutual understanding", "mutual transformation", "mutual recognition", "mutual service", "mutual respect", "mutual learning", "mutual trust", "mutual diffidence", et cetera.). This obviously shows a clear option for this double horizontal and vertical asymmetry.

2. *The* Victoria Scale *in Practice*

Let us once again have a look at schools in Flanders. These graphs display the scores for the *Monologue, Dialogue, Colourful* and *Colourless Schools* of staff and students in Flemish Catholic schools. Firstly, on the factual level, the staff is saying that they already are in a *Dialogue School*. In this way, the staff is a little too optimistic, since the students do not see as much Dialogue as the teachers believe there is. It is clear, though, that the staff in Catholic schools in Belgium on the whole definitely opt for the *Dialogue School* in the future. There is almost a full support basis for this option among staff and principals.

If you look at students, you see they are not so enthusiastic. Still, they do not reject the *Dialogue School*: 48.8% are positive, 22.1% are hesitant and 28.9% resist the *Dialogue School* model on the normative level. We can thus notice an obvious tension between the staff and the students.
Secondly, we initially wondered whether the schools perhaps desired to be *Monologue Schools*. But the data clearly countered this assumption. For Flanders, *Monologue* is not an option because there is a growing resistance on the normative level. If you tried this, you would meet resistance as only 2.4% of the staff has a tendency towards the Monologue School.

3. Pope Francis. Twitter Post. September 21, 2016, 4:30 a.m. (CEST). https://twitter.com/Pontifex/status/778557007942946816

Next, we focus on the *Colourful* and the *Colourless School*. We notice a growing support for these models among the staff. The results also highlight that there is an openness among the students for the *Colourful School* as well as for the *Colourless*. Therefore, it is not surprising that the *Catholic Dialogue School* is under pressure in Flanders. We need to re-dynamise the *Dialogue* with the Catholic tradition within our schools. This need for re-dynamisation was added to the new curriculum of religious education in Flanders in early 2019.

This colourful graph summarises the information collected from the various respondent groups. For instance, you can see the principals (in light brown) supporting the *Catholic Dialogue School* model, followed by the teachers and the parents. By contrast, as they get older, the students become more hesitant towards this model. Nevertheless, the *Monologue School* type is rejected by everyone. The *Colourful* and *Colourless School* models are only rejected by principals and the diocesan Catholic Education Offices. In other words, for the staff (excluding the principals), there is no problem to shift from a *Dialogue* to a *Colourful School*. There is a discussion going on between these two.
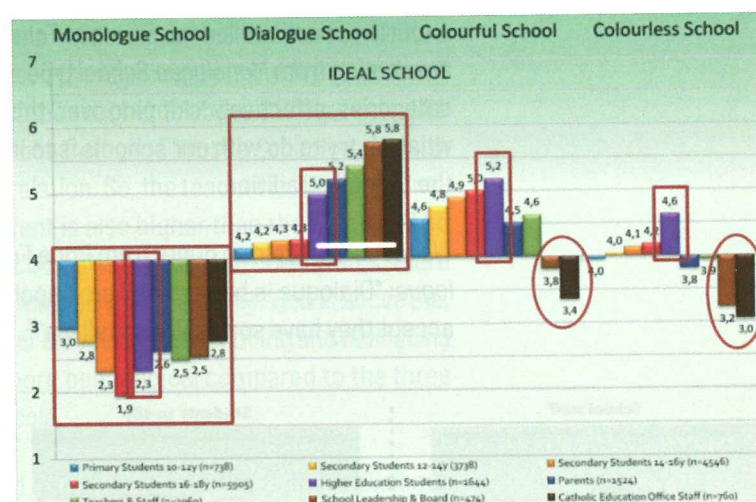
What is more, you can see a group in purple which represents the students in higher education and those in teacher training programs. These young adults will teach in our Catholic schools for decades to come. What is striking is that they prefer the *Colourful* (and even the *Colourless*) *School* over the *Dialogue School*. This is a big concern and a challenge for the Catholic education system. This is why we are currently working with these future teachers to make them aware of the risks of such a profile when they are asked to foster Catholic school identity.

V. Correlations between the scales

Now, it gets a little bit more complex. In what we called the "Bubble Graph" we have brought together various elements for analysis. Nearly every principal in Australia is acquainted with these kind of graphs because they are used for selecting and hiring new staff. When one hires new staff in one's Catholic school, the identity of this new person will have an impact on the identity of the school.

