

# **EDUCATE FOR SERVICE, JUSTICE, AND PEACE**

## **A. Promote a missionary spirit for the reign of God**

“We are all missionaries,” Blessed Chaminade said, “and we consider ourselves on a permanent mission” witnessing the Good News of Jesus Christ. We carry out this mission not only in the classroom, but equally in activities such as retreats, days of recollection, youth groups, social service, meetings with parents of students, and extracurricular formation programs. The entire school community—teachers, students, staff, parents, friends—is invited to take part. Drawing on every available educational resource, we work to transform our schools into living testimonies to the new evangelization. Jesus said he came to bring “good news to the poor”; it is for this reason that our missionary spirit leads us to give a certain priority to direct service to the poor, especially in new works and programs.

## **B. Educate for solidarity as well as justice and peace**

Committed to the common good, the Marianist school values human life in all its dignity from its beginning until natural death. The Marianist school lives its commitment to human dignity, and to a just and peaceful society, by establishing just internal institutional structures. Through clear organizational plans, manuals of operation and internal regulations, we insure that institutional processes are just and collaborative. Our mission statements and general educational policies articulate clear, fair criteria to guide matters such as student and teacher evaluation, salaries, and dismissals. Such actions promote solidarity, reconciliation, and cooperation in the educational community.

## **C. Attend to the poor and marginalized**

The Marianist school lives the Christian commitment to the poor both through establishing educational institutions directly serving the poor and by preparing people for genuine service to the economically disadvantaged, the disabled, and the marginalized. The school supports this general commitment through specific programs such as scholarships, disability-accessibility, community service, mission trips, and support for the integral development of people and groups. Teachers and students work with and for the poor, developing in the school and in the civic community programs of physical, economic, educational, and social assistance. In the Marianist school, the curriculum helps students understand the causes of poverty and the roots of injustice, and makes it possible to undertake thoughtful forms of action that truly respond to these social and moral problems.

## **D. Promote the dignity and rights of all people**

Created in the image and likeness of God, each person possesses the full dignity of the human person, with its corresponding rights and responsibilities. The Marianist school promotes the equality of all people and encourages the contributions of all people to the school's mission and to the larger culture. The school assures equal treatment in educational opportunities such as leadership, representation and salaries while helping to advance equality through programs of social awareness and development. Extending its commitment beyond its own borders, the Marianist educational community joins with people all over the world in their continuing struggle for equal human rights.

## **E. Promote programs of service, encouraging the formation of Christian service groups**

Faith inspires us to service, and the Marianist school helps its students hear and respond to that call. Because education itself is essentially communitarian, the school naturally aspires to serve its local community through educational as well as pastoral, liturgical, social, and recreational activities. Such service and reflection on the experience acquaints students with their local communities and creates the sensitivity and skills they need for future leadership. Occasions for service often arise spontaneously from fostering communities of faith, such as Marianist lay communities within or related to the school, in which apostolic service is integral.

## **F. Under the prophetic influence of Mary, announce the goodness and justice of God and denounce oppression**

The Marianist school community confronts society's problems with courage and seeks their solution with optimism and hope. As Christian and Marianist, the educational community announces the goodness and justice of God, while at the same time denouncing all that oppresses or degrades the human person. Students learn to recognize and to name both justice and oppression through prayerfully seeking the will of God, the thoughtful analysis of social conditions, and through personal and communal witness. In the prophetic spirit of Mary, teachers and students together read the signs of the times as constructive critics and agents of change with a "permanent mission" to witness to the message of the Gospel.

