



Speaker and Participant Notes

Aspiring Catholic School leaders

2022-2023

Additional documents and notes for participants and key-input speakers

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Self Evaluation

The purpose of the resource *The Catholic School: Developing in Faith* is to help school leaders incorporate into their school evaluation and planning processes an appropriate focus on the particular mission of the Catholic school. This is in line not only with national developments in Scotland but also with the Church’s universal call for a renewed focus on Catholic school identity. It builds on the great efforts which have been made to strengthen the rationale for Catholic education in our country and to exemplify excellence in all we do.

The document uses the well-established *Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland* as the foundation of a set of themes which cover the main activities of a Catholic school community. Schools are asked to incorporate these 5 themes over a number of years into their normal processes of school evaluation and planning for improvement. The choice of themes and their sequence of coverage is for each school to decide, in the light of its own content and stage of development.

Each school has copies of, and access to, a range of resources that link HGIOS 4, DIF and the annual cycle for school improvement, recording and reporting.

1.1 Self- Evaluation for Self-Improvement			
Illustration of very good	How are we doing? What are the features of effective practice in our school?	How do we know? Where do we see evidence of the impact of our work?	What are we going to do now? Challenge questions for staff to discuss.
<p><i>Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation:</i> Within our school community all staff, pupils, parents, partners and stakeholders, understand that our shared vision, aims, values and mission statement are a collective expression of the high standards we want to achieve and outline how we will improve to achieve it.</p> <p><i>Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data:</i> We use a range of quality improvement activities to gather data on how our Catholic school values impact on attainment and achievement of pupils. We reflect on current practice at local, diocesan and national level, share good practice, evaluate new initiatives and can demonstrate where there has been improvement.</p> <p><i>Impact on learners successes and achievements:</i> We can show clear evidence of improvement based on actions taken as a result of self-evaluation of our Catholic Ethos, community and identity.</p>			<p>■ How effective are we at evaluating our vision, values, aims, mission statement against <i>Charter for Catholic School</i>?</p> <p>■ How well do all staff understand their responsibility to include a focus on the Catholic mission of the school in their self-evaluation process?</p> <p>■ How effective are we at involving all members of our school community in evaluating the life and work of the school as a community of faith e.g., through surveys, focus groups, bodies such as the Pupil Council?</p>



PRD & CLPL

Background

In 2015 the Scottish Catholic Education Service published the resource, *Companions On The Journey*. This strategy paper outlines the vision and expectations of the Catholic Education Community in Scotland that all staff within Catholic Schools will have access to a pathway of Career Long Professional Learning that includes the six areas of the [framework for Catholic School CLPL](#).

In order to access and participate in CLPL opportunities that are relevant to the individual requirements of each teacher, it is important that the identification of professional learning needs is rooted within the Professional Review, Development and Update process of each teacher.

Professional Review, Development and Update

The process of PRD provides valuable opportunities for focussed professional dialogue between a teacher and a senior colleague, enabling the teacher to reflect on the impact of any professional learning, on them and on their learners, and to plan for future learning.

GTCS requirements for Professional Update underline the importance of the PRD process being meaningful and supportive of professional development within the teacher's professional context.

The professional dialogue which is at the centre of the PRD process should include consideration of any professional learning undertaken by the teacher with a view to developing and enhancing his/her practice in the Catholic school. The PRD process should always include a discussion on the specific CLPL opportunities available to support the teacher's professional development as a member of a Catholic school and therefore a faith community. All teachers involved in this dialogue should have access to relevant and accurate information about such opportunities.

SCES has published the following to support the PRD process and purposeful CLPL: (all can be downloaded using this link -<https://sces.org.uk/download/prd-process-within-catholic-schools/>)

CLPL process for Teachers in Catholic Schools (Power point): This power point is available for use by SMT to inform and remind staff about the documents used in Scottish Catholic schools when planning for CLPL. It focuses in particular on the use of '*Companions on the Journey*' to aid individual teachers' own CLPL pathway, which may be of particular use in the PRD process. Information about sourcing CLPL opportunities is also given.

National Strategy for CLPL: '*Companions on the Journey*' is the strategy paper published by SCES in 2015 which outlines the visions and expectations for all teachers in Catholic Schools in Scotland. Within the paper, staff are reminded that they should include the six areas of the framework as they plan their pathway for Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL). Suggestions of appropriate CLPL, which is linked to the GTCS Professional Standards, is given for each level of a teacher's career.

