

Church Documents for Catholic School Teachers: Annotated Bibliography

Pope Leo XIII. (1865). *Spectata Fides*. Retrieved from http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_27111885_spectatafides.html

In these days, and in the present condition of the world, when the tender age of childhood is threatened on every side by so many and such various dangers, hardly anything can be imagined more fitting than the union with literary instruction of sound teaching in faith and morals... For it is in and by these schools that the Catholic faith, our greatest and best inheritance, is preserved whole and entire. In these schools the liberty of parents is respected; and, what is most needed, especially in the prevailing license of opinion and of action, it is by these schools that good citizens are brought up for the State... The wisdom of our forefathers, and the very foundations of the State, are ruined by the destructive error of those who would have children brought up without religious education. You see, therefore Venerable Brethren, with what earnest forethought parents must beware of entrusting their children to schools in which they cannot receive religious teaching. (#4)

Pope Pius XI. (1929). *Divini illius magistri*. Retrieved from http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html

This all-encompassing, seminal encyclical on Catholic education was written by Pope Pius XI. The document elaborates on the mission, focus, circumstances, and final end of Catholic education. He begins by stating, "It is therefore as important to make no mistake in education, as it is to make no mistake in the pursuit of the last end, with which the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected. In fact, since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of Providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, who alone is 'the way, the truth and the life,' there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education" (#7). The means of Catholic education includes the permeation of religion throughout all subjects and grades of schooling for "...it is necessary not only that religious instruction be given to the young at certain fixed times, but also that every subject taught, be permeated with Christian piety," because "if this is wanting, if this sacred atmosphere does not pervade and warm the hearts of masters and scholars alike, little good can be expected from any kind of learning, and considerable harm will often be the consequence" (#80). He allows

no excuse for not properly forming the consciences of young people and states this is well within the Church's maternal supervision. The document discusses the role of parents and the State to provide education to young people.

The Pope condemns new methods of instruction based on naturalism, stating that man is both body and soul, with a fallen nature that can be elevated by God's grace. He laments the movement by educational institutions away from the foundations of Christianity, stating a Christocentric anthropology of man and his relationship with God should be the center of the educational enterprise.

The Pope acknowledges the important role of teachers: "Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers, teachers who are thoroughly prepared and well-grounded in the matter they have to teach; who possess the intellectual and moral qualifications required by their important office; who cherish a pure and holy love for the youths confided to them, because they love Jesus Christ and His Church, of which these are the children of predilection; and who have therefore sincerely at heart the true good of family and country" (#88).

Pope Pius XI. (1935). *Provido sane consilio*. Retrieved from

<https://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CATTEACH.HTM>

This short document was issued by the Catechetical Office of the Holy See under Pope Pius XI to address the urgency that Catholic doctrine be taught in all parishes, schools, and colleges and that those teaching the faith be qualified and attend annual catechetical conventions and other meetings to discuss the best methods of catechetical instruction (#34-35). Also, special "Courses of Lectures on Religion [are to] be offered each year to those who teach Christian doctrine in parochial and public schools, in order that they will increase in the quality and depth of their knowledge" (#37).

Pope Paul VI. (1965). *Gravissimum educationis*. Retrieved

from http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/va_tii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html

A declaration of Catholic education issued from the Second Vatican Council. This foundational document of Catholic education situates parents, by their God-given role, as the "primary and principle educators" of their children (#3) and the family as the "first school of the social virtues" (#3). It proclaims education as an inalienable right for all mankind and insists that the state should not usurp the choice of education available to families (#6). The document states that "a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end" (#1). The Church, through her care and concern for her people, enters into the field of education not only to assist primarily in this formation, but also to "pursue cultural goals," create a community "animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity," "help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism," and "order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation" (#8). Teachers, "who aid parents in fulfilling their duties" of education and

formation (#5), are recognized as individuals who must “possess special qualities of mind and heart,” because “beautiful indeed and of great importance” is their vocation (#5). Teachers are to be carefully prepared for their apostolate and continually ready to “renew and adapt” (#5). The document attempts to address all the many forms of Catholic education, including Catholic colleges and universities, advocating for coordination and cooperation among them.