First, let me give you some explanation to understand the graph. You have four lines on the vertical axis, representing someone with:

1. *Literal Belief*;
2. *External Critique* or atheism;

Melbourne PCB Scale	Secularisation	Reconfessionalisation	Christian Values Education	Recontextualisation
				n=3477
Literal Belief	-0.43	0.58	0.40	0.09
External Critique	0.65	-0.33	-0.25	-0.47
Relativism	0.00	-0.13	0.01	0.27
Post-Critical Belief	-0.61	0.36	0.36	0.58

3. *Relativism;*
4. *Post-Critical Belief;*

Additionally, you see four options for your Catholic school on the horizontal axis:

1. *Secularisation*
2. *Reconfessionalisation*
3. *Christian Values Education*
4. *Recontextualisation*

Finally, blue is a positive correlation while red is a negative correlation. In other words, in this graph we observe that:

1. Someone with *Literal Belief* rejects *Secularisation*. He/she will try to use *Christian Values Education* to *Recontextualise* the Catholic identity of the school.
2. If you hire someone with *External Critique*, the impact on *Secularisation* is huge. Indeed, this person will reject the other three aspects and especially *Recontextualisation*.
3. It is remarkable that *Relativists* will have the least significant impact on all other categories.
4. Hiring someone with *Post-Critical Belief* seems to be the best option as this person resists *Secularisation*. To compare, *Post-Critical Believers* have stronger resistance against *Secularisation* than *Literal Believers*, i.e. a high negative correlation.

Also interesting is that, from the perspective of *Post-Critical Belief*, there is no contradiction between *Reconfessionalisation* and *Recontextualisation*. A *Post-Critical Believer* is concerned about *Reconfessionalising* the Catholic school, but he/she will prefer to do that through *Recontextualisation*. These two aspects go hand in hand. As you can see there is also a smaller correlation with *Christian Values Education*. The idea would be that this correlation is a little bit lower in order to facilitate the shift toward the *Recontextualising Catholic Dialogue School*.

VI. Four Subpopulations

Thanks to the huge amount of data we have collected in Flanders, we can now accomplish a higher level of integration. This is a special diagram designed on the basis of the Melbourne Scale, which summarises the big trends in Catholic education in Flanders.
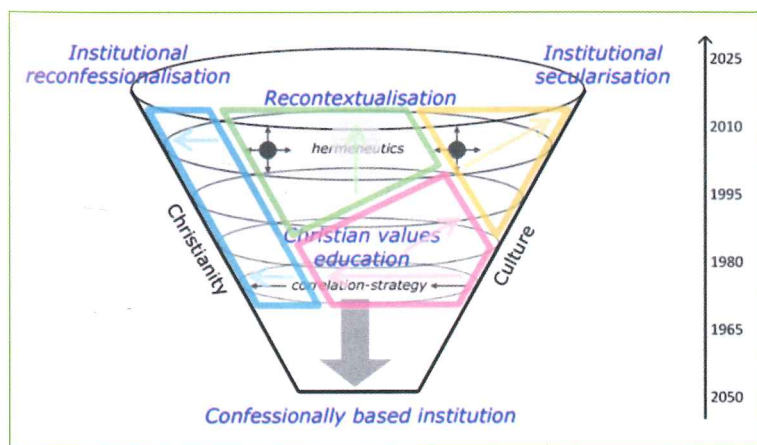

We have four distinctive subpopulations which represent four big trends:

- In pink: Those who are in *Christian Values Education*.
- In blue: Those who want to *Reconfessionalise* the Catholic schools
- In yellow: Those who just want to give up the Catholic identity (*Secularisation*)
- In green: Those who are in *Recontextualisation*.

Let us now have a look at the results.

The first subpopulation (above) is separated into the staff and the students. As you can see, it is quite shocking that 30.4% of the staff and the leadership are in *Secularising* subpopulation, along with a majority of 67.5% of the students. That means that they do not care in the long term about the Catholic identity of their schools. Then, if you look at the profile of these people on the *Melbourne Scale*, both groups have a positive answer for *Secularisation*. They opt for *External Critique* and prefer the *Colourful* and *Colourless Schools* as much or more than *Dialogue*. So, they are statistically very consistent, despite representing a very big group, between 7958 (*Melbourne* respondents) and 9624 (*PCB* respondents) people who have the same pattern.