Explanation of the 6 CLPL areas for Catholic Schools: This page offers an explanation of what the 6 areas from '*Companions on the Journey*' mean for your personal, professional and spiritual learning.

Professional Review and Development within a Catholic School: This document gives background information about the use of '*Companions on the Journey*' to support the PRD

process required by the GTC and underlines that all teachers in a Catholic school must include a faith dimension to their PRD. Within this document, the PRD process is explained and examples of reflective questions are given.

Resources, Articles and Blogs to Guide Teachers' Career Long Professional Learning in a Catholic School: This bank of resources supports teachers in the minimum requirements of CLPL for a Catholic Teacher in Scotland and gives direct e-links to website pages, pdfs and articles which focus on the six themes of 'Companions on the Journey'. The articles and resources can be used by individual teachers to inform and develop their knowledge, or by staff groups to guide professional reading and reflection.

CLPL Calendar of Activities: Once CLPL needs have been identified, colleagues may look to partners from the Diocese, SCES, Glasgow University and the wider Catholic community to help achieve their professional learning targets. Each CLPL Provider produces a yearly overview of the CLPL opportunities they provide. To assist teachers in identifying appropriate courses or events, each opportunity clearly shows which CLPL area from '*Companions on the Journey*' it supports. These can be booked via the SCES website or directly through the diocese.

CLPL Case Studies: These case studies are examples of CLPL pathways which teachers at all levels in their career took to meet the six CLPL areas as outlined in '*Companions on the Journey*'. Whilst not exhaustive, they provide clear examples of what appropriate CLPL for a Scottish Catholic teacher may look like. They can be used to prompt discussion with colleagues, to offer suggestions of pathways within the vocation to teach and to support staff who are looking for ideas and suggestions on the variety of CLPL available.

Approval To Teach in a Catholic School

Church Approval

The relevant legislation on the management of denominational schools in Scotland states: "A teacher appointed to any post on the staff of any such school by the education authority. . . shall be required to be approved as regards religious belief and character by representatives of the church or denominational body in whose interest the school has been conducted. "

[Guidance for teachers seeking Approval](#)

Approval to teach in a denominational School must be obtained from the denominational body for "any post". The Roman Catholic diocese where a Catholic school is located is the denominational body in whose interest the Local Authority hold, maintain and manage Catholic schools in Scotland. Therefore, applicants for any post within a Catholic school must be approved by the Bishop of the Diocese in order to be appointed. To enable Councils to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, the Catholic Church requires to be assured that the personal "religious belief and character" of a teacher is appropriate to the duties associated with the teaching post for which he/she has applied.

When seeking approval, a teacher must demonstrate how his/her personal "religious belief and character" enables him/her to undertake the duties of the particular teaching post within the context of a Catholic school, with its particular mission, values and ethos, as outlined in [A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland](#).

All teachers who seek approval must provide a reference from a suitable person who can testify to the teacher's personal "religious belief and character". The reference for a Catholic teacher must be provided by the teacher's parish priest who should be able to testify to the teacher's personal "religious belief and character".

For Catholic teachers, whose teaching posts impact on the teaching of Religious Education, teachers will be expected to provide evidence of having obtained an appropriate teaching qualification in Catholic Religious Education – The Catholic Teacher Certificate, and that they meet the requirements of the [instrument for approval](#).

Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools & the Catholic Teacher Certificate

(Scottish Government Guidance)

[Guidance on provision of religious and moral education in non-denominational schools and religious education in Roman Catholic schools.](#) (Scottish Government – February 2011)

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 continues to impose a statutory duty on local authorities to provide religious education in Scottish schools. This letter replaces guidance previously contained within Circular 6/91 and reflects the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence across all of Scotland's schools.

Section 3: Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools

12. All Catholic schools are expected by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to follow guidelines established by the Catholic Education Commission on the provision of adequate time for religious education within the school curriculum. **These guidelines indicate a requirement for a minimum of 2.5 hours per week in primary school and two hours per week in all stages of secondary school. In all secondary stages this minimum time allocation is expected by the Commission to be provided through two periods of religious education classes per week and enriched by additional activities throughout the school year.**

13. The relevant legislation on the management of denominational schools in Scotland states that: "A teacher appointed to any post on the staff of any such school by the education authority shall be required to be approved as regards religious belief and character by representatives of the church or denominational body in whose interest the school has been conducted".

For those teaching posts which impact on the teaching of religious education, teachers will, in addition, be expected to have obtained an appropriate teaching qualification in Catholic Religious Education.