## **GENERAL PRACTICES FROM THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIANIST EDUCATION**

- Opportunities for service are a respected part of the school's total program by which all members of the school community relate with the poor and marginalized and reflect on these experiences
- The curriculum helps students understand the causes of poverty and the roots of injustice and makes it possible to undertake thoughtful forms of action in response to these social and moral problems
- The school lives its commitment to human dignity and to a just and peaceful society by establishing a just institutional environment

## **MARIANIST QUOTES**

- "Mary's apostolic mission is to form all persons into the most perfect conformity with the God-Man Christ, her son" (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- "By educating both the mind and the heart, the school can form people who in turn can work at changing the very structures of their society to ensure a community of justice and reconciliation." (Marianist General Chapter)
- "Some are called to teach persons who are poor; others to teach persons who are middle class about their responsibilities to change systems that keep people poor. Some will be prophetic voices challenging our complacency; others will minister quietly and daily to the poor at the door. Some are called to develop policy and organize community action; other will tutor, heal, and advocate for individuals and families." (Stephen Glodek, S.M.)
- "Schools offer us an excellent opportunity and responsibility to work for justice and peace. Our programs should develop a critical sense which prepares students to build a just society and to promote unity and respect among all peoples. (Marianist Rule of Life)
- "The religious and lay people who work in our schools should examine both the content of instruction and the quality of student groups to make sure that they fulfill the call of the Church and the Society of Mary to build a society marked by justice and charity." (Marianist General Chapter, Vision and Journey)

## **Characteristics of Marianist Education**

### **Educate for Service, Justice, and Peace**

#### **Descriptors**

- Promote a missionary spirit for the reign of God
- Educate for solidarity as well as justice and peace
- Attend to the poor and marginalized
- Promote the dignity and rights of women
- Promote programs of service, encouraging the formation of Christian service groups
- Under the prophetic influence of Mary, announce the goodness and justice of God and denounce oppression
- Promote adult and student programs that help in the understanding and appreciation of differences among people

#### **Practices**

- Under the prophetic influence of Mary, members of the school community announce the goodness and justice of God and denounce oppression
- Students are taught the social teachings of the church across the curriculum
- The mission statement clearly states the incorporation of a service component for students, faculty, and staff
- Teacher/student/staff interactions demonstrate social justice
- Each person in the community is afforded full dignity
- Members of the school community address any manifestation of prejudice both within and outside of the school community
- I witness a wise stewardship in the use of material goods
- School community members provide support for community members and their families in time of need
- Each departmental philosophy, departmental objectives, and course syllabus indicate the incorporation of justice and peace throughout the curriculum
- The teaching of human rights is part of the school's overall curriculum
- Co-curricular activities have a service component
- Community service is part of the school's program
- Students understand the systematic relationships for injustice
- I talk with and reflect with students on their community service experiences
- I discuss current social issues with my students
- Students work together in groups on community service project(s)
- The entire school community has been involved in a community service project, e.g. Habitat for Humanity
- School community members participate in food drives, clothing drives, assistance for victims of disaster, measles awareness, etc.
- Students have opportunities to minister to each other

- Pastoral ministry is involved in the school's program to educate for justice and peace
- Students are made aware of the causes of poverty
- Students and teachers communicate with students and teachers in Marianist schools throughout the world
- Faculty members are provided professional growth time for community service and reflection
- There is time for students to exchange their thoughts, reflections, and feelings from involvement in community service projects
- Students are prepared so as to exercise their right to vote
- Vowed Marianists are actively involved in educating for peace and justice and in school sponsored community service projects

## **AS A MARIANIST EDUCATOR**

- I participate in and encourage students to participate in service projects
- I act justly with members of the school community
- I treat all persons with dignity
- I have rules and policies that are fair and just
- I have classroom expectations that are clear and fair and communicated to students, parents and administrators
- I encourage the student to open his/her mind and heart to a larger world
- I grade fairly and consistently
- I work at developing vocations to Marianist religious life, the Marianist lay family, and the priesthood
- I appropriately address the student whose behavior reflects a lack of respect for the rights of others
- Lesson plans present women and minorities in a manner that not only transcends stereotypes but delineates their contributions
- I demonstrate respect for all stages of human life
- I share with students the social teachings of the Catholic Church and the Marianists
- I avoid engaging in gossip
- I appropriately address the student whose behavior reflects a lack of respect for others
- I discuss the struggle men and women face in maintaining their dignity and rights
- I encourage students to be compassionate and understanding toward the disadvantaged and marginalized
- I encourage students to explore careers that will bring personal satisfaction and assistance to others and not just financial reward
- I model a life of service
- I work with students in accomplishing their service requirement
- I subscribe to periodicals that deal with social justice and peace issues and relate the ideas in my course material