



TEACHING IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS - A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Catholic School is a privileged means of promoting the formation of the whole person. It forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith.

The Archbishop, as the principal teacher in the Archdiocese, commissions persons supportive of Catholic education philosophy to participate in the mission of proclaiming the Good News of salvation to all and to train them to live knowingly as children of God.

This philosophy of Catholic education, expressed in a growing number of documents and policy statements over the last decade, guides the Catholic School in its functioning. Whilst it is accountable to the community at large for the provision of quality education to young citizens, it is also accountable to the Church community for providing this within the context of Christian Gospel values as espoused by the Catholic tradition. The Catholic School is more than an educative institution; it is a key part of the Church, an essential element in the Church's mission.

The Catholic education philosophy reveals a concern for an education that combines sound knowledge and skills with an overall personal development rooted in Christian values. Such an education involves a high level of inter-personal relationships between teacher and student.

Pope John Paul II spelt out key implications for this for teachers who work in Catholic schools:

"The Church looks upon you as co-workers with an important measure of shared responsibility ... To you it is given to create the future and give it direction by offering your students a set of values with which to assess their newly discovered knowledge ... (The changing times) demand that educators be open to new cultural influences and interpret them for young pupils in the light of Christian faith. You are called to bring professional competence and a high standard of excellence to your teaching ... But your responsibilities make demands on you that are far beyond the need for professional skills and competence ... Through you, as through a clear window on a sunny day, students must come to see and know the richness and the joy of life lived in accordance with Christ's teaching, in response to his challenging demands. To teach means not only to impart what we know, but also to reveal who we are by living what we believe. It is this latter lesson which tends to last the longest."

Address to Catholic Educators September 12, 1987

Teachers in the Catholic School are more than employees. They minister in the name of the Church and of the Gospel in one way or another and as such participate actively in Church life and should have a pastoral concern for each individual student.

It is expected that all teachers employed in a Catholic school will perform conscientiously and competently the duties, both teaching and non-teaching, that they are assigned by the principal in accordance with normal practice in Catholic schools.

Teachers should help maintain an atmosphere of charity and justice within the school as would be expected in a Catholic community and help ensure the provision, as far as possible, of the Catholic religious perspective in the teaching and learning process and in all the activities of the school in which staff and students engage.

All teachers have a responsibility to develop and maintain an adequate understanding of those aspects of Catholic teaching that relate to their subject areas and by their own example provide a Christian leadership role for all members of the school community.

Only a person supportive of Catholic education philosophy may be a teacher in a Catholic school. Teachers bear witness to Christ and Christian values in their own lives and by personally supporting, evaluating, developing and disseminating the Catholic School philosophy.

The objectives which teachers undertake to support and promote during their term of employment require them:

- I. To give regular and efficient instruction for the academic, physical and spiritual development of the pupils
- II. To participate in worship and prayer in the school in co-operation with the parish priest or priest in charge, and the principal
- III. To adhere to Catholic principles and at all times by personal example, integrity and behaviour, to support Catholic moral standards.