

Editorial

Vulnerability: a question for education

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Why make vulnerability a subject for reflection in a journal devoted to education?

The question might seem paradoxical. Is education not intended to enable everyone to grow, develop their abilities and become an active agent in their own lives? Speaking of vulnerability might seem to shift our attention towards what is lacking, what weakens us or what holds us back.

Yet this is precisely the different perspective we wish to open up in this issue of **Educatio**. Taking vulnerability seriously first means questioning our understanding of the person, relationships and education. For vulnerability is not simply a condition affecting some people: it is part of the human condition. We are exposed and interdependent beings, called to receive as well as to give. We become who we are through the relationships that precede us and accompany us.

This conviction echoes one of the fundamental insights of personalism. The person cannot be reduced to an autonomous individual defined by performance or by the ability to be self-sufficient. A person is a being of relationship, responsibility and commitment. For Emmanuel Mounier, the person is formed through openness to others and participation in a human community.

The Christian tradition gives this reflection a particular depth. The Incarnation reveals a God who enters into the human condition, including its fragility. It therefore invites us to reconsider our instinctive ideas of power and success: vulnerability can become a place of presence, relationship and gift.

This perspective leads us to distinguish between vulnerability and the process of making people more vulnerable. Being vulnerable is part of our condition; being made more vulnerable may result from social, institutional or relational mechanisms. Some practices can weaken, humiliate, discredit or confine people to a particular status. Others can restore confidence, support autonomy and enable everyone to regain the capacity to act.

Education therefore faces a fundamental responsibility: what do we do with the vulnerability of those entrusted to our care?

This question is particularly relevant to schools. A school can be a place of comparison, ranking and sometimes exclusion; it can also become a space of recognition and of processes that reduce vulnerability. It can teach everyone that they are not defined by their difficulties or results, but remain capable of learning, making progress, contributing and building relationships.

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The question of vulnerability naturally leads to that of freedom. To be free does not mean to be alone. Freedom develops within relationships that make its exercise possible. Supporting a vulnerable person therefore does not mean acting on their behalf, but enabling them to develop their own capacity to act.

This reflection opens onto fraternity. In **Fratelli tutti**, Pope Francis reminds us that no one builds themselves alone, and that fraternity becomes a responsibility when another person's vulnerability concerns us. Education can thus become a process of learning to embrace interdependence: discovering that the other is not an obstacle to my freedom, but helps create the conditions for my humanity.

It is from this perspective that **Educatio** seeks to bring the Christian educational heritage into dialogue with contemporary questions facing education systems. The aim is neither to repeat an inheritance nor to preserve it as a static memory, but to test it against present-day realities and discern what it can contribute to the education of tomorrow.

The challenge is twofold: to inherit and to create. To inherit a conception of the person that recognises in everyone an irreducible dignity; and to develop educational practices capable of translating this conviction into the everyday realities of schools, universities and training.

One question can therefore run through this issue: do our educational practices enhance or diminish other people's capabilities?

Vulnerability does not invite us to dream of an invulnerable humanity. Rather, it reminds us of our interdependence and responsibility. It teaches us that education is not tasked with eliminating all fragility, but with creating the conditions in which everyone can grow, find their place and contribute to the common world.



Plan your reading journey!

Introducing issue 17

This issue is devoted, in its first part, to **'Vulnerability: A Path to Fraternity?'**, presenting reflections of a general nature intended to explore in greater depth the ideas put forward in the call for contributions. The second part, **'Education in Practice'**, presents educational initiatives and proposals, both pedagogical and practical, in response to the call for contributions.

A **'Varia'** section welcomes texts that relate indirectly to the call for contributions or address other themes.

Finally, two sections, **'Online Resources'** and **'Book Reviews'**, share reading suggestions and internet resources, varying in number from one issue to another, contributed by members of the Editorial Board and friends of the journal.

This issue opens, on this occasion, with a series of **'Prologues'**, presenting key texts intended to situate our reading within broader theological and anthropological perspectives.



We open this issue with an article showing how Indian Catholic higher education institutions can turn experiences of vulnerability into structured pathways of solidarity and civic responsibility.

A team from the Institut Catholique de Paris focuses in particular on processes that increase vulnerability within healthcare and educational institutions, and on how institutions respond to them.

Géraldine Maugars explores a considered understanding of vulnerability that does not reduce a person to their weaknesses. In doing so, she contributes to the debate on the meaning and significance of fraternity.

Brother André-Pierre Gauthier, a Lasallian, revisits the Lasallian educational tradition and its capacity to help pupils realise their abilities and potential.

Christophe Lemardelé introduces us to a Christian anthropology of vulnerability through an exegesis of the Lord's Prayer.

Jean-Louis Barbon, a member of the *Educatio* team, seeks to highlight processes that increase vulnerability and suggests ways towards a school shaped by fraternity.



The '**Education in Practice**' section opens with a dialogue between France and Quebec. led by a team from the Institut Catholique de Paris, exploring the concept of inclusive schooling and the multifactorial environment it requires in order to respond to pupils' individual circumstances.

A team from Toulouse (ICT) presents co-teaching, exploring its potential and its relevance to adapting teaching practices.

Working in a Lasallian context, Fabrice Deroissart examines the sometimes negative effects of a strongly asserted identity and asks how hospitable Catholic education can be. Drawing on his practical experience, he puts forward proposals.

Teachers, too, can be vulnerable or made more vulnerable, as Eric De Rus, a neurodivergent teacher, shows. Drawing on Edith Stein's thought, he considers the processes of professional adaptation that are put in place.

Izabella Gombkötő-Lombár, from the István Benkő Protestant Secondary School in Budapest, considers approaches to vulnerability in school alongside collaborative and community-based practices.

Eva Gyarmathy, of Apor Vilmos Catholic College in Hungary, explores an original relationship between the cognitive profiles of neurodivergent pupils and the cognitive demands and processes fostered by digital technologies. Might these 'vulnerable' pupils hold some of the keys to the future of learning?

Szilvia Moldován, from Budapest, presents a pedagogical and social model that has already been implemented and evaluated in practice. It builds on social differences as a potential source of engagement, cooperation and solidarity in the learning process.

Carmen María González Bermejo, a trainee teacher in Murcia, Spain, puts forward pedagogical and educational proposals that take account of adolescents' physical and psychological dynamics.

Pour citer cet article

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