

# CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIANIST EDUCATION



Quotations from

**Blessed William Joseph Chaminade**  
**Venerable Adele de Batz de Trenquellion**  
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**Marianists in the Ministry of Education**

## Education for Formation in Faith

- “You are true missionaries. Teaching youth is certainly not the end that you should have proposed to yourselves when consecrating yourselves entirely to God under Mary’s protection: teaching is only a means that we employ to complete our mission, that is, to educate in faith and to multiply Christians.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Religion is not taught; it is communicated. Religion is instilled more deeply in the spirits and hearts of the students through the atmosphere that permeates the school rather than through teaching.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “The spirit of the Marianists is the spirit of Mary.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Those who are dedicated directly to teaching make a mistake, if they limit their efforts to instructing in the human disciplines, if they only worry about producing scholars or gaining fame. Do not forget that you are Mary’s missionaries. Do not reduce yourselves to running learning factories.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “The imitation of Mary is the surest, the quickest and easiest way to imitate Jesus Christ.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “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)
- “Let us always put our hopes in God, who never ceases giving us abundant grace . . . He is faithful to His promises; whoever hopes in Him will never be disappointed.” (Adele de Batz de Trenquelleon)
- “Let us not be discouraged, for we can do everything with the help of the grace which will always be there if we are faithful.” (Adele de Batz de Trenquelleon)
- “It is true we will never be tried beyond our strength. Courage, Courage!” (Adele de Batz de Trenquelleon)
- “Mary is our mother, and its with her help that we hope to achieve (our) goals . . . We are hers and must, therefore, have for her the hearts of children and have recourse to her with a confidence inspired by the most loving of mothers.” (Adele de Batz de Trenquelleon)

- “You know that I said to you that it was to honor God and God’s Providence to do those things which must be done, and to abandon ourselves with confidence to God’s loving prudence for the true needs of God’s children.” (Marie Therese de Lamourous)
- “Let us constantly beg our good mother to strengthen us in our weakness, to increase our courage and our faithfulness.” (Marie Therese de Lamourous)
- “The most effective means of inculcating devotion to Mary is to radiate in our own lives Mary’s goodness and kindness, and to always manifest this with our students.” (Francis Wohleben, S.M.)
- “Education is for us a privileged means of forming in faith. Through education we intend to sow, to cultivate and to strengthen the Christian spirit and to make it fruitful for all people.” (Marianist RULE OF LIFE)
- “Education is a participation in the work of Mary. She is the great teacher of (all people). Her mission has been, and still is, to give birth to Jesus Christ . . . . In calling us to the work of education, Mary has constituted us her collaborators in this mission. Our pupils are her children . . . and it is in her name that we ought to try to form Jesus in them.” (Emil Neubert, S.M.)
- “We must take advantage of all opportunities to inspire our students to love the Holy Virgin, helping them to become aware of the advantage of being consecrated to her service. Every Marianist (educator) should labor at his (her) tasks supported by his (her) trust in this powerful protector.” (MARIANIST SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDATION)
- “To radiate Mary’s kindness in our lives, never tire of asking yourself what Mary would do if she was in your place. . . .” (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
- “We can preach Mary in our conversations, our correspondence, our classrooms, often by mere allusions. Blessed Chaminade said, ‘I need not tell you that the holy name of Mary must be found naturally, as it were, everywhere. Whether you pray alone or in common, whether you encourage, instruct, or conduct a sodality meeting—do not be content unless the holy name of Mary is mentioned.’” (Emil Neubert, S.M.)
- A Christian does not cease to be human; the Christian should be even more integrally human than anyone else. The Creator has entrusted human nature to the Christian so that that nature might be brought to perfection.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “(Marianist educators), then, assist Mary in her mission of forming souls in the faith, especially, if the term ‘education’ is taken in its broadest sense.” (unknown)

