

**Pastoral Letter
On Catholic Education
In the Territories of
The Antilles Episcopal Conference**

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Introduction

1. The contribution of the Catholic Church to the development of the peoples of the Caribbean region over the last 250 years through its educational enterprise is no secret. These efforts have been affirmed by the Holy See throughout, but especially in its watershed period of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

2. Almost fifty-five (55) years after the promulgation of its Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum Educationis*, (28 October 1965) and later the Post Conciliar Documents on Catholic Schools, (*S.C.C.E. Malgré les déclarations* June 24, 1977), new challenges face the Church and its educational mission to the world. While we look with pride to the many successes and achievements of our Catholic schools, the entire Catholic community must now focus on the future and the many challenges we face.

3. Therefore, we, the Bishops of the Antilles, with the cooperation of diocesan school and community leadership, see the need to pursue effective responses to those challenges if we are to adequately fulfill our responsibility to the people we serve. We must then move forward with confidence, courage and zeal since we place great value on the Catholic schools and Catholic education in the future development of our region.

Some Challenges faced by Catholic Schools in the 21st Century

4. In the document: *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, The Congregation for Catholic Education, states:

On the threshold of the third millennium education faces new challenges which are the result of a new socio-political and cultural context. First and foremost, we have a *crisis of values* which, in highly developed

societies in particular, assumes the form, often exalted by the media, of subjectivism, moral relativism and nihilism. The **extreme pluralism** pervading contemporary society leads to behavior patterns which are at times so opposed to one another as to undermine any idea of community identity. **Rapid structural changes**, profound technical innovations and the globalization of the economy affect human life more and more throughout the world. Rather than prospects of development for all, we witness a widening of the gap between rich and poor, as well as massive migration from underdeveloped to highly-developed countries. The phenomena of **multiculturalism** and an increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is at the same time an enrichment and a source of further problems.¹

5. While the foregoing paints a picture of the global situation, it is also testimony to the fact that the socio-political and socio-cultural challenges in one region impact those of others; and the Caribbean region is not exempt. The **globalized nature** of human existence in this 21st Century brings its share of effects on the local Caribbean situation. Clear examples of these effects include:

- the scope of educational function has broadened, becoming more complex; more specialized;
- the sciences of education, which concentrated in the past on the study of the child and teacher-training, have been widened to include the various stages of life, and the different spheres of situation beyond the school;
- that new requirements have given force to the demand for new contents, new capabilities and new educational models besides those followed

¹ Congregation for Catholic Education (for Seminaries and Educational Institutions), *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Rome, 28th December 1997,1. (emphasis added)

traditionally. Thus education and schooling becomes particularly difficult today.²

6. The Congregation for Catholic Education goes on to describe the school as “a sensitive meeting point for the problems which besiege this restless end of the millennium. The Catholic school is thus confronted with children and young people who experience the difficulties of the present time; pupils who shun effort, are incapable of self-sacrifice and perseverance and who lack authentic models to guide them, often even in their own families. In an increasing number of instances they are not only indifferent and non-practicing, but also totally lacking in religious or moral formation. To this we must add – on the part of numerous pupils and families – a profound apathy where ethical and religious formation is concerned, to the extent that what is in fact sought of the Catholic school is a certificate of studies or, at the most, quality instruction and training for employment.”³

7. Such an outlook calls for courageous renewal on the part of the Catholic School. The precious heritage of the experience gained over the centuries reveals its vitality precisely in the capacity for prudent innovation. And so, now, as in the past, we must be able to speak effectively and convincingly, as we realize, “it is not merely a question of adaptation, but of missionary thrust, the fundamental duty to evangelize, to go towards men and women wherever they are, so that they may receive the gift of salvation.”⁴

From Religious to Lay Leadership

8. In no small measure the dwindling in the number of religious and priests in the present school system has changed and is still changing the perception of Catholic education. In the past forty years, not only in the Caribbean but in most of the

² Cf. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 2.

³ *Ibid.*, 6

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

developed and developing world, the number of religious vocations has plunged. Since Vatican II, Catholic schools have shown a steady decline in the number of religious and priests who are administrators and teachers, and an increase in the number of lay persons who fill those positions.⁵

9. For generations religious women provided the backbone of many parochial schools in the Caribbean, contributing to their establishment and allowing them to flourish by their generous and sacrificial apostolate. In its documents, the Holy See frequently extols the specific contribution made by religious to the Church's educational apostolate:

Because of their special consecration, their particular experience of the gifts of the Spirit, their constant listening to the word of God, their practice of discernment, their rich heritage of pedagogical tradition built up since the establishment of their Institute, and their profound grasp of spiritual truth [Eph.2:17], consecrated persons are able to be especially effective in educational activities and to offer a specific contribution to the work of other educators.⁶

10. Undoubtedly, for years, the presence of religious in most Catholic Schools, both primary and secondary, served as a built-in guarantee of their Catholic identity, which parents and pastors took for granted. The shift to lay leadership in Catholic schools, which has followed from the dearth of religious, presents its own set of challenges.⁷ To this reality the Congregation states:

⁵ Kenneth C. Jones, *Index of Leading Catholic Indicators: The Church Since Vatican II* (St. Louis: Oriens Publishing Company, 2003), 36; Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, (Solidarity Association, Atlanta, Georgia, 2006), 3

⁶ John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata*, 96; cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and Their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, 29; *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 4.

⁷ *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 4.

In the life of the Church, the Catholic school is recognized above all as an expression of those Religious Institutes which, according to their proper charism or specific apostolate, have dedicated themselves generously to education. ... We should remember that the presence of consecrated religious within the educating community is indispensable, since consecrated persons are able to be especially effective in educational activities; they are an example of the unreserved and gratuitous “gift” of self to the services of others in the spirit of their religious consecration. The presence of men and women religious, side by side with priests and lay teachers, affords pupils a vivid image of the Church and makes recognition of its riches easier.⁸

11. This is not to suggest that the members of the laity are somehow second-best as Catholic educators. Still, theirs is a new responsibility and presents a new opportunity for the Church, one full of promise and hope. They, too, have a “supernatural vocation”⁹ as educators.¹⁰ To be effective bearers of the Church’s education tradition, however, laypersons who teach in Catholic schools need a “religious formation that is equal to their general, cultural, and, most especially, professional formation.”¹¹

12. It has been noted that the religious bring to their educational apostolate the charism of a particular religious institute, with all that it involves in terms of a specific spirituality and approach to pedagogy. This is no doubt very commendable. But more important than handing on elements of a particular charism to certain members of the laity is the safeguarding and promoting of the schools’ Catholic ethos.¹² In

⁸ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 42.