Staff & Leadership (30.4%)   Students (67.5%)
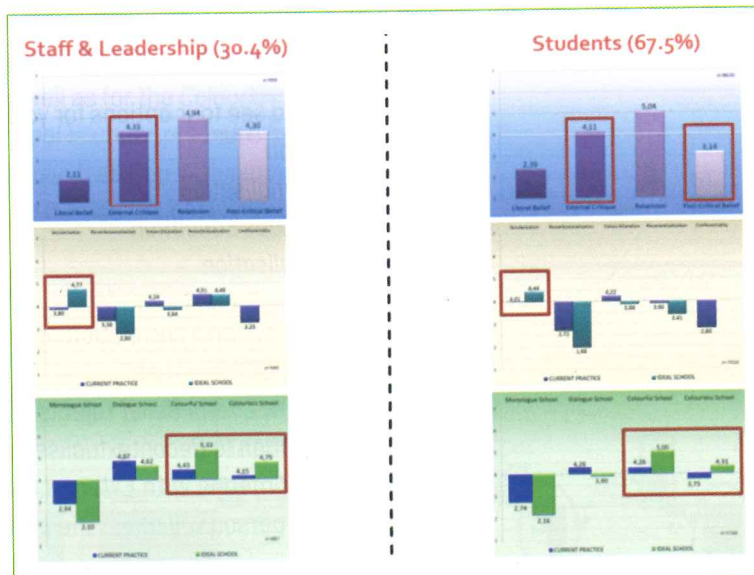
The second subpopulation (above) contains the people who want to *Reconfessionalise*. If you look here, *Reconfessionalisation* is very high on the normative level. These people are almost equally in favour of affirming *Literal Belief* and they even show a tendency towards the *Monologue School*. So that is a completely different profile from the first subpopulation. However, only 2.0% of the staff and 3.1% of the students fit in this *Reconfessionalising* subpopulation. This means that you can launch a school adopting this profile, but you will have little support both from your staff and students.
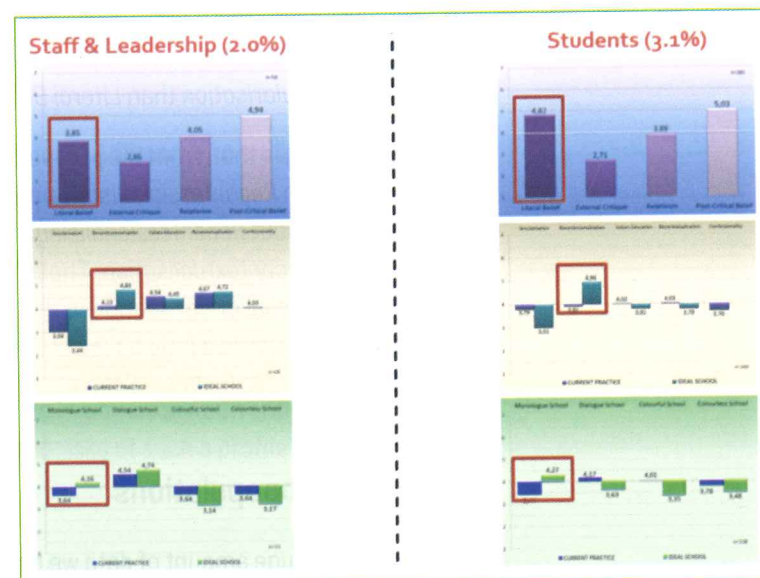
This leads us to the third subpopulation (above), in which students and staff are *Recontextualising* the Catholic faith. Via the *Melbourne Scale*, such students and staff both indicate a very high perception and support of *Recontextualisation* on the factual and normative levels of the *Melbourne Scale*. These people have a very high *Post-Critical Belief* on the *PCB Scale*, and they opt for *Dialogue School* on the *Victoria Scale*. 35.1% of the staff and the leadership in Catholic schools in Flanders are now supporting this model based on the *Recontextualisation* of the Catholic school identity, as well as strongly resisting *Secularisation*. This resistance is a truly important part of the *Recontextualising* subpopulation, as only 8.7% of students currently belong to this group.

Staff & Leadership (2.0%)   Students (3.1%)