In section 8 we read,

But let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends upon them almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and programs. They should therefore be very carefully prepared so that both in secular and religious knowledge they are equipped with suitable qualifications and also with a pedagogical skill that is in keeping with the findings of the contemporary world. Intimately linked in charity to one another and to their students and endowed with an apostolic spirit, may teachers by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ, the unique Teacher. Let them work as partners with parents and together with them in every phase of education give due consideration to the difference of sex and the proper ends Divine Providence assigns to each sex in the family and in society. Let them do all they can to stimulate their students to act for themselves and even after graduation to continue to assist them with advice, friendship and by establishing special associations imbued with the true spirit of the Church. The work of these teachers, this sacred synod declares, is in the real sense of the word an apostolate most suited to and necessary for our times and at once a true service offered to society. The Council also reminds Catholic parents of the duty of entrusting their children to Catholic schools wherever and whenever it is possible and of supporting these schools to the best of their ability and of cooperating with them for the education of their children.

National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1972). *To teach as Jesus did.*

Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

This pastoral message was issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (United States) in response to the exhortation of the Second Vatican Council in *Gravissimum Educationis*. The document begins by stating, “Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded,” and “through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action” (#7). “Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society with God’s help” (#7). Three main themes are proposed for Catholic education: message/doctrine (“integration of religious truth and values with life distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools,” #105); community including fellowship, life in Christ, and evangelization (“Building and living community must be prime, explicit goals of the contemporary Catholic School,” #108); and service including the transformation of society (“The experience of Christian community leads naturally to service,” #28). Scant mention is made about the qualities and characteristics of Catholic school teachers, aside from the very important facts that, “If the threefold purpose of

Christian education is to be realized, it must be through their commitment to give instruction to their students, to build community among them, and to serve them” (#144) and the “integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life is brought about in the Catholic school... by the presences of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives” (#104).

National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1976). *Teach them*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

This is a brief follow-up by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (United States) to *To Teach as Jesus Did*, addressing the present and future state of Catholic education in the United States. Many initiatives are suggested. The document reiterates the themes of Catholic education: “to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve.” Parent, teacher, administrator, pastor, and community roles in supporting Catholic education are discussed. Especially emphasized is “the new awareness that all members of the faculty, at least by their example, are an integral part of the process of religious education” and a “Teachers’ life style and character are as important as their professional credentials” (p.7). The twofold dimension of Catholic education as enfolding academic instruction with Christian formation is discussed stating, “the integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life” is a responsibility of teachers, because their “daily witness to the meaning of mature faith and Christian living has a profound impact upon the education and formation of their pupils” (p.3).

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1977). *The Catholic school*. Retrieved from

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19770319_catholic-school_en.html

Published by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, this document provides a deeper reflection of the Catholic school, especially in the areas of the nature and characteristics which lend to a school identifying itself as “Catholic.” The document begins by stating that the “Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church” (#9), “provides a privileged environment for the complete formation of her members, and ...also provides a highly important service to mankind” (#16). The school is considered a “centre of human formation,” and certain qualifiers must be in place or the school cannot be considered a Catholic school (25). The school must be a “place of integral formation” and “must begin from the principle that its educational programme is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person” (#28). The Catholic school is also a place where “a systematic and critical assimilation of culture” exists (#26), where faith is integrated with culture and life, and where students are not only given the opportunity to excel academically but to live in a “community whose values are communicated through the interpersonal and sincere relationships of its members” (#32), especially the teachers who “in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behavior” (#43). The document states that the Catholic school must help the student “spell out the

meaning of his experiences and their truths” (#27) and states that any school which does not do this “hinders the personal development of its pupils” (#27).

A Catholic school is founded on a Christian vision of life, with Christ as “the foundation of the whole educational enterprise” (#34), since He is “the Perfect Man” (#34). Redeemed by Him, “the Catholic school aims at forming in the Christian those particular virtues which will enable him to live a new life in Christ and help him to play faithfully his part in building up the Kingdom of God” (#36). To ensure this distinctive Christological emphasis, the local bishop has the authority to “watch over the orthodoxy of religious instruction and the observance of Christian morals in the Catholic schools,” but “it is the task of the whole educative community to ensure that a distinctive Christian educational environment is maintained in practice” (#73). Parents and especially teachers have the duty and obligation to ensure this distinctive character, especially “By their witness and their behavior” (#78).