⁹ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith*, 13

¹⁰ *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 5.

¹¹ *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith*, 60.

¹² Cf. *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 6.

light of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that “lay people have their own proper competence in the building up of the Church,”¹³ men and women, precisely as members of the lay faithful, have their own charism of teaching, independent of the charism of particular religious congregations.

The Challenge of Vocation Promotion

13. Implicit to the foregoing situation is the challenge and the responsibility for vocation promotion in Catholic schools through Catholic education. As Church we have the charge to re-invigorate the Catholic ethos by helping those entrusted to our care to choose the vocation that is best suited for them. Guided by the assertion that God is constantly calling persons to commit their lives to selfless service as religious and priests, the Catholic Schools have a responsibility to create the intellectual, social, moral and spiritual environment that would be conducive to their cultivation. This truth is affirmed by Pope John Paul II, in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, when he says: "Hence the urgent need that the Church's pastoral work in promoting vocations be aimed decisively and primarily towards restoring a "Christian mentality," one built on faith and sustained by it."¹⁴

14. The Holy Father further affirms that "the first responsibility for the pastoral work of promoting (priestly) vocations lies with the bishop who is called to be the first to exercise this responsibility even though he can and must call upon many others to cooperate with him."¹⁵ Among the others mentioned are the presbyterate and the Christian family. However, he goes on to stress that "Following upon and in harmony with the work of parents and the family, the school is also called to live its identity as an "educating community" by providing a correct

¹³ Second Vatican Council, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 25; *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 6.

¹⁴ Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992, 37.

¹⁵ Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992, 41

understanding of the dimension of vocation as an innate and fundamental value of the human person. In this sense, if it is endowed with a Christian spirit (either by a significant presence of members of the Church in state schools, ... or above all in the case of the Catholic school), it can infuse "in the hearts of boys and young men a desire to do God's will in that state in life which is most suitable to each person ..."16 Further emphasis is made when he makes it clear that "The lay faithful also, and particularly catechists, teachers, educators and youth ministers, each with their own resources and styles, have great importance in the pastoral work of promoting (priestly) vocations."17

15. With similar sentiments Pope Paul VI, in his Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, stated that "Priests and Christian educators should make serious efforts to foster religious vocations, thereby increasing the strength of the Church, corresponding to its needs ... In ordinary preaching, the life of the evangelical counsels and the religious state should be treated more frequently. Parents, too, should nurture and protect religious vocations in their children by instilling Christian virtue in their hearts."18

Inter-Faith Realities

16. While the ethos of its schools with regard to education is Catholic, her mission is to all. In light of the increasing demand by non-Catholics, both teachers and students, seeking placement in the Catholic school system, it is necessary for us to review our own self-understanding as regards our role in face of that reality. Therefore, the Congregation for Catholic Education reminds us:

¹⁶ Ibid. 41.

¹⁷ Ibid. 41.

¹⁸ Pope Paul VI, in his Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, 1965, §24.

The Catholic school cannot be considered separate from other educational institutions and administered as an entity apart, but must be related to the world of politics, economy, culture and society as a whole. For her part the Catholic school must be firmly resolved to take the new cultural situation in her stride. ... It fulfills a service of public usefulness and, although clearly and decidedly configured in the perspective of the Catholic faith, is not reserved to Catholics only, but is open to all those who appreciate and share its qualified educational project. This dimension of openness becomes particularly evident in countries in which Christians are not the majority or developing countries, where Catholic schools have always promoted civil progress and human development without discrimination of any kind. Catholic Schools, moreover, like state schools, fulfill a public role, for their presence guarantees cultural and educational pluralism and, above all, the freedom and right of families to see that their children receive the sort of education they wish for them.¹⁹

Relationships to the State

17. In order to fulfill its mission the Catholic school has to work with the civil authorities in the context in which it is established. The Holy See is clear as to the kind of relationship that ought to be maintained when it says:

The Catholic school ... undertakes a cordial and constructive dialogue with state and civil authorities. Such dialogue and collaboration must be based on mutual respect, on the reciprocal recognition of each other's role and on a common service to mankind. To achieve this end, the Catholic school willingly occupies its place within the school system of the different

¹⁹ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 16.

countries and in the legislation of the individual states, when the latter respects the fundamental rights of the human person, starting with respect for life and religious freedom. A correct relationship between state and school, not only a Catholic school, is based not so much on institutional relations as on the rights of each person to receive a suitable education of their free choice. This right is acknowledged according to the principle of subsidiarity. For “The public authority, therefore, whose duty it is to protect and defend the liberty of the citizens, is bound according to the principle of distributive justice to ensure that public subsidies are so allocated that parents are truly free to select schools for their children in accordance with their conscience.”²⁰

18. The Church’s clear teaching affirms that the parents are the first educators of their children. Parents have the original, primary, and inalienable right to educate their offspring in conformity with the family’s moral and religious convictions.²¹ They are educators because they are parents. At the same time, the vast majority of parents share their educational responsibilities with other individuals and institutions, primarily the school. Elementary education is, then, “an extension of parental education; it is extended and cooperative home schooling.”²²

19. In a true sense schools are extensions of the home. Parents – and not schools, either of the state or the Church – have the

²⁰ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 17; *Gravissimum Educationis*, 6; cf. *Code of Canon Law*, canon 793 § 2.

²¹ *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 9; Cf. *Gravissimum Educationis*, 3,6; John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 36; *Lay Catholics in Schools*, 12; Pontifical Council for the family, *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (22 October 1983), 1-3; *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 793; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2229; John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 16; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2005), n. 239.

²² *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 9; Peter Redpath, forward in Curtis L. Hancock, *Recovering a Catholic Philosophy of Education* (Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania: Newtown House Press, 2005), 19.

primary moral responsibility of educating children to adulthood. Like a good Mother, the Church offers help to families by establishing Catholic schools that ensure the integral formation of their children.²³

20. In keeping with a basic tenet of Catholic social doctrine, the principle of subsidiarity must always govern relations among families, the Church, and the state. As Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1994 *Letter to Families*:

Subsidiarity thus complements parental and maternal love and confirms its fundamental nature, inasmuch as all other participants in the process of education are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of parents, with their consent, and, to a certain degree, with their authorization.²⁴

21. For subsidiarity to be effective, families must enjoy true liberty in deciding how their children are to be educated. This means that “in principle, a state monopoly of education is not permissible, and that only a pluralism of school systems will respect the fundamental right and the freedom of individuals – although the exercise of this right may be conditioned by a multiplicity of factors, according to the social realities of each country.”²⁵

Right to Government Financial Assistance

²³ *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 9-10; Cf, *Code of Canon Law*, canon 796; *The Catholic School*, 8.