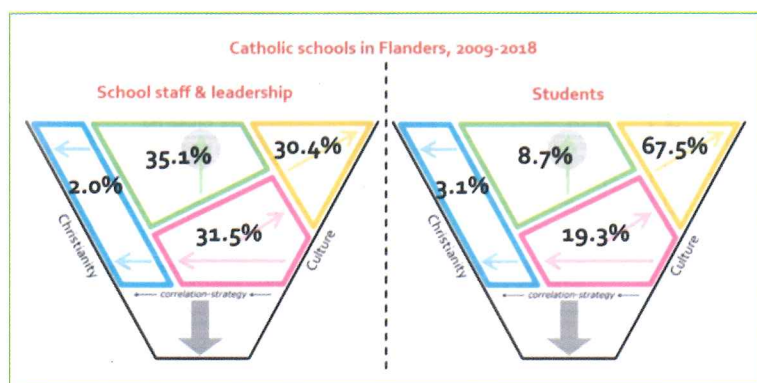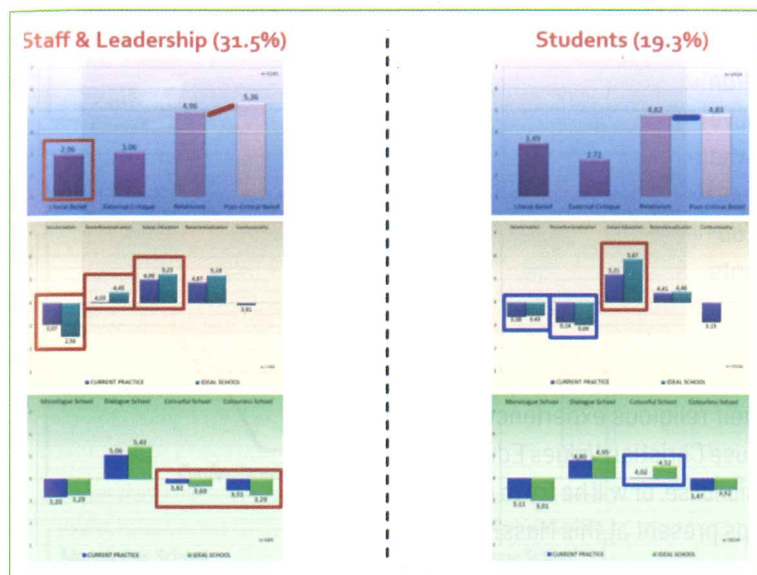Staff & Leadership (35.1%)   Students (8.7%)
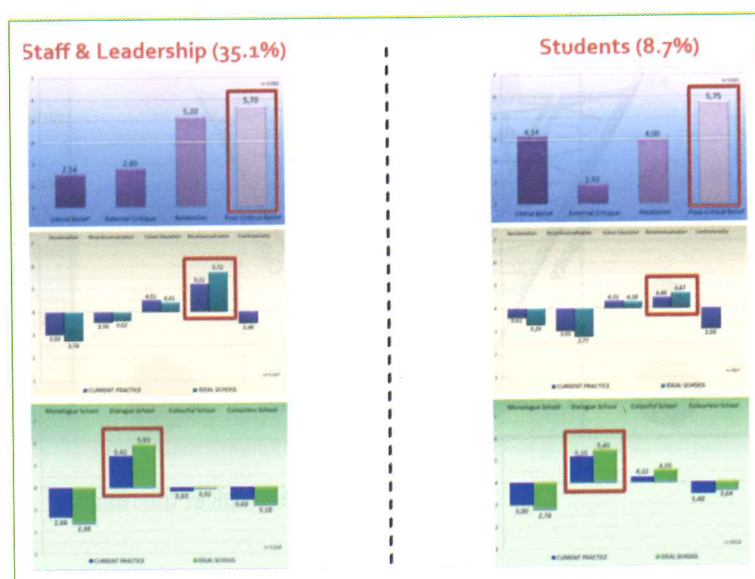
Finally, the fourth subpopulation (above) consists of people who prefer to continue with *Christian Values Education*. On the *Melbourne Scale*, these staff want more *Christian Values Education*, as do the students. This group includes one third of the staff and one in five students. You can see there is are shifts from the factual to the normative levels, but these reflect different trends for school staff compared to students. If you look closer, the staff and the school leadership want more *Christian Values Education* in order to resist *Secularisation* and to *Reconfessionalise* the school. There is a gap between *Relativism* and *Post-Critical Belief* and the level of *Literal Belief* is rather high. This group does not strongly resist the *Colourful* and the *Colourless School*. So, these are people who think that the gap between Christianity and culture is not that big and you can close it through *Christian Values Education*.

Looking to the students, however, we see that they too prefer *Christian Values Education*, albeit with different motives. The difference between *Relativism* and *Post-Critical Belief* disappears, they resist *Reconfessionalisation* and they are more positive towards *Secularisation*. In other words, the staff uses *Christian Values Education* to *Reconfessionalise*, while the students use *Christian Values Education* to resist *Reconfessionalisation*, to *Secularise*, and finally to end up in a *Colourful School*.

In conclusion, we think that it is urgent — in Catholic education all around world — to make the shift from a *Christian Values Education* approach. This approach is too flattening, too horizontal, too focused on peace. The alternative, we recommend, is a model more aware of the particularity of the Catholic faith. From there on, we will not *Reconfessionalise*, but we will enter into a *Recontextualised Dialogue* with the Catholic tradition.