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1982). *Lay Catholics in schools: Witnesses to faith*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19821015_lay-catholics_en.html

This document from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education begins by stating the importance of all those who work in Catholic schools, “whether as teachers, directors, administrators, or auxiliary staff” (#1). These “will substantially determine whether or not a school realizes its aims and accomplishes its objectives” (#1). With this statement, we see the great importance and impact of even those individuals not directly hired as teachers to the total educational environment experienced by the student on a daily basis. As all people are called to a life of personal holiness, so too are those who work in Catholic schools, since they have a privileged opportunity for giving witness (#33).

The more completely an educator can give concrete witness to the model of the ideal person that is being presented to the students, the more this ideal will be believed and imitated. For it will then be seen as something reasonable and worthy of being lived, something concrete and realizable. It is in this context that the faith witness of the lay teacher becomes especially important. Students should see in their teacher the Christian attitude and behavior that is often so conspicuously absent from the secular atmosphere in which they live. Without this witness, living in such an atmosphere, they may begin to regard Christian behavior as an impossible ideal (#32)

“Lay Catholic teachers should be influenced by a Christian faith vision in the way they teach their course, to the extent that this is consistent with the subject matter” (#49), and should be seekers of the truth, which is found in Truth Himself, Christ. They should be active participants in the school and the surrounding community, so as to act as a conduit of Catholic culture and an evangelizer of the faith. Teachers in Catholic schools possess

professional commitment; support of truth, justice and freedom; openness to the point of view of others, combined with an attitude of service; personal commitment to the students, and fraternal solidarity with everyone; [and] a life that is integrally moral in all its aspects. The lay Catholic who brings all of this to his or her work in a pluralist school¹ becomes a living mirror, in whom every individual in the educational community will see reflected an image of one inspired by the Gospel (#52).

Part III discusses the many dimensions of necessary formation for Catholic schoolteachers, and Part IV addresses the types and kinds of ecclesial and institutional support needed and available for lay teachers in Catholic schools whose work in education is part of the specific mission of the Church. That work includes

cultivating in student the intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties of the human person; to develop in them the ability to make correct use of their judgement, will, and affectivity; to promote in them a sense of values; to encourage just attitudes and prudent behavior; to introduce them to the cultural patrimony handed down from previous generations; to prepare them for professional life, and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding (#12).

Canon Law Society of America. (1983). *Code of canon law*. Retrieved

from http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/___P2N.HTM

Book III, Title III, Canons 793-806 are particular to grade schools operating under an ecclesial authority, independent or private schools using a Catholic faith-based curriculum, and parents.

Can. 795. Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person, so that all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children and young persons are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life.

Can. 803 §2. Instruction and education in a Catholic school must be based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and the teachers must be outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1988). *The religious dimension of education in a Catholic school*. Retrieved from

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19880407_catholic-school_en.html

This is the third of a trilogy of documents issued by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education on Catholic education following the promulgation of *Gravissimum Educationis* in 1965. (The trilogy began with *The Catholic School* in 1977 and *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* in 1982.) This document offers general guidelines regarding the educational climate of a Catholic school which includes the building up of a school culture animated by faith. Catholic schools should not be seen as institutions, but as communities and extensions of family life, especially for elementary school students. The document discusses the complementary role of harmonious spiritual and academic formation of the students and again focuses upon the school climate to impress upon the reader that

strong determination is needed to do everything possible to eliminate conditions which threaten the health of the school climate. Some examples of potential problems are these: the educational goals are either not defined or are defined badly; those responsible for the school are not sufficiently trained; concern for academic achievement is excessive; relations between teachers and students are cold and impersonal; teachers are antagonistic toward one another; discipline is imposed from on high without any participation or cooperation from the students; relationships with families are formal or even strained, and families are not involved in helping to determine the educational goals; some within the school community are giving a negative witness; individuals are unwilling to work together for the common good; the school is isolated from the local Church; there is no interest in or concern for the problems of society; religious instruction is 'routine' (#104).