²⁴ *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 10; John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 16; cf. Benedict XVI, Angelus Address (28 October 2005): *L’Osservatore Romano*, English-Language edition (2 November 2005), 1: “Parents are the primary and principal educators and are assisted by civil society in accordance with the principal of subsidiarity (cf. *Gravissimum Educationis*, 3).”

²⁵ *The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools*, 10-11; *Lay Catholics in Schools*, 14; cf. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 16.

22. The Church's teaching authority has frequently addressed the right of parents to government assistance in fulfilling their obligation to educate their children. The *Compendium of The Social Doctrine of the Church* (2005) states that "the refusal to provide public economic support to non-public schools that need assistance and that render a service to civil society is to be considered an injustice."²⁶ Furthermore, "the state is obliged to provide such public subsidies because of the enormous contribution that Catholic Schools make to society by serving the common good."²⁷

23. Unfortunately many Catholics fail to appreciate that they have a right to subsidies for their schools because these institutions provide a service to society. Furthermore, it is also the responsibility of the State to ensure quality education for its citizens. In no way would such assistance compromise the separation of Church and state. Rather, it guarantees the fundamental right of parents to choose a school for their children. We share John Paul II's earnest hope that in all democratic countries "concrete steps finally be taken to implement true equality for non-state schools and that it be at the same time respectful of their educational project."²⁸

24. In many of the territories of the Antilles region governments exercise that duty by undertaking the full or partial payment of salaries to the schools' faculties or providing a subvention to assist in the running of the schools. For this the Catholic Church in the region is grateful. No doubt more can be done. In other territories parents remain with a heavy financial burden in an attempt to give to their children a Catholic education.

²⁶ *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*,12; *Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 241.

²⁷ *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*,12; Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, canon 797; Jason Boffetti, *All Schools Are Public Schools: A Case for State Aid to Private Education and Homeschooling Parents* (Washington, DC; Faith and Reason Institute, 2001).

²⁸ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*,17; John Paul II, *Letter to the Superior General of the Piarist*, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 28 June 1997, 5.

The Question of Tertiary Education

25. It is evident that most of Catholic education in the Caribbean focuses on the primary and secondary levels. However, the few tertiary level institutions include the Regional Seminary of St. John Vianney and the Uganda Martyrs in Trinidad, for the formation of the future clergy of the region and lay people for ministry, the School of Continuing Education (a three-year summer programme for the formation of the laity), the St. Michael's Theological College in Jamaica for the formation of the laity and continuing formation of religious and clergy, the Catholic College of Mandeville, Jamaica, the St. Joseph Teachers' College in Kingston, Jamaica and Catholic Religious Education Development Institute (CREDI) with affiliations to the Universities of Dayton and Duquesne in the United States.

26. All of the above, except CREDI in Trinidad and the Catholic College of Mandeville in Jamaica offer studies in strictly theological/pastoral disciplines. There are calls from the Caribbean populace for the establishment of university level education to form the Catholic minds of the future in the varied human and social disciplines. It seems like an expression of a feeling of incompleteness for many of the people who enjoyed the benefits of Catholic education and were compelled to terminate it at the secondary level or a deprivation for persons who did not have such an opportunity in their formative years of an education that was integral. The major challenges we face in that regard are financial and personnel. However, a way forward needs to be sought.

Agenda for Catholic Education in the 21st Century

27. The Antilles Episcopal Conference, therefore, proposes the following agenda for Catholic Education in the region:

- a) Reaffirm the Role of the Catholic School in the New Evangelization; that is: “to announce the gospel in such a fashion as to assure the relationship between faith and life in the individual person and in the socio-cultural setting in which people live, act, and interrelate. Thus it strives to transform ‘through the power of the Gospel, mankind’s criteria of judgment, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation.’”²⁹ These are perfect ingredients for excellence in education.
- b) In light of the fact that more than ninety-five percent of our current school administrators and teachers are members of the laity, we have to adjust to the present reality. Catholic school personnel should be grounded in a faith-based Catholic culture, and be witness to the faith in both words and actions. The formation of personnel will allow the Gospel message and the living presence of Jesus to penetrate the entire life of the school community and thus be faithful to the school’s evangelizing mission. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of school personnel who are not Catholic, but who support and cooperate in accomplishing the mission of the Catholic school.
- c) Ongoing faith formation and professional development programmes must also be available so that administrators and teachers in Catholic schools can continue to grow in the ministry of education. These programmes will introduce new and effective initiatives, educational models, and approaches, while always maintaining a sound Catholic identity in our schools.
- d) We need to intensify our efforts to maintain and develop the cordial relationships with the civil authorities, at the same time helping them to understand their role in relation

²⁹ EN 19; Aparecida § 331.

to Catholic schools. Quoting the Catholic Bishops of the United States in the 1995 statements: *Principles for Educational Reform in the United States*, when they affirmed that “government at all levels, acting in partnership with parents, has a responsibility to provide adequate professional and material resources to assist all children attain a quality of education.”³⁰

- e) Develop programmes to assist Parish Priests, clergy, seminarians and laity to understand, appreciate, support, and promote the critical value of our Catholic schools in fulfilling the teaching ministry of the Church. This is particularly important in promoting the idea that the successful running of the Catholic school is a shared enterprise.

- f) At its meeting in Grenada in November 1972 on the theme *Education for Development*, the Bishops of the Antilles Conference stated: “The progress of Caribbean peoples demands a wider training in technical and vocational skills and children should be taught to value the dignity of these vocations no less than that of academic pursuits. We appreciate the existing efforts to achieve this and we urge the introduction where possible of technical, domestic, and agricultural training into schools. Teachers of these subjects should be selected with care and rewarded as are our academics. We shall need to re-educate the whole community to the value and dignity of manual skills since it is from the public attitude to manual work that the parents will derive the judgments which will influence the minds of their children.”³¹ This statement by the bishops is still pertinent today.

³⁰ A Statement of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary & Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, 2005, 12.

³¹ AEC Bishops, *Some Reflections and Recommendations on Resolutions of “The Ecumenical Consultation for Development, Trinidad 1971”*: *Education and Development*, Grenada, November 1972.