According to the graph above, what is challenging is that there is 67.5% of the students in Catholic schools who fall in the *Secularising* subpopulation — including students who are training to become teachers. By contrast, there is a more hopeful picture concerning the school staff as they separate roughly into thirds supporting *Christian Values Education*, *Recontextualisation* or *Secularisation*. In my view, the future of Catholic education will depend upon the possibility to invite the staff in the *Values Education* subpopulation to move into *Recontextualisation*, so that they would become more explicit and dialogical towards the Catholic tradition. If we could achieve that, we would have almost two-thirds in support of Catholic identity. The danger is that the staff in *Christian Values Education* do not work in this way, but rather move towards *Secularisation*. If that continues to happen, than it would mean that Catholic schools in Flanders would increasingly *Secularise* and lose their Catholic identity in the long term.
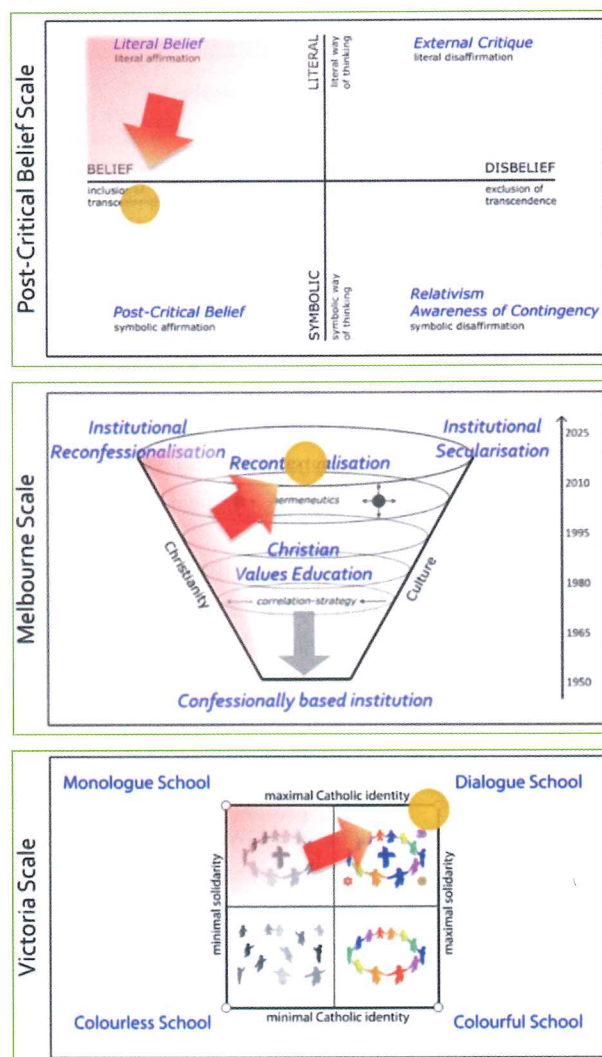
VII. Conclusions

This is a picture of a whole school Mass in a secondary college somewhere in Australia. This photo serves to illustrate that, while those who attend Mass might all look similar on the outside, there lies a great deal of diversity underneath. It is this diversity that the *Melbourne Scale* uncovers. Indeed, the people at the front opt for *Reconfessionalisation* and represent 8.9% of the students. Then you have a big group, which stands for 29.7% on average, who want to *Recontextualise*. Then, on the left side you see the majority of students in *Christian Values Education*: 40.7%. At the back, you have the students who want to *Secularise*: 20.6%.
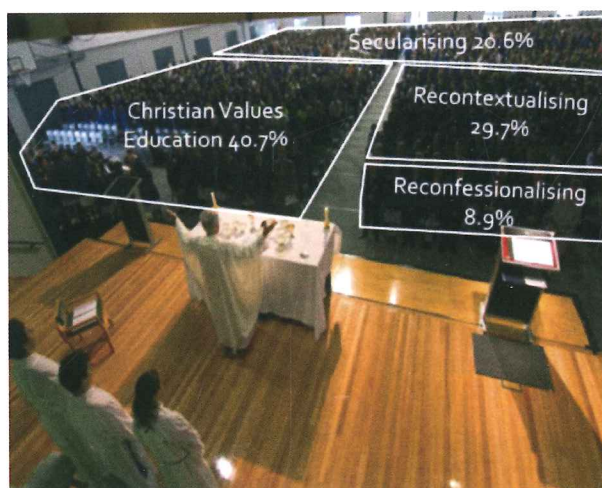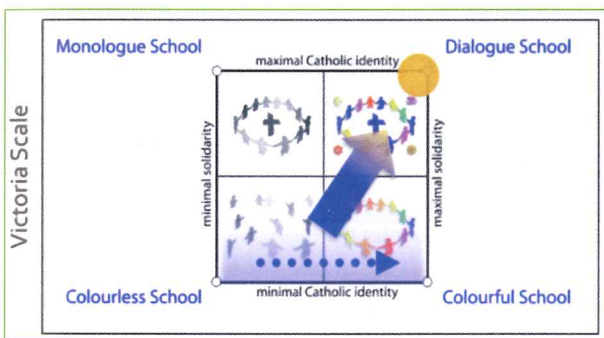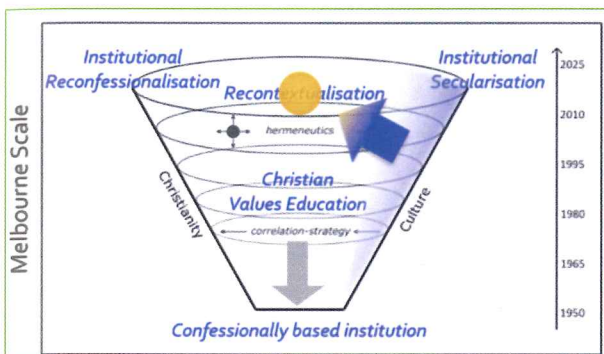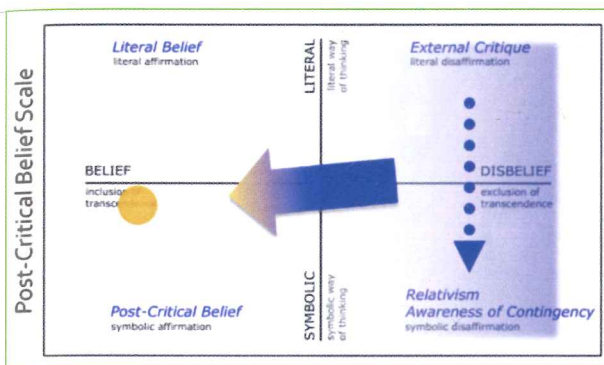