Discussion regarding the teaching of religion and the importance of catechesis of those receptive to the Christian message of salvation is presented with suggestions for methodology and to look for opportunities of "pre-evangelization: to the development of a religious sense of life" (#108), the "why," "what," and "how" of a culture purports a religious and ethical dimension. Frequent reference to Christ and God, the Father, as well as frequent prayer create a culture and climate that is genuinely Catholic.

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1995). *The truth and meaning of human sexuality: Guidelines for education within the family*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html

This document from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education was written for families, but it is applicable for educators and administrators overseeing courses on human sexuality in Catholic schools. As collaborators with parents in the education of their children, educators need to affirm the Church's position that parents are the primary educators of their children. Included in this document are several quotes from *Familiaris Consortio*, one of which is, "Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centers chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church affirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it

cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents.” Also, the end of the document is a set of recommendations for all educators working in this area:

1. Since each child or young person must be able to live his or her own sexuality in conformity with Christian principles, and hence be able to exercise the virtue of chastity, no educator—not even parents—can interfere with this right to chastity (cf. Matthew 18: 4-7) (#118).
2. It is recommended that respect be given to the right of the child and the young person to be adequately informed by their own parents on moral and sexual questions in a way that complies with his or her desire to be chaste and to be formed in chastity. This right is further qualified by a child’s stage of development, his or her capacity to integrate moral truth with sexual information, and by respect for his or her innocence and tranquility (#119).
3. It is recommended that respect be given to the right of the child or young person to withdraw from any form of sexual instruction imparted outside the home. Neither the children nor other members of their family should ever be penalized or discriminated against for this decision (#120).

Congregation for the Clergy. (1997). *General directory for catechesis*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_17041998_directory-for-catechesis_en.html

The document from the Congregation for the Clergy describes the relationship between religious instruction and catechesis, both of which are evident in Catholic schools. Paragraphs 73-75 explain the proper characteristics of religious instruction in schools. Religious instruction is to be scholastic in nature

with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. It should not be an accessory alongside of these disciplines, but rather it should engage in a necessary inter-disciplinary dialogue. This dialogue should take place above all at that level at which every discipline forms the personality of students. In this way the presentation of the Christian message influences the way in which the origins of the world, the sense of history, the basis of ethical values, the function of religion in culture, the destiny of man and his relationship with nature, are understood. Through inter-disciplinary dialogue religious instruction in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the educational activity of the school (#73).

Paragraph 259-260 address religious instruction and catechesis within Catholic schools, recalling the emphasis of the Second Vatican Council’s document *Gravissimum Educationis* on schools as places for evangelization, human formation, and enculturation into the life of Christ.

Congregation for Catholic Education. (1997). *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium.* Retrieved from

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_27041998_school20_00_en.html

Written as a “state of the union” for Catholic education at the time before the new millennium, the document from the Congregation for Catholic Education highlights the exiting concerns and challenges of Catholic education, the first and foremost as a crisis of values, especially in the prevalence of moral relativism, subjectivism, and nihilism.² Society has turned away from the Christian faith as a “reference point” and “source of light for an effective and convincing interpretation of existence” (#1). Stressing the importance of the Catholic school as a place for courageous renewal with its evangelizing mission, pastoral care for the family and society, and shared responsibility for the “social and cultural development of the different communities and people to which it belongs” (#5), Catholic schools are called to impart a “solid Christian formation” (#8), to offer technical and scientific skills, and above all to focus on the “development of the whole man” (#9).

The document briefly but succinctly mentions the cultural identity of the Catholic school.

From the nature of the Catholic school also stems one of the most significant elements of its educational project: the synthesis between culture and faith. Indeed, knowledge set in the context of faith becomes wisdom and life vision. The endeavor to interweave reason and faith, which has become the heart of individual subjects, makes for unity, articulation and coordination, bringing forth within what is learned in school a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and of history. In a Catholic school’s educational project there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom...All of this demands an atmosphere characterized by the search for truth, in which competent, convinced and coherent educators, teachers of learning and of life, may be a reflection, albeit imperfect but still vivid, of the one Teacher. In this perspective, in the Christian educational project all subjects collaborate, each with its own specific content, to the formation of mature personalities. (#14)

Catholic education’s role in service to society and the local community is discussed with the special role of teachers and their role in students development, “for the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings” (#19).

