

Dr. Topping's Popular Talks – For Parishes, Homeschoolers, and Learned Societies

Titles and Descriptions:

On Revitalizing Catholic Education

1. Happiness, Culture, Virtue: The Case for Catholic Education

Drawing upon Catholic social teaching and recent sociological data, Dr. Topping presents a report on the vital signs of Catholic education in North America and offers suggestive recommendations for its recovery (*with power point*).

2. Building Blocks for a Catholic Philosophy of Education

A talk especially designed for Homeschooling parents and other educators. What principles define a *Catholic* education? What are the right questions to ask as we go about refining our curricula, our pedagogy, and our aims? Dr. Topping draws upon both philosophers and magisterial teaching to help you think clearly about teaching and learning.

3. The Elements of Rhetoric

A public-speaking workshop especially for parents and teens. What are the elements of a great presentation? How do you prepare to deliver a speech? Drawing upon classical and modern rhetoricians, as well as his own experience, Dr. Topping walks through the basics of crafting and delivering rhetorical presentations.

On Renewal in the Family

4. The Christian Family: Key to the Culture of Life

Far from helping women and children, the movement toward sexual liberation has reduced our happiness, and threatens to undo the fabric of our society. Drawing upon both Catholic philosophy and extensive social-scientific research, Dr. Topping shows why the family remains the foundational building block to personal happiness and collective harmony (*with power point*).

5. The Long War Against the Family

The modern attack against the family began long before the 1960s. Already in the 19th century Marxists called the family the “original cell of slavery.” Discover the three waves of attack against the family, and learn how to combat them.

6. John Paul II on the Mission of the Family

In the face of grave challenges to the family, how should Christians respond? What Pope Leo XIII did for workers in the 19th century, Blessed John Paul II did for family life in the 20th and 21st centuries. In this talk, Dr. Topping uncovers the four-fold blueprint for the mission of the family in the modern world.

7. Holiness in the Home

The family is often called the ‘Domestic Church’. By walking through the four marks of the Church, Dr. Topping explains the disciplines needed to strengthen the Christian family.

On Catholic Culture and Apologetics

8. Our Suffering and Christ's Passion

What is the problem of evil? How does Christ's suffering ennoble our own? In this talk, Dr. Topping pits the Christian answer to evil against its ancient and modern alternatives.

9. The Joy of Faith in an Age of Unbelief

How is faith rational? What distinguishes faith from dogmatism, and critical from corrupted thinking? With reference to the *Catechism*, the Council, and modern philosophers, in this popular lecture Professor Topping shows how faith serves as an extension of natural reason, and shows how skepticism, far from perfecting the intellect, is a sign of its failure.

10. Apologetics 101: What Christians Should Know

Can we prove God's existence? Are values relative? Is objective truth knowable? C.S. Lewis once quipped that believers need to learn philosophy if only to counter bad philosophy. In non-technical language, Dr. Topping introduces foundational concepts in Aristotle, St. Thomas, and C.S. Lewis that can help you explain your faith.

11. The Artist After God

A crash-course in Western art history as interpreted through the lens of theology (*with power point*).

Speaker Biography:

A native of Saskatoon, Canada, Dr. Topping earned an MA in Philosophy from the University of Manitoba as well as an M.Phil. and a Doctorate in Theology from the University of Oxford. He held the Pope John XXIII Chair of Studies in Catholic Theology at St. Thomas University in Canada, and is Fellow at Thomas More College of Liberal Arts in New Hampshire.

Dr. Topping has published on a variety of Catholic themes and figures, from St. Augustine, to Dante, to G.K. Chesterton in academic and popular journals such as *International Philosophical Quarterly*, *The Chesterton Review*, *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, *Catholic Insight*, *First Things*, *Crisis Magazine*, and *Catholic Exchange*. He has published six books on Catholic culture and education, including: *Rebuilding Catholic Culture: How the Catechism Can Shape our Common Life*, *The Case for Catholic Education* (Angelico Press, 2015) and *Renewing the Mind: A Reader in the Philosophy of Catholic Education* (Catholic University of America Press, 2015). A popular speaker, he has presented widely on Catholic radio and TV networks including EWTN.

Besides home-schooling their seven children, he and his wife have been teaching Natural Family Planning for a decade. They reside in Nashua, New Hampshire.

To arrange a speaking engagement you may reach Dr. Topping at:

Dr. Ryan N.S. Topping, Fellow • Thomas More College
6 Manchester St. • Merrimack, NH 03054
Email: rtopping@thomasmorecollege.edu