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Box 09, Folder 25 - "On the Sacraments" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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ON THE SACRAMENTS

It is of course necessary for us to teach the children about all those special means - or channels of Grace -by which the Church helps us in our spirituallife --- The Sacraments.

We must teach him to distinguish between those things which are necessary for the validity of the Sacrament , and those which are not absolutely necessary - as it were a sort of luxury .For instance it isnecessary for the celebration of Mass to have two lighted candles but it is not essential to have flowers on the altar . Sometime the teacher herself doesnot know which are the essential elements . For the difficulty doesnot lie in arousing the child's interesft or in the matter of the sinstruction but in having the nec essary knowledge to present whay is essential .

Also we must know the pyschology of the child at the various stages ; and we must present at each stage what is most suited to the child's interests (Sensitive ,eriods)

To Animate Religious Intratuction

So then there are two pointsto be remembered

- a) We must know how to animate religious instruction
- b) We must do it in such a way as to repsond to the needs of the child at each age .

No Religious Instruction Period

To put life into this question of Religious Intruction we must not thinki it can be done just rhough a "religious instruction period "fromI^o.30 --II.30 " on the curriculum between English and Arithmetic periods. It cannot be done in this way . The teacher must try and arrangethings se that the child passees all his life in touch with religious activity - going from one difficulty to another - by ever new means of religious auto-education .

To accomplish this it is neccessary to have the special religious

5

pecially prepared religious environment - The Atrium - in which the religious life can develop spontaneously from moment to moment. We must remember then a) that this child is a human being with the dignity of a human being b) that his religious life develops by means of (a traverse) activity. c) Nor should we forget that this inner creative forces are much stronger than we usually think.

We Teach through a Material

Since the child learns through activity - and not just through listening to an adult talking - we must adopt the idea of teaching an idea by means of some material which expresses that idea. In the Atrium there would be the greatest possible facility given for such materials - in fact that is precisely what it is for (L'istruzione fare) Hence the need for a continual research to make all the things, the materials, which would help in the teaching of religion - just as one has the materials for Arithmetic, geometry and Grammar and so on.