National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2005). *National directory for catechesis.* Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

While not a Catholic school document, per se, the directory for catechesis from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops insists on the role of the Catholic school as a center for evangelization and catechesis, stating “its catechetical program is essential to its distinctly Catholic identity and character” (p.231). It includes an important section on the hiring of the Catholic school principal (Section 9a) as well as the role

Catholic schoolteachers play as models and witness of the faith as they act to form students in what it means to live life as a Christian.

All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry. 'All members of the faculty, at least by their example, are an integral part of the process of religious education... Teachers' life style and character are as important as their professional credentials'. Their daily witness to the meaning of mature faith and Christian living has a profound effect on the education and formation of their students (p. 233).

This witness is so important, the directory goes on to say, "While some situations might entail compelling reasons for members of another faith tradition to teach in a Catholic school, as much as possible, all teachers in a Catholic school should be practicing Catholics" (p. 233).

Section 61.4b states that religion programs in Catholic schools should be in harmony with the catechetical efforts of local parishes and diocesan catechetical priorities and that Catholic schools should be affordable, accessible, and open to all.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2005). *Renewing our commitment to Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the third millennium*. Retrieved from <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catholic-education/upload/renewing-our-commitment-2005.pdf>

This document was developed by the Committee on Education of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to reaffirm commitment to Catholic education and its fourfold purposes of "providing an atmosphere in which the Gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated" (par. 2). The document reiterates the value of Catholic education, citing some of the previous documents released by the Sacred Congregation of Catholic Education, and discusses the importance of Catholic schools especially for the economically poor and minority students in inner-city environments. The document addresses the changing demographics of the Church in America, citing the increase in the Hispanic/Latino population and the need to find and properly train lay administrators for positions in the Catholic school environment, develop new models for economic sustainability of schools, and continue advocacy of Catholic schools in the public policy arena. It recommends meetings across the country to address "critical issues of Catholic identity, cultural diversity, finances, just wages and benefits, academic quality—especially in the area of religious education—alternative governance models, and the marketing of our Catholic schools."

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2007). *Educating together in Catholic schools: A shared mission between consecrated persons and the lay faithful*. Retrieved from

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20070908_educare-insieme_en.html

This document from the Congregation for Catholic Education “considers the pastoral aspects regarding cooperation between lay and consecrated persons within the same educational mission. In it, the choice of the lay faithful to live their educational commitment as ‘a personal vocation in the Church, and not simply as... the exercise of a profession’” (#6). Catholic education is discussed from the perspective of communion, defined as union both with God and neighbor. Aspects of communion are further described, and importance is placed upon the Catholic educator as being a person living *in* communion, with a spirituality *of* communion, and living *for* communion with Christ and with others.

As “a consecrated person is called to testify his or her specific vocation to a life of communion in love so as to be in the scholastic community a sign, a memorial and a prophecy of the values of the Gospel, so too a lay educator is required to exercise ‘a specific mission within the Church by living, in faith, a secular vocation in the communitarian structure of the school’” (#15).

Sufficient detail is given to the professional and spiritual formation of those working in Catholic schools. All should continually update methodologies and knowledge of culture, psychology, and pedagogical approaches. Catholic educators must possess a “sensitivity with regard to the person to be educated in order to grasp not only the request for growth in knowledge and skills, but also the need for growth in humanity” (#24).

For this reason, Catholic educators need “a ‘formation of the heart’: they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others”, so that their educational commitment becomes “a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love (cf. Gal 5:6)”. In fact, even “care for instruction means loving” (Wis 6:17). It is only in this way that they can make their teaching a school of faith, that is to say, a transmission of the Gospel, as required by the educational project of the Catholic school (#25).

Communion not only includes collaboration among colleagues, but also with parents, the local community, and the entire Church.