- g) Given the demand for tertiary education in the region, serious steps need to be taken within the structure of the Catholic education system to include in the immediate vision of the Catholic Church, the establishment of such institutions to meet the needs of its people.

Conclusion

28. The challenges highlighted in the foregoing exposition as regards the Catholic schools and Catholic Education are seen against the reality of the mission entrusted to the Church; that is, “the holistic development of each student for responsible citizenship, motivated by the Spirit of the Gospel, and modeled on the example of Jesus Christ.” It is clear that it is not a mission in isolation, as would be a particular project to be achieved. It is rather the inculcation of a way of life; a posture towards the world in which human beings exist, with the distinct aim of bringing about its renewal. It is evident also in the foregoing that this mission cannot be achieved single-handedly by any person or any single group of persons. It requires the collaboration of all, albeit with different functions, religious, laity, government and other civil authorities; all working collaboratively without losing the Catholic identity of our institutions.

APPENDIX

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

In the Territories of the Antilles Episcopal Conference

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Introduction

1. Cognizant of the new challenges posed by the pluralistic nature of the new millennium, the negative influences of secularism and the effect of a globalized culture on the religious ethos of our Schools in the Caribbean, the Bishops of the Antilles deem it necessary to reaffirm the philosophy by which the Catholic Schools are to function in their attempt to impart the quality of education which they feel called to convey to the people of the region. Therefore we propose to do so as briefly and as clearly as possible according to the mind of the Universal Church.

The Catholic School Shares in the Mission of the Church

2. All those involved in Catholic education are called to build communities of faith and holiness. In partnership with the family and the parish, the Catholic School participates in the saving mission of the Church. By evangelization, catechesis and works of service, the Catholic school builds up both the family of faith and the human community. The school is called to become primarily a privileged place of comprehensive formation and development, through the systematic and critical assimilation of one's culture, which it achieves through a living and vital encounter with the cultural legacy.

3. This means that such an encounter takes place in the school in an ongoing manner, that is, by confronting and inserting the perennial values into the contemporary context. Indeed, if culture is to be educational, it must be inserted into the problems of the time in which the young person's life unfolds. Thus, the different disciplines must be presented not only as knowledge to be acquired, but as values to be assimilated and truths to be discovered.

4. The Catholic school provides religious and moral reference points to help students critically examine the culture around them and build a society enlightened by the values of the Gospel:

- in a world that ignores the human thirst for God, it shares the Living Waters of Faith;
- in a time when there is little reverence for the image of God in the human person, it gives an unequivocal witness to the dignity of human life;
- in an age marked by relativism and a crisis of meaning, it evangelizes our culture's way of thinking, standards of judgment and norms of behaviour with the truth of the Gospel;
- in a culture in which communication and relationships are often reduced to utilitarian ends, it proclaims a life of communion with God and others;
- in a world disfigured by poverty, oppression and war, it promotes justice and peace;

- in a society marked by personality cults, it bears witness to Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, as the model for the fullest human life;
- in a time that often seems to be without goals and fearful of the future, it gives an account of the hope that is within us (cf. 1 Peter 3: 15).

Characteristics of Catholic Schools

5. We are in a position to affirm that in the educational project of the Catholic school, Christ, the Perfect Man, is the foundation in whom all human values encounter their full realization, and accordingly their unity. He reveals and promotes the new meaning of existence and transforms it, enabling man and woman to live divinely; that is, to think, desire, and act, according to the gospel, making the beatitudes the standard of their life.

6. Precisely because of the explicit reference to the Christian vision shared by all members of the school community—albeit in different degrees and respecting the freedom of conscience and religious freedom of non-Christians present there—education is “Catholic” because for it the gospel principles become educational norms, internal motivations, and at the same time, final goals. This is the specifically Catholic character of education; for Jesus Christ elevates and ennobles humans, gives value to their existence, and constitutes the perfect example of life. He is the best news, proposed to young people by Catholic schools.³²

7. Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic School.³³ His teaching and life inform the school’s identity and characteristics, which include:

- a belief in the inviolable dignity of every human person;

³² Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic Schools*, 1977, n. 34; Aparecida § 335.

³³ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic Schools*, 1977, n. 34.

- a sacramental sense that leads us to recognize God manifested by His creation;
- a recognition of God's sanctifying presence in Word and Sacrament;
- a love for encounter with God in prayer;
- a Gospel spirit of freedom and love;
- a spirituality of communion marked by mutual respect, accountability and caring;
- concern for justice leading to a critical analysis of society;
- a sense of solidarity with and commitment to the marginalized.

The Goal of Catholic Education

8. The goal that the Catholic school sets for itself is to lead children and youth to encounter the living Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, brother and friend, Master and merciful Shepherd, Hope, Way, Truth and Life, and thus to experience covenant with God and with human beings. It does so by aiding in building the personality of the students, having Christ as their reference point for mindset and life. As that reference point gradually becomes explicit and internalized, it will help them to see history as Christ sees it, to judge life as He does, to choose and live as He does, to cultivate hope as He teaches us, and to live in communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit in Him.

9. By the mysterious fruitfulness of this reference point, persons are built up in their existential unity, that is, they assume their responsibilities and seek the ultimate meaning of their life. Situated within the Church, the community of believers, with freedom, are able to live the faith intensely, proclaim it, and celebrate it joyfully in the reality of each day. As a consequence, the human attitudes that lead to sincerely being open to the truth, to respecting and loving people, to

expressing their own freedom in self-giving and in service to others to transform society, mature and become second nature.³⁴

10. The core elements of the Catholic faith thus provide a framework for Catholic Education:

a) *Teaching the whole person*

11. The Church “establishes her own schools because she considers them a privileged means of promoting the formation of the whole man, since the school is the center in which a specific concept of the world, of [humanity], and of history is developed and conveyed.”³⁵

12. Catholic education goes beyond the purely technical and practical aspects of schooling and aims at an integration of all knowledge within a vision of the world and of the human person. It focuses on the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual dimensions of human development, leading to a personal synthesis of faith and life of each student. Growth in all areas prepares students for a meaningful life of service as committed Christians, building the Kingdom of God in a pluralistic society.

b) *Education for all, especially the Poor*

13. In its schools the Church is called to promote an education centered on the human person who is capable of living in community, and making his or her contribution to its well being. Given the fact that many are excluded, the Church must press for quality formal and informal education for all, especially for the poorest. This means an education that brings children, youth, and adults into an encounter with the cultural values of their own country, discovering or integrating religious and transcendent dimensions into those values.