You see how challenging it must be for this priest to serve all these different groups, each with different expectations related to their religious experience and Christian tradition. What will his homily look like? Will he use Christian Values Education? Will he only talk to those people who want to *Reconfessionalise*, or will he try to *Recontextualise* his message and try to appeal to all these groups present at this Mass?

The Hermeneutical Shift

The theologically and educationally normative direction proposed by the *Enhancing Catholic School Identity* project can be expressed in terms of three different shifts. Firstly, there are schools with a very high *Literal Belief*, with a lot of *Reconfessionalising* tendencies and with an appeal towards the *Monologue School*. We invite these schools to reflect on *Post-Critical Belief*, to move towards *Recontextualising* the Catholic faith and to try to *Dialogue* with the context. Technically speaking, that is the shift from catechism to hermeneutics.

Post-Critical Belief Scale

Literal Belief
literal affirmation

LITERAL
literal way of thinking

External Critique
literal disaffirmation

BELIEF
inclusion of transcendence

DISBELIEF
exclusion of transcendence

Post-Critical Belief
symbolic affirmation

SYMBOLIC
symbolic way of thinking

Relativism
Awareness of Contingency
symbolic disaffirmation

Melbourne Scale

Institutional Reconfessionalisation

Institutional Secularisation

Recontextualisation

hermeneutics

Christian Values Education

correlation-strategy

Christianity

Culture

Confessionally based institution

2025
2010
1995
1980
1965
1950

Victoria Scale

Monologue School

maximal Catholic identity

Dialogue School

minimal solidarity

maximal solidarity

Colourless School

minimal Catholic identity

Colourful School

Post-Critical Belief Scale

Literal Belief
literal affirmation

LITERAL
literal way of thinking

External Critique
literal disaffirmation

BELIEF
inclusion of transcendence

DISBELIEF
exclusion of transcendence

Post-Critical Belief
symbolic affirmation

SYMBOLIC
symbolic way of thinking

Relativism
Awareness of Contingency
symbolic disaffirmation

Melbourne Scale

Institutional Reconfessionalisation

Institutional Secularisation

Recontextualisation

hermeneutic

Christian Values Education

correlation-strategy

Christianity

Culture

Confessionally based institution

2025
2010
1995
1980
1965
1950

The Religious Identity Shift

The second bis shift consists of people who have a very high degree of *External Critique* and *Relativism*, who are in a *Secularizing* corner and who present tendencies towards *Colourful* and *Colourless School* types. In this case, we invite them to make two steps. The first step is to learn to move from a *Literal* to a symbolic, *Post-Critical* style of thinking. And then, we ask them to see how we can invite them to the political space of the faith tradition. It works the same way to move from a *Colourful* and *Colourless School* to a *Catholic Dialogue School*. It is a big challenge working with this kind of school.
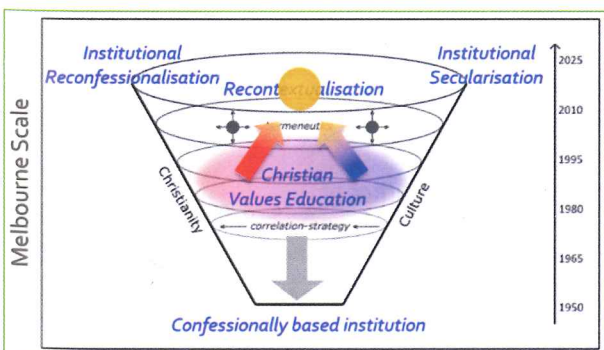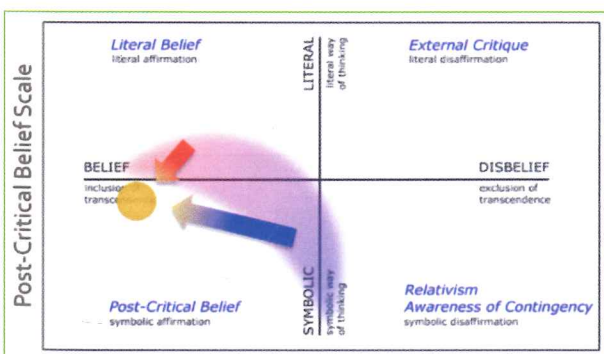
The Recontextualisation Shift