14. The role of the wider parish community plays an important part in the delivery of religious education. Active learning approaches to learning and teaching, including collaborative learning, will encourage children and young people to discuss and share ideas, experiences and moral challenges in a variety of ways. Such opportunities are not only provided by the teacher but by parents and families and in local parish and community settings. Schools are encouraged to use the rich resources available from the local, national and global community when planning their programmes of study.

University of Glasgow: Information for those applying to enrol for the Catholic Teacher Certificate course:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/study/undergraduate/informationforapplicants/catholicteachercertificate/applicationinformation/>

COURSE INFORMATION

The Catholic Teacher's Certificate in Religious Education (CTC) is the qualification required for those eligible* and wishing to teach Religious Education in Catholic primary schools or in Catholic secondary schools as a 'generalist' RE teacher. Working in partnership with the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, the University of Glasgow is responsible for this award which is offered to students on our ITE programmes.

We are delighted to offer the qualification in 2021-2022 to PGDE students at the University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the University of Strathclyde and the University of the West of Scotland.

The course teaching team will be drawn from specialist staff based in the University of Glasgow's School of Education.

*(*Please note, the course is also open to those who are **not** eligible to teach Religious Education in the Catholic sector but the assessment will be different and those successful will gain an 'Award in Religious Understanding'.)*

Course Structure

- The course will start in September/October depending on the University and will run over two semesters. There will be a mix of contact time and online study.

Assessment

- Assessment for the course consists of tasks that will cover theological knowledge and application to educational contexts, as appropriate.
- Submissions are graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Submissions have to be passed in order to complete the course satisfactorily. There is one opportunity for resubmission.

St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education

The course is organised by the St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education, the hub of the University of Glasgow's provision for those interested in teaching in Catholic schools.

Further details of the course will be available in the Course Handbook issued in September/October.

* This course leads to an academic qualification, not 'teacher approval'. See [SCES](#) for details of the approval process.

Equality and Inclusion

[Equality and Inclusion within a Catholic School](#)

All schools should have robust [policies](#) that seek to ensure the safety and inclusion of all children. Anti bullying, Nurture, Safeguarding and Safe Spaces are all positive aspects of the Equality and Inclusion work of our schools. However, there is always more that could be done to ensure that staff feel confident, informed and enabled to put the policies into practice. Therefore, as well as creating resources for use in classroom, SCES and Diocesan RE Offices support schools with CLPL training, materials for use at home and whole school level and guidance to inform policy and practice relating to the Equality Act and the protected characteristics.

All of the materials and support from SCES and Diocesan RE Offices note that within a Catholic school the starting point for any work with young people in the area of Equality, Inclusion and Justice is rooted in the Church's vision of what it means to be in relationship with God and others.

All materials and resources are used in conjunction with the existing RE Guidance 'This Is Our Faith' and current [guidance](#) and resources for Relationships and Moral Education – Called to Love (Secondary schools) and God's Loving Plan (Primary schools). There is an expectation that all staff using the Equality and Inclusion resources will have attended a Diocesan or SCES training event prior to using them within the classroom.

Catholic Church Documents and Teaching on Catholic Schools and Education:

[ACCESS SWAY FOR CHURCH DOCUMENTS HERE](#)

[DECLARATION ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION](#)
[*GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS \(1965\)*](#)

SUMMARY:

A declaration of Catholic education issued from the Second Vatican Council. Gravissimum Educationis is a 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.

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education
The Catholic School (1977)

SUMMARY:

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 of Catholic Education

Lay Catholics In Schools: Witnesses to Faith (1982)

SUMMARY:

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).

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education

The religious dimension of education in a Catholic school (1988)

SUMMARY:

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.

[Congregation for Catholic Education](#)
[The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium \(1997\)](#)

SUMMARY:

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).

[Congregation for Catholic Education](#)
[Educating together in Catholic schools: A shared mission between consecrated persons and the lay faithful \(2007\)](#)

SUMMARY:

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](#)
[Educating to Intercultural Dialogue In Catholic Schools: Living in harmony for a civilization of love](#) (2013)

SUMMARY:

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](#)
[Educating Today and Tomorrow: A renewing passion](#) (2014)

SUMMARY:

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).

[All Summaries](#)

Church Teaching continued:

Fratelli Tutti

On Fraternity and Social Friendship, 2020

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

Male and Female He Created Them

Towards a Path of Dialogue on the question of Gender Theory in Education

Congregation for Catholic Education, 2019

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