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2013). *Educating to intercultural dialogue in Catholic schools: Living in harmony for a civilization of love*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20131028_dialogo-interculturale_en.html

Primarily aimed at parents, teachers, and other personnel in Catholic schools, this document from the Congregation for Catholic Education addresses what it sees as a central challenge of education—the acceptance of various cultural expressions among all peoples and the necessity to overcome prejudices and build harmony among

cultures without losing one's own identity and pedagogical vision. Culture is defined as the "particular expression of human beings, their specific way of being and organizing their presence in the world" (Ch. 1, #1). While dialogue and clarity regarding the understanding of other religions is discussed, it is done so with "faithfulness to one's own Christian identity" (#16). Catholic schools, as institutions of evangelization and enculturation, are seen as places where this intercultural dialogue should take place. In order for this dialogue to be effective, it must be "set-out from a deep-seated knowledge of the specific identity of the various dialogue partners. From this point of view, diversity ceases to be seen as a problem. Instead, a community characterized by pluralism is seen as a resource, a chance for opening up the whole system to all differences of origin, relationship between men and women, social status and educational history" (#27). Culture is discussed from a theological, anthropological, and pedagogical perspective before focus is placed practical applications of the transmission of culture in Catholic schools. "The contribution that Catholicism can make to education and to intercultural dialogue is in their reference to the centrality of the human person, who has his or her constitutive element in relationships with others. Catholic schools have in Jesus Christ the basis of their anthropological and pedagogical paradigm..." (#57).

Of importance to Catholic educators and administrators are the sections titled, "The curriculum as the expression of the school's identity" (#64-69) and the sections directed toward the formation and profession of teachers and administrators (#76-86). A Catholic school's programs "can be harmonized with the school's original mission" (#65), and their curricula should "place on centre-stage both individuals and their search for meaning. This is the reference value, in view of which the various academic disciplines are important resources... From this perspective, what is taught is not neutral, and neither is the way of teaching it" (#65).

Catholic schools are encouraged to promote a wisdom-based society, to go beyond knowledge and educate people to think, evaluating facts in the light of values... In teaching the various academic disciplines, teachers share and promote a methodological viewpoint in which the various branches of knowledge are dynamically correlated, in a wisdom perspective. The epistemological framework of every branch of knowledge has its own identity, both in content and methodology. However, this framework does not relate merely to 'internal' questions, touching upon the correct realization of each discipline. Each discipline is not an island inhabited by a form of knowledge that is distinct and ring-fenced; rather, it is in a dynamic relationship with all other forms of knowledge, each of which expresses something about the human person and touches upon some truth. (#66-67) Moreover, it must be pointed out that teaching the Catholic religion in schools has its own aims, different from those of catechesis. In fact, while catechesis promotes personal adherence to Christ and maturing of the Christian life, school teaching gives the students knowledge about Christianity's identity and the Christian life. Thus, one aims 'to enlarge the area of our rationality, to reopen it to the larger questions of the truth and the good, to link theology, philosophy and science between them in full respect for the methods proper to them and for their reciprocal autonomy, but also in the awareness of the intrinsic unity that holds them together.' (#74)

The formation of Catholic school teachers and administrators is discussed as not simply an initial formation, but an initiation into an on-going, professional learning community of scholars who collaborate with each other and integrate their ideas and faith into the subjects they teach. Their camaraderie goes beyond the classroom to a personal level and their responsibilities as teachers does not end when the final bell rings, for “Good teachers know that their responsibilities do not end outside the classroom or school. They know that their responsibilities are also connected with their local area, and are demonstrated by their understanding for today’s social problems...teachers must be able to provide their students with the cultural tools necessary for giving direction to their lives” (#83).

In its conclusion, the document states Catholic schools are to “avoid both fundamentalism and ideas of relativism where everything is the same. Instead, they are encouraged to progress in harmony with the identity they have received from their Gospel inspiration.”