Finally, most people in Catholic schools find themselves in the third paradigm because of their *monocorrelation* or *Christian Values Education*. In terms of the PCB Scale, the schools are in the purple area and should move to a hermeneutical, *Post-Critical* way of dealing with the Catholic faith tradition. Likewise with the *Melbourne* and *Victoria Scales*, people are here in the *Colourful* and *Monological* and we invite them towards *Recontextualising*.

These are the three shifts we would like to see happen in Catholic schools in Flanders and across the world. I think we are supported by the way our Pope understands *Dialogue*: "Dialogue is born from a respectful attitude towards the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It supposes that we can make room in our hearts for their point of view, their opinion and their proposals. Dialogue entails a warm reception and not
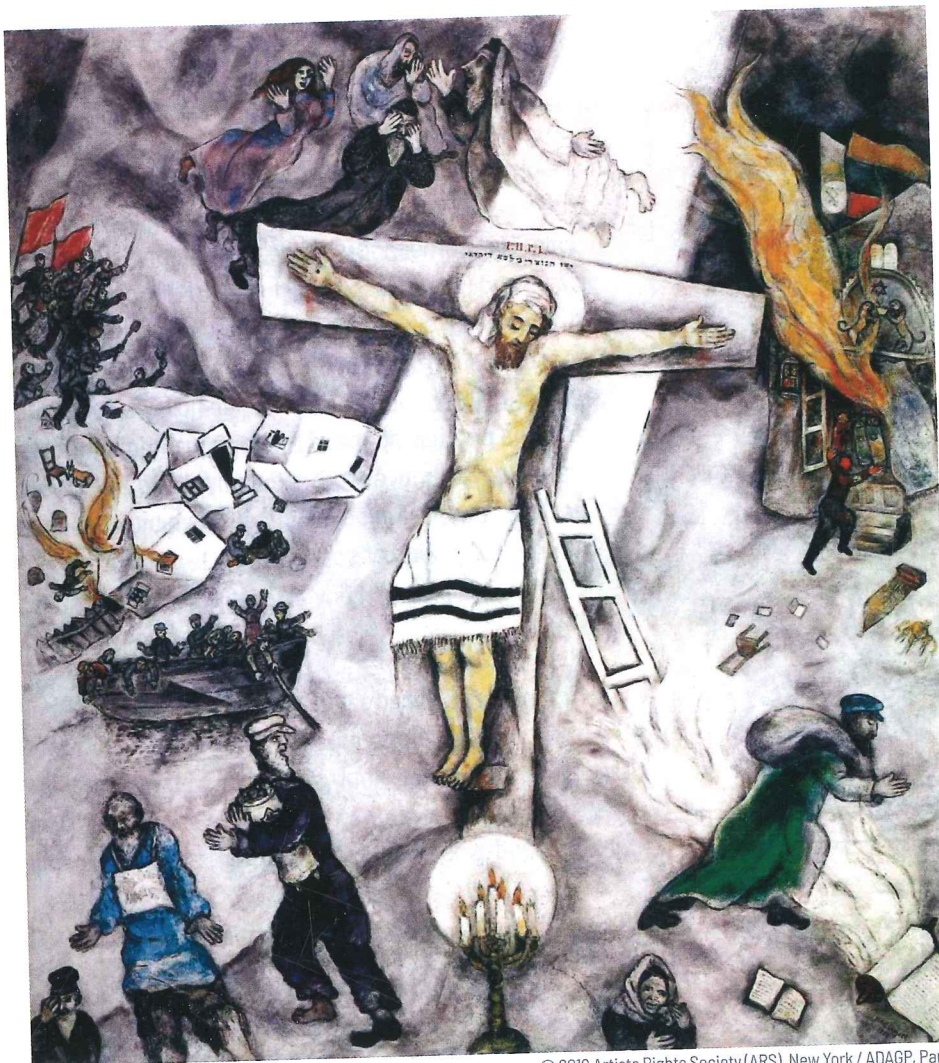
a pre-emptive condemnation. To dialogue, one must know how to lower the defences, to open the doors of one's home and to offer warmth"[4].