³⁴ Aparecida § 336.

³⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic Schools, 1977*, n. 8).

14. To that end, we need a dynamic pastoral ministry of education to accompany education processes, to be a voice legitimizing and safeguarding freedom of education vis-à-vis the state and the right to a quality education for the most dispossessed.³⁶

c) Faith Lived in Christian Community

15. The New Testament word for Christian Community is “koinonia”, which means a communion of life-sharing relationship with Christ and others. Living Christian community means living in relationship with Jesus, the Head of the Church, and the members of His Mystical Body. Communion with Christ and others leads to relationships characterized by mutual love, honest communication and commitment to serve each other’s needs, to rejoice together, to mourn together, and to delight in each other.

16. “A spirituality of communion indicates above all the heart’s contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling with us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the faces of the brothers and sisters around us.”³⁷ Catholic education is committed to developing communities of faith. Those involved in Catholic education are called to create a faith community in the school and to link it to the wider Church community.

d) Commitment to Justice and Compassion

17. Catholic education nourishes in students a relationship with Jesus that leads to awareness of those Christ loves, namely, all of humanity, and inspires a spirit of solidarity and service. Therefore, by the completion of secondary school the graduate of the Catholic school should have achieved considerable knowledge of the many needs of the local and

³⁶ Aparecida § 334.

³⁷ Pope John Paul II, *At the Beginning of the Third Millennium*, 2001, n. 43.

wider communities and be prepared for the day when he or she will take a place in these communities as a competent, concerned and responsible member.³⁸

18. The Catholic School seeks to achieve this by:
- 1) making its students more aware of selfish attitudes and tendencies which lead one to treat others unjustly;
 - 2) consciously seeking to be more understanding, accepting, and generous with others;
 - 3) learning to see that the Christian faith implies commitment to a just society;
 - 4) growing in an awareness of the global nature of many current social problems (human rights, energy, ecology, food, population, terrorism, arms limitations, etc.) and their impact on various communities;
 - 5) understanding the structural roots of injustice in social institutions, attitudes and customs; and
 - 6) recognizing the needs of some disadvantaged segments of the community through working with them in community service programmes and gaining some empathetic understanding for their conditions of living.³⁹

e) Seeking absolute ethical values in culture

19. It is a strict responsibility of the Catholic school, as an educational institution, to highlight the ethical and religious dimension of culture, precisely in order to activate the spiritual dynamism of the individual person and help him or her to attain the ethical freedom that presupposes and perfects psychological freedom. But ethical freedom occurs only in confrontation with the absolute values on which the meaning and value of the life of human beings depends.

³⁸ Cf. The Commission on Research and Development, *Profile of the Graduate of a Jesuit High School at Graduation*, (Section 8), 105.

³⁹ Cf. The Commission on Research and Development, *Profile of the Graduate of a Jesuit High School at Graduation*, (Section 8), 105.

20. Even in the realm of education there appears the tendency to accept the present as a parameter of values, thereby running the risk of responding to transitory and superficial values and of losing sight of the deeper exigencies of the contemporary world.⁴⁰ Education humanizes and personalizes human beings when they are thereby enabled to fully develop their thinking and freedom, bringing them to flourish in habits of comprehension and in initiatives of communion with the entire real order. Human beings thereby humanize their world, produce culture, transform society, and build history.⁴¹

f) Call to Renewal

21. Catholic schools are called to deep renewal. We must restore the Catholic identity of our schools through a courageous and bold missionary impulse, so that it becomes a prophetic option shaped in a pastoral practice of participatory education. Such projects must promote the comprehensive formation of persons, having their foundation in Christ, with ecclesial and cultural identity, and with academic excellence. They must also bring about solidarity and charity to the poorest. Oversight of educational processes, parent participation in them, and teacher training are priority tasks of the education ministry.⁴²

Parents and Educators

22. “Parents have a particularly important part to play in the educating community, since it is to them that the primary and natural responsibility for their children’s education belongs.”⁴³ The school exists to complement the work of parents as the first teachers of their children. Parents should be involved in the life of the school by participating in schools

⁴⁰ Catholic School, 1977, n. 30.

⁴¹ Puebla Documents, 1025; cf. Gaudium et Spes. 55; Aparecida § 330

⁴² Aparecida, § 337.

⁴³ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 1997, n. 20.

councils and committees and through regular collaboration with teachers.

Pastors

23. The priest is a necessary and integral member of the school community. He has a specific role and responsibility, particularly in the religious instruction given and in all matters that affect the Catholic character of the school. Pastors should promote Catholic education especially for those who are poor, those deprived of the benefits of family life and those weak in faith.

Staff as Living Witness

24. Catholic educators are called to do much more than share religious knowledge. “Professionalism is marked by, and raised to, a supernatural Christian vocation.”⁴⁴ It is the personal witness and holiness of the teacher that will have the greatest impact on the students. Catholic educators should model collaboration, love of the faith, communion with the Church and concern for the poor and marginalized. They must be committed to leading their students to encounter Jesus and develop a relationship with Him that expresses itself in witness and service.

Religious Formation in the Catholic School

25. “The special character of the Catholic school and the underlying reason for its existence, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the overall education of the students.”⁴⁵ This catechesis should be spiritual, liturgical, moral, sacramental and apostolic,⁴⁶ so that the student may

⁴⁴ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in School: Witness to the Faith*, 1982, n. 37.

⁴⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education: *The Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic Schools*, 1988, n. 66

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 69.

experience the transforming power of the Gospel in an integral way.

The Catholic School and New Evangelization

26. As the Catholic Bishops of the Antilles, we emphasize the Catholic school's central role at the beginning of the third millennium in the Church's work of evangelization, which must be new in ardor, method and expression.⁴⁷ In setting forth principles to direct the Catholic schools of the region, we call on the commitment of students and parents, teachers and administrators, pastors and religious, School Board members and members of PTA, and the whole community to this great work.

27. Together, these form the authentic ecclesial community and center of evangelization, carrying the role of former of disciples and missionaries at all levels. In communion with the Christian community the Catholic School should provide a pastoral service in the sector where it is inserted, especially youth, the family, catechesis, and promoting the human development of the poor.⁴⁸

Canonical Legislation Concerning Catholic Education

Canon 793 § 1

Parents and those who take their place have both the obligation and the right to educate their children. Catholic parents also have the duty and the right to choose those means and institutes, which, in their local circumstances, can best promote the Catholic education of their children.

Canon 793 § 2

⁴⁷ Pope John Paul II, *The Church in America*, 1999, n. 6.