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2015). *Educating today and tomorrow: A renewing passion*. Retrieved from

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20140407_educare-oggi-e-domani_en.html

This post-synodal document from the Congregation for Catholic Education focuses on the need for Catholic education to “convey vital values and principles to younger generations” and to “contribute to building the common good” (Introduction). Both the context and approach of teaching in a Catholic school are described. The context is the collaborative, unified learning and teaching environment where care and concern is exhibited between teachers and students; where a wealth of opportunities exist for students to thrive and develop their talents; where the cognitive, affective, social, professional, ethical and spiritual dimensions of the person are all addressed; and where ideas are respected, dialogue is free-flowing, and a rigorous commitment towards truth is found. The approach to teaching and learning engages one in the pursuit of knowledge and research where “Engagement in knowledge and research cannot be separated from a sense of ethics and transcendence: no real science can disregard ethical consequences and no real science drives us away from transcendence. Science and ethics, science and transcendence are not mutually exclusive, but come together for a greater and better understanding of man and the world” (II, #2). The pedagogy of teaching includes the centrality of the learner within a relationship where teachers are trained and prepared to guide and accompany students toward deeper learning and challenging goals.

Challenges of Catholic education are to “make young people realize the beauty of faith in Jesus Christ and of religious freedom in a multireligious universe. In every environment, whether it is favorable or not, Catholic educators will have to be credible witnesses” (III). The educational vision for Catholic education must sit within a “philosophical anthropology that must also be an anthropology of truth, i.e., a social anthropology whereby man is seen in his relations and way of being; an anthropology of

recollection and promise; an anthropology that refers to the cosmos and cares about sustainable development; and, even more, an anthropology that refers to God” (III).

Education is not just knowledge, but also experience: it links together knowledge and action; it works to achieve unity amongst different forms of knowledge and pursues consistency. It encompasses the affective and emotional domains, and is also endowed with an ethical dimension: knowing how to do things and what we want to do, daring to change society and the world, and serving the community. Education is based on participation, shared intelligence and intelligence interdependence; dialogue, self-giving, example, cooperation and reciprocity are also equally important elements (III).

Challenges to Catholic schools include an increased hostility toward private, religious education by local and national governments.

The document addresses Catholic higher education and its challenges and then concludes with a quote from Pope Francis to educators (below) and a questionnaire.

Do not be disheartened in the face of the difficulties that the educational challenge presents. Educating is not a profession but an attitude, a way of being; in order to educate it is necessary to step out of ourselves and be among young people, to accompany them in the stages of their growth and to set ourselves beside them; Give them hope and optimism for their journey in the world. Teach them to see the beauty and goodness of creation and of man who always retains the Creator’s hallmark. But above all with your life be witnesses of what you communicate (Conclusion).

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2017). *Educating to fraternal humanism: Building a “civilization of love” fifty years after Populorum progressio*. Retrieved from

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20170416_educare-umanesimo-solidale_en.html

This Instruction is another follow-up on the 2015 World Congress *Educating today and tomorrow: A renewing passion* (29) as well as the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the social encyclical, *Populorum progressio*. Divided into seven sections, it presents the current state of global affairs as one filled with multiple crises in economic, financial, political, environmental, and social fields. It proposes a “joint development of civic opportunities with an educational plan” (6) to promote cooperation and solidarity in the world instead of marginalization.

Section two provides the document’s thesis that “education should be at the service of a new humanism,” and that education itself needs to be humanized through

...a process in which each person can develop his or her own deep-rooted attitudes and vocation, and thus contribute to his or her vocation within the community. ‘Humanizing education’ means putting the person at the centre of education, in a framework of relationships that make up a living community,

which is interdependent and bound to a common destiny. This is fraternal humanism. (8)

Fraternal humanism includes respect for the family as the “first natural society” and a methodology that

does not just provide an educational service, but deals with its results in the overall context of the personal, moral and social abilities of those who participate in the educational process. It does not simply ask the teacher to teach and students to learn, but urges everyone to live, study and act in accordance with the reasons of fraternal humanism. It does not aim to create division and divergence, but rather offers places for meeting and discussion to create valid educational projects. It is an education – at the same time – that is sound and open, that pulls down the walls of exclusivity, promoting the richness and diversity of individual talents and extending the classroom to embrace every corner of social experience in which education can generate solidarity, sharing and communion. (10)