I began this contribution with the painting of *Christ Entering into Brussels 1889*. I would like to end with a painting of Christ on the cross entitled *White Crucifixion* (1938). It was painted by Marc Chagall and it is an impressive example of a *Recontextualisation*. It was created when Chagall was confronted by the *Kristallnacht* (*Night of Broken Glass*) in Germany and was forced to flee the country. You can see elements referring to the *Kristallnacht* in November 1938, with flames coming out of the synagogue. You also see references to communism, namely the red flags of the Russian army. You see migrants fleeing from the evil of the Nazi's. You also see anonymous Jews, trying to save the Torah, losing their shoes while fighting to escape. You see a woman trying to take care of a child. In the middle, there is Jesus with the prophets on the top of the cross and the Menorah for the Jews. If Jesus were there, He would have been on the side of the Jewish victims. The ladder is connecting the horizontal with the vertical. Jesus is in peace, as you can see. But there is at the end an immense white light, vertical lights coming over the grass, the healing Jesus taking care of them and promising a new future.

I think it is not an accident that this *Recontextualising* painting is one of the favourites of Pope Francis. He has said in several interviews that this painting is a strong example of the Christian message of the Gospel, of the cross, of the hope after the cross. And we hope that in the future we can continue to contribute to re-vitalise time and again this faith tradition, so that it will have a bright future for young people in our schools today.

4. J. Bergoglio – A. Skorka, *On Heaven and Earth*, New York, Editorial Sudamericana, 2013. Originally published in 2010 in Spanish under the title: *Sobre el cielo y la tierra*.

Presentation of the "massive open online course" (MOOC) on enhancing Catholic school identity by Drs. *Jan Bouwens*

Proudly, I would like to present to you the new MOOC, or Massive Open Online Course on *Assessing and Enhancing Catholic School Identity* on the renowned online edX platform. Every MOOC is accompanied by a two-minute trailer, and I propose that we watch the trailer together.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXeQja8OUmw
www.edx.org/course/enhancing-catholic-school-identity

Catholic schools are faced with many challenges, but paradoxically the new context can offer interesting opportunities for schools to strengthen and deepen their Catholic identity. The *Recontextualising Catholic Dialogue School* is the new model to address the educational challenges of the twenty first century.

The huge edX website offers thousands of online courses at the university level to a worldwide audience. The courses are taught in English and they are free of charge. Dozens of universities worldwide, including KU Leuven, have joined. They create MOOCs on the most diverse topics in all fields of science.

Since October 2018, there is also a MOOC about Catholic schools. It is a free online course that provides a theological framework and a pedagogical strategy to support principals and teachers in maintaining and strengthening the Catholic identity of their schools.

By joining this MOOC, you will learn how to assess and enhance the Catholic identity of your school. You will learn the theological underpinnings of the *Catholic Dialogue School*. You will learn how to read and interpret the different typologies and graphs. You will learn inspiring examples and good practices and many ways to apply specific strategies to enhance the Catholic identity of your school.

Through many knowledge clips, exercises, written explanations, typologies, illustrations, cartoons, surveys and case studies, participants learn to enhance their school's Catholic identity. Participants are required to engage in a personal reflection and formation. Not only they learn *about* something, but first and foremost they enter into a personal transformation process. On top of this, there is a forum for discussion with other learners, an important component of a MOOC educational philosophy.

Through five extensive sections, participants become acquainted with a new vocabulary and theological framework regarding Catholic school identity. We begin by looking at personal religious identity because at the heart of every school are its people. We first look at how the individuals within the school relate to faith. Next, we turn from a personal to an institutional and organisational identity: How does the school relate to the Catholic faith tradition? In the third section, we look at how cultural, moral, and religious diversity are treated in a Catholic school community. Next, we bring all three perspectives together to see the school in its totality. The shift to the Recontextualising *Catholic Dialogue School*, the model that is central to ECSI, is explained extensively. The final section provides practical information and how to set up your own ECSI research in a Catholic school or school network.

The ECSI MOOC is self-paced, which means that participants can determine their own study time and work pace. Any person with a keen interest in the issue of Catholic identity is welcome to join the online course. The threshold is low, admission is free and there are no registration requirements. The participants can freely opt to take part in a full examination that evaluates their insights and skills. Those who succeed for the exam receive a verified certificate in exchange for a cost of 42.00 euros.

The graph on the screen shows the number of subscribed users on Tuesday the 12th of March. At present, there are already 508 learners doing our MOOC. 23 of them are certified. At any given time, there are approximately 15 to 20 active users. They find themselves in 67 countries all over the world.

This exciting tool offers new opportunities to get to work on the religious identity of our schools. So, we invite you to check it out for yourselves and to encourage others to join as well. Together, let's being new hope to students and staff in Catholic school communities worldwide.