⁴⁸ Cf. Aparecida, § 338.

Parents have moreover the right to avail themselves of that assistance from civil society, which they need to provide a Catholic education for their children.

Canon 794 § 1

The Church has in a special way the duty and the right of educating, for it has a divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian life.

Canon 794 § 2

Pastors have the duty of making all possible arrangements so that all the faithful may avail themselves of a Catholic Education.

Canon 795 § 1

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.

Canon 196 §1

Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfill their role in education.

Canon 196 § 2

There must be a close cooperation between the parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling that task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set and held in high esteem.

Canon 797

Parents must have a real freedom in their choice of schools. For this reason Christ's faithful must be watchful that the civil society acknowledges this freedom of parents and, and in accordance with the requirements of distributive justice, even provide them with assistance.

Canon 798

Parents are to send their children to those schools, which will provide for their Catholic education. If they cannot do this, they are bound to ensure the proper Catholic education of their children outside the school.

Canon 799

Christ's faithful are to strive to secure that in the civil society the laws, which regulate formation of the young, also provide a religious and moral education in the schools that is in accord with the conscience of the parents.

Canon 800 § 1

The Church has the right to establish and to direct schools for any field of study or of any kind of grade.

Canon 800 § 2

Christ's faithful are to promote Catholic schools, doing everything possible to help in establishing and maintaining them.

Canon 801 § 1

Religious institutes which have education as their mission are to keep faithful to this mission and earnestly strive to devote themselves to Catholic education, providing this also through their own schools which, with the consent of the diocesan Bishop, they have established.

Canon 802 § 1

If there are no schools in which an education is provided that is imbued with a Christian spirit, the diocesan Bishop has the responsibility to ensuring that such schools are established.

Canon 802 § 2

Where it is suitable, the diocesan Bishop is to provide for the establishment of professional and technical schools, and of other schools catering for special needs.

Canon 803 § 1

A Catholic School is understood to be one which is under the control of the competent ecclesiastical authority or of a public ecclesiastical juridical person, or one which in a written document is acknowledged as Catholic by the ecclesiastical authority.

Canon 803 § 2

Formation and education of 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.

Canon 803 § 3

No school, even if it is in fact Catholic, may bear the title “Catholic School” except by the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority.

Canon 804 § 1

The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school, and through various means of social communication, is subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the Episcopal Conference to issue general norms concerning this field of activity and for the Diocesan Bishop to regulate and watch over it.

Canon 804 § 2

The local Ordinary is to be careful that those who are appointed as teachers of religion and, even non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in true doctrine, in the witness of their Christian life, and in their teaching ability.

Canon 805

In his diocese, the local Ordinary has a right to appoint or to approve teachers of religion and, if religious or moral

considerations require it, the right to remove them or to demand that they are removed.

Canon 806 § 1

The diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established by members of religious institutes. He has also the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of Catholic Schools; these directives apply also to schools conducted by members of a religious institute, although they retain their autonomy in the internal management of their schools.

Canon 806 § 2

Those who are in charge of Catholic Schools are to ensure, under the supervision of the local Ordinary, that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area.

Code of Ethics for Catholic Schools Boards

28. The effectiveness of our Catholic schools is strengthened by the clergy and lay people who work together with faith and commitment for the education of our young people. Such an expression is found in the policy of Catholic Education as promulgated by the Bishops of the Antilles. It is therefore essential for those who accept the call to serve on School Boards to understand the expectations of the office and conduct themselves in a way that will foster collaboration and Christian community. Further, all members are charged with strictly supporting the role of the Catholic Schools Society of the Antilles Region, its policies and directives, and the policies and directives of the local school council.

29. The aim of Catholic Education is the holistic development of each student for responsible citizenship, motivated by the Spirit of the Gospel, and modeled on the example of Jesus Christ. The Catholic School Board member

shall within the duties described in Policies and Regulations reflect that ministry within the Church.

30. The governing bodies of the Catholic Schools are church ministries within the Diocesan and parish communities. As such, a standard of conduct, similar to the expectations of members of other church ministries, is required of members of these bodies:

Regulations:

31. The members of Catholic School Boards will:
- a. acknowledge that Catholic schools are a significant expression of the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and function within its structure;
 - b. provide witness to the Catholic community by active participation in the communal life of the parish, and by a personal lifestyle that reflects the teaching of the Church;
 - c. endeavour to become more knowledgeable about Catholic education, its mission, and educational and religious goals;
 - d. provide the best possible Catholic education, according to the programme approved by the Antilles Bishops Conference and the Ministries of Education of the Antilles region;
 - e. recognize the need for continuous education about their responsibilities and know that they do not represent the Board officially unless explicitly authorized to do so;
 - f. be fully prepared for each meeting by doing the required reading and completing necessary tasks for committee work and reports;
 - g. attend regular, extraordinary, and committee meetings of the Board and participate in discussions and decisions to the best of their ability;
 - h. share and utilize their knowledge and experience for the betterment of the Board and the school as a whole;
 - i. be alert to alternate solutions to problems and keep an open mind;

- j. be loyal to Board decisions even when personally differing from the final recommendations and decisions;
- k. strictly ensure the confidentiality of the Board and all matters dealt with “in confidence”;
- l. be familiar with and comply with the mandate, policies, and bylaws of the local school council;
- m. ensure that affairs of the Board are conducted with openness, justice, and compassion;
- n. ensure that all complaints are made directly to the person involved and if to the Board, in writing to the Chairperson;
- o. support and recognize the Principal as the Chief administrator of the day to day operation of the school and avoid intruding into administrative details unless requested to do so;
- p. pray often for other members of the Board, Catholic schools and the community that they serve;
- q. complete an authorization form for a Criminal Record Search;
- r. disqualify him/herself from all discussion and voting on any issue where there is a conflict of interest with his/her family or business interest or if the outcome will grant any pecuniary or material benefits. If and when such an issue arises he/she shall excuse him/herself from that part of the meeting that deals with such issues. His/her exclusion will be recorded in the minutes.

Education Policy: Personnel

a) Manager / Parish Priest – Principal Relationship

32. The manager / parish priest provides the ultimate leadership in creating and maintaining a relationship of mutual love and respect and cooperation between the principal and himself.

33. The manager / parish priest and principal collaboratively work to ensure that an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation permeates relationship among principals, teachers, parents, students, and the local community.

34. The manager / parish priest and principal should develop a clear understanding of the professional capabilities and educational responsibility of the principal to ensure an effective professional relationship, which fosters quality Catholic education.