Section three leans heavily on the use of the “grammar of dialogue” (12) to build networks of fraternal humanism which “ha[ve] the weighty responsibility of providing a formation of citizens” (14) who will work with positive ethical values in the public sphere (13). Section four states that “the education to fraternal humanism must start from the certainty of the message of hope contained in the truth of Jesus Christ” (17) and that this is the job of education, to make connections that offer hope to the world. Section five moves toward inclusion of all peoples, not just education for the future and the needs of citizens in that world but establishing a relationship with a community’s past generations. Section six discusses cooperative networks among faculty, schools, universities, research groups, and content areas for the collaboration and sharing of knowledge and services. The last section sums up the “themes and horizons” (31) just explored as a “culture of dialogue, globalizing hope, inclusion and cooperation networks” (31) and encourages everyone to use these tools to engage civic society.

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2019). *Male and female he created them: Towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender theory in education.* Retrieved from

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20190202_maschio-e-femmina_en.pdf

This document is specifically in response to the push of ‘gender ideology,’ which “leads to educational programmes and legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female” (2). It states that discussion of gender should not be separated from a larger discussion of an “education in the call to love” and the presentation of a “clear and convincing” (30) Christian vision of anthropology. The document warns that traditional notions of marriage and the family are abandoned if gender ideology is accepted (14, 21). The document recommends a process of ‘Listening’ to all sides of the issue to find points of agreement and disagreement, ‘Reasoning’ through rational

arguments from biology/physiology/medical science, philosophy, psychology, and theology and 'Proposing' acceptable ways for Catholic schools to address the issue. It encourages schools to provide solid teaching in Christian anthropology and human sexuality in conjunction with the family (subsidiarity) and with carefully prepared teachers (47) formed in the moral teachings of the Church and human psychological and physical development (46). The document highlights the importance of all those working in Catholic education, not just teachers, in the Christian formation of students.

School managers, teaching staff and personnel all share the responsibility of both guaranteeing delivery of a high-quality service coherent with the Christian principles that lie at the heart of their educational project, as well as interpreting the challenges of their time while giving daily witness of their understanding, objectivity and prudence. (48)

The document's preferred "path of dialogue, which involves listening, reasoning and proposing" is put forward as a means of addressing the issue of gender theory in order to bring "positive transformation of concerns and misunderstandings" (52). Schools are to provide a "way of accompanying" (56) that is "discrete and confidential, capable of reaching out to those who are experiencing complex and painful situations" (56).

Every school should therefore make sure it is an environment of trust, calmness and openness, particularly where there are cases that require time and careful discernment. It is essential that the right conditions are created to provide a patient and understanding ear, far removed from any unjust discrimination. (56)

Congregation for Catholic Education. (2022). *The identity of the Catholic school for a culture of dialogue*. Retrieved from

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20220125_istruzione-identita-scuola-cattolica_en.html

This Instruction is a follow-up on the 2015 World Congress *Educating today and tomorrow: A renewing passion*. It addresses the need for a "clearer awareness and consistency of the Catholic identity of the Church's educational institutions all over the world" (1). It is written as a "concise and practical tool" to "help clarify certain current issues" and to "prevent conflicts and divisions in the critical area of education" (7). The document addresses Catholic identity from four points: the reductive, the formal, the charismatic, and the narrow; The document encourages Catholic schools to be in "the educational sphere the model of a 'Church which goes forth', in dialogue with everyone" (68-72). It emphasizes that everyone in a Catholic school is important to the establishment of the school's Catholic identity. It details safeguards for teachers to know the mission and catholicity of the school prior to employment. It suggests the development of self-assessments and formation programs detailing expectations of those working in Catholic education. A very specific section on the Bishop's authority over Catholic schools and the recourse to both civil and canon law available to solve conflicts is emphasized as are the processes of dialogue, subsidiarity, graduality, and proportionality when handling these conflicts.

1. A public or private school with an educational philosophy compatible with Catholic schools (#47). Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1982). *Lay Catholics in schools: Witnesses to faith*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19821015_lay-catholics_en.html
2. "The belief that traditional morals, ideas, beliefs, etc., have no worth or value; a doctrine that denies any objective ground of truth and especially of moral truths. *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

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