35. The manager / parish priest and principal should meet on a regular basis to establish effective lines of communication. This provides opportunities for the necessary interchange of information. Such a pattern of communication frequently prevents substantive misunderstandings.

36. In addition to these regular scheduled briefings, it is strongly recommended that the manager / parish priest and principal formerly meet at least three times during the school year to assess the overall direction and operation of the school and the implementation of strategic goals.

b) Principal

37. The role of the principal is critical to the success of any school. Therefore the one employed as principal should be a practicing Catholic with the relevant professional qualifications. The Principal as instructional leader and administrator of the school is called to the school community as to be committed to provide quality education within the framework of Catholic principles. The Principal therefore agrees to supervise and administer the school and act according to the precepts and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church as well as the Education Act.

38. As *leader*, the Principal:

- a. clearly articulates a vision of Catholic education, consistent with the principles expressed in the magisterium of the Church, which unifies and motivates all members of the school community: staff, students and parents;
- b. applies this Catholic educational vision to daily school activities;
- c. fosters a school climate which strongly reflects its Catholic identity and encourages staff and students to maximize their potential;
- d. develops / implements a school philosophy and mission statement which reflects the Catholic character of the school;
- e. is aware of the cultural characteristics of the school community and provides for differences in planning the school programme;
- f. gives priority to a vibrant religious education programme;
- g. facilitates the moral development and maturity of children, youths and adults;
- h. ensures quality Catholic religious instruction of students;
- i. integrates Gospel values into the curriculum, policies and school life;
- j. nurtures faith development of faculty and staff through opportunities for spiritual growth;
- k. provides opportunities for the school community to celebrate the faith;
- l. supports and fosters consistent practices of Christian service;
- m. undertakes long and short range instructional planning with the staff;
- n. exercises responsibility as the chief decision maker in the school;
- o. delegates authority appropriately;
- p. recognizes and fosters leadership ability among the staff;
- q. promotes healthy staff morale;
- r. creates with the staff a student-centered learning environment;
- s. interprets and utilizes research and current trends in education to guide action plans;

- t. plans and presents opportunities for the professional growth of the staff;
- u. supervises and evaluates teachers performance both formally and informally;
- v. participates personally in professional development opportunities; and
- w. encourages on-going evaluation of the total educational programme.

39. As *Facilitator*, the Principal:

- a. recognizes, respects, and facilitates the role of the parents in educating their children;
- b. elicits suggestion and ideas from the staff;
- c. unifies the staff to accomplish established goals;
- d. enables staff members to accept and share responsibility
- e. manages conflicts.

40. As *Communicator*, the Principal:

- a. treats people in a manner which indicates respect for the dignity of the individual;
- b. is available to staff members, students, parents;
- c. provides a variety of opportunities for faculty unity;
- d. incorporates consultation with staff members into the decision making process;
- e. provides regular feedback to staff members concerning their performance;
- f. informs staff of activities and programmes of the Diocese, Parish and Community;
- g. informs CEBM, the Parish and MOE of the school programmes and policies.

41. As *Administrator*, the Principal:

- a. supports and implements policies and guidelines;
- b. ensures that adequate and up-to-date records are kept on the file for each student and staff member;
- c. prepares and submits all required reports promptly;

- d. possesses and applies planning and management skills regarding resources and budgeting process;
- e. seeks resources and support beyond the local community;
- f. ensures that teachers are thoroughly informed on standard procedures;
- g. cooperates with the Ministry of Education and civic agencies to ensure the welfare of all students;
- h. supervises maintenance personnel in providing a clean and safe environment.

42. As ***Pastoral Partner***, the Principal:

- a. strives to become an integral member of Parish life
- b. serves as a member of the Parish pastoral team and collaborates in Parish Pastoral planning;
- c. supports and participates in the Parish sacramental programme;
- d. fosters participation by the school community in appropriate Parish programmes, projects and celebrations;
- e. informs the parish and local community concerning life within the school and invites their support.

c) Teacher: General Expectations

43. The School Board of Directors recognizes that the success of the system depends upon the caliber of its professional staff. The Board expects its teachers to witness their Catholic Faith and demonstrate the academic and professional competence necessary to work co-operatively in the field of general instruction of pupils, motivated by the philosophy and general educational goals of the church, which stress the importance of each student as a unique creation of God.

d) Teacher: Practicing Catholic

44. The Board of Directors of the Catholic School expects that every effort will be made to employ qualified teachers who are practicing Catholics and who are witnessing their faith.

45. There are some essential components to Roman Catholicism that can and must be named:

- Full initiation into the community (baptism, confirmation, Eucharist).
- Communion with the church through compliance with legitimate authority.
- Regular participation in the Eucharist within the local community, including within that sensitivity to the liturgical rhythm of the Church's life. (This component is so emphasized because, as Roman Catholics, that which essentially defines us is that we are a Eucharistic community).
- A life of prayer and private morality.
- A commitment to the social teachings of the Church.
- A sense of responsibility for ministry and leadership within the Church, including financial.
- A concern for the universal church, its unity, its spread and its maintenance.
- A concern and respect for the public forum with the community; that is, in the public forum not being at variance with respect to major doctrinal or moral teachings of the church.
- Not labouring under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared.

46. The primary goal of the Catholic Church is to provide an education, enlightened by faith, in which youth can grow in the knowledge, love, and practice of the Catholic faith. To this end the Catholic schools must be centers of Catholic life and worship.

47. In order to realize this expectation it must be recognized that *“the Catholic school depends upon (teachers) almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and*

purposes” (Vatican II). This can best be achieved by teachers who are Catholics and actively participate in a Parish.

e) The Role of the Teacher

48. The expectations of the teacher in our Catholic Schools are awesome, many and multi-faceted. Success comes from the commitment to the vision of our Catholic teachings, ministry, and to the service to our students. To assist understanding and as guidance, the following role description is provided.

49. The teacher demonstrates in his/her relationship with students, school staff, the Council, Parish, and community the following roles as:

- a. Educational leader of the classroom
- b. Spiritual and Moral leader;
- c. Manager of his/her particular classroom and programme.

50. As an **Educational Leader** he/she provides leadership that indicates and maintains effective schooling in terms of the Ministry’s goals, the Local School Council’s objectives, the school’s goals and the goals and philosophy of the Catholic Bishops of the Antilles.

51. As the **religious and moral leader** of the classroom, the teacher has a responsibility to demonstrate a Catholic lifestyle and implement the Diocesan education programme that reflects Catholic Christian values.

- a. Foster and maintain classroom prayer
- b. Internalize the “servant” model of Christian service
- c. Model the virtues and values of our Christian belief and heritage
- d. Assist students to use religious education classes to understand and internalize a sense of God’s plan for humankind, the Mystery of Jesus Christ, the Church, and our spirituality

- e. Ensure that parents and students of other faiths attending the school can participate positively (within the limits of Canon Law) in classroom rituals, activities and celebrations.
- f. Maintain close liaison with the Pastor.

52. As the **classroom manager**, the teacher provides the necessary support to assist effective and efficient instruction. The classroom needs to be a safe invigorating environment that develops positive work and character habits as well as socially acceptable behaviour patterns in students.

53. The teacher conscientiously and co-operatively demonstrates satisfactory performance in the following areas:

- a. knowledge of subject matter
- b. understanding of student needs;
- c. daily and long range planning;
- d. varied teaching methods and strategies;
- e. evaluation of students work;
- f. recording and reporting of students' work;
- g. classroom management

54. The teacher is expected to contribute to the overall effective and efficient management of the school by:

- a. following Council and Catholic Schools policy and directives
- b. preparing and submitting reports and required administrative forms
- c. attending regular and special meetings as called by the Principal
- d. notifying the Principal of concerns regarding various aspects of the school using the proper channels
- e. participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as determined on a shared basis by staff and administration

- f. being supportive of the school through attendance at school functions and especially functions involving both school and parish

f) Teacher: Other Faiths/Denominations

55. The Catholic Schools Board of Directors respects the freedom of conscience of those teachers who are of faiths/denominations other than the Catholic faith. Such a teacher, whose conscience does not prevent his/her assuming employment in the Catholic School, is expected at all times to support the goals of the Catholic Schools and be respectful of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church in accordance with the following regulation.

56. There are occasions when Catholic teachers with appropriate qualifications and experience are not available for specific positions. At such times other suitably qualified and experienced teachers have to be hired. It is important that when such occasions occur candidates of other faiths/denominations be made aware of the expectations of all teachers in Catholic schools.

57. Non-Catholic teachers who work in the Catholic Schools of dioceses of the Antilles Bishops' Conference are required to meet the following conditions:

- the school as a Catholic school has as its aim the provision of education enlightened by faith as taught by the Catholic Church such that the school's students can grow in their knowledge, love, and practice of the Catholic faith;
- the School is to be a Catholic community and center of Catholic life and worship;
- the conscience of the teacher does not prevent him/her from assuming employment in the school in accordance with the agreement;
- the teacher will at all times demonstrate a respectful and sympathetic sensitivity to the aims and nature of the

school and to the Catholic belief and practices of the school; and

- practice a lifestyle that meets the expectations held for teachers that are of the Catholic faith.

g) *Hiring of Professional Teaching Staff*

58. With respect to character and religious training the applicant must:

- a. display exemplary character and a faithful commitment of religious obligations;
- b. display a willingness to teach the religious education programme as approved by the Bishops of the Antilles Conference;
- c. be willing to take necessary steps to upgrade or maintain a level of religious knowledge and understanding appropriate to a teacher in a Catholic school; and
- d. be willing to provide opportunities in teaching at all levels for the inclusion of gospel values.

Conclusion

59. It is our hope that the forgoing guidelines will prove useful in giving direction to Pastors, Principals, Faculty and Students, members of the Parents-Teachers Associations, Parents and guardians, and all those who are, on one level or another, involved in the Catholic Educational enterprise; that they will help to recapture the Catholic ethos of our schools and will give clarity to the *raison d'être* of Catholic Education. May the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the meaning and purpose for which we exist, bring to fruition all that for which we hope.

Glossary

Apostolate: mission of the (apostolic) Church in particular context (in this context, the School).

Canonical penalty: A punishment imposed under penal law of the Church, such as excommunication. The law of the Church is set in the Code of Canon Law.

Catechesis: An education in the faith of children, young people, and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life.

Catholic Ethos: Ethos is the fundamental values peculiar to a specific person, people, culture, or movement. Catholic Ethos is the fundamental values peculiar to Catholic Christianity. All employees in Catholic schools (whether they are Catholic or not) sign a morals clause in their employment agreement that they agree to "maintain, by word and actions, a position of role model and witness to the Gospel of Christ that is in conformity with the teachings, standards, doctrines, laws, and norms of the Catholic Church."

CEBM: Catholic Education Board of Management

Distributive justice: Normative principles designed to guide the allocation of the benefits and burdens (responsibility) of economic activity. The first principle of distributive justice is strict egalitarianism, which advocates the allocation of equal material goods to all members of a society.

Ecclesiastical authority: Jurisdiction exercised by church leaders over other leaders and over the laity.

Holy See: (Latin: *Sancta Sedes*, "holy chair") is the episcopal jurisdiction of the Catholic Church in Rome, in which its Bishop is commonly known as the Pope.

Magisterium: The teaching authority of the Church. This authority is understood to be embodied in the episcopacy, which is the aggregation of the current bishops of the Church in union with the Pope.

MOE: Ministry of Education

Moral relativism: concerned with the difference in moral judgment across different people and cultures.

Nihilism: From the Latin *nihil* – “nothing”, nihilism is the doctrine suggesting that life is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value. It is sometimes used to explain the general mood of despair at a perceived pointlessness of existence that one may develop upon realising there are no necessary norms, rules, or laws.

Pedagogy: Generally refers to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction. Pedagogy also refers to the correct use of instructive strategies.

Principle of subsidiarity: One of the key principles of Catholic social teaching. This tenet holds that nothing should be done by a larger and more complex organisation which can be done as well by a smaller and simpler organisation. In other words, an activity which can be performed by a more decentralised entity should so be performed. This principle is a bulwark of limited government and personal freedom.

Public ecclesiastical juridical person: Can. 116 #1: They are aggregates of persons or of things which are established by competent ecclesiastical authority so that, within the limits allotted to them in the name of the Church, and in accordance with the provisions of law, they might fulfil the specific task entrusted to them for the public good.

Subjectivism: The doctrine that all knowledge is restricted to the conscious self and its sensory states. It is a theory that emphasises the subjective elements in experience. It refers to any of various theories holding that the only valid standard of judgment is that of the individual. For example, ethical subjectivism holds that individual conscience is the only appropriate standard for moral judgment.

Approved by the Annual Plenary Meeting (APM) of the
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