- We are so happy with, so proud of the honor of this heavenly gift, our Marianist vocation, that we burn with eagerness to obtain this same happiness for all those upon whom we have some influence. To spread the knowledge of Mary, to perpetuate love and devotion to her, is our highest ambition.” (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
- “It is to the chanting of a new Magnificat that we are called: the celebration of God’s action in our world and our response in faith. This response in faith must be a careful, critical discernment of both “yes” and “no.” It needs to be a response of “yes” to the uplifting of God’s people and a response of “no” to all that impedes or works against that uplifting.” (Stephen Glodek, S.M.)
- “The intellect must be trained, but the heart must also be cultivated . . . .” (T.F.E., S.M.)
- To be fully Christian, it is necessary to be fully human.” (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
- “With trust in Mary, no enterprise of ours will seem beyond our strength. We must hope with Mary’s protection. . . . What happiness to be a child of Mary.” (P. Resch, S.M.)
- “Religion is not a branch of instruction . . . . It is like air, which can not be replaced by anything else—that everyone breathes everywhere—in the classes, in the study halls, in sports and recreation.” (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
- “It is well within the ability of a teacher to make good writers and fluent readers of his pupils; the great difficulty lies in making fervent Christians of them, even saints, because the teacher must preach by example. Hence, (the teacher) must be on the road to sanctity . . . in order to show others the way.” (MARIANIST SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDATION)
- “Our school community must always be seen as a member of the larger community of the Marianist family—the Society of Mary, Marianist Lay Communities, Daughters of Mary Immaculate, the Alliance Mariale.” (Third International Convocation of Marianist Lay Communities, 2001)

## **Educate in Family Spirit**

- “The multiplication of Christians is brought about less by the use of certain pedagogic procedures than by the presence of a religious atmosphere in the school. Religion is not taught; it is communicated. Religion is instilled more deeply in the spirits and in the hearts of the students more through the atmosphere that permeates the school than through teaching.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Teaching is only a means that we employ in the fulfillment of our mission which is to disseminate everywhere the spirit of faith and of religion and to multiply Christians.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “No angry wrinkle should mar the brow, a joyous and affable demeanor attracts youth, but a cold and solemn one repels it.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “A teacher can not succeed with a pupil whose esteem and friendship he/she has not gained.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “To do good for others it is necessary to act with an even temper, a cheerful modesty. . . .” (Marie Therese de Lamourous)
- “Treat students better than they deserve because God treats us the same way.” (Joseph Tedesco, S.M.)
- “There are three ways of giving an education: by instruction, by example, and by living in community. . . .” (Jean Lalanne, S.M.)
- “(Marianist sponsored schools) are meant to become an authentic community. Teachers, parents, and students must work together, enrich one another, and help one another grow as Christian persons.”(Marianist RULE OF LIFE)
- “Essential to any Marianist school has been one of its characteristic virtues: Family Spirit. Through the loving concern of teachers, the young people experience a strong community of faith; thus the school itself can develop into a community of faith.” (Marianist General Chapter)
- “Where there is a faculty working together, expending itself and finding full joy in its work, there will be a student body composed of similar characteristics. Goodness is contagious. Above all, in that faculty where family spirit reigns, there is a deep respect and appreciation for the human personality, for the student.” (Bertrand Clemens, S.M.)

- “If the teacher is to awaken interest and motivate effort, the teacher must be a wellspring of enthusiasm, a fountain of cheerfulness and optimism for students.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “A cheerful and happy teacher is one of the most beautiful gifts that God can give to a class. Serve the Lord with gladness.” (Eugene Paulin, S.M.)
- “Foster family spirit among your students, and to do so, make sure that it is paramount in your methods and procedures.” (Joseph Hiss, S.M.)
- “In that school where family spirit is indeed the essence of a noticeably pervading school spirit, study will be more readily expected. In a wholesome, congenial family atmosphere, learning is no mere drudgery. Because of a close union with the members of the faculty, students look up to the teacher . . . strive after high ideas, imitate the generosity and self-sacrifice of the teacher and thus acquire leadership.” (Bertrand Clemens, S.M.)
- “The knowledge and practice of the rules of politeness and propriety form an integral part of a good educator . . . How can he/she train pupils in politeness if he/she does not know its rules or fail to observe them.” (MARIANIST BOOK OF CUSTOMS, 1933)
- “It is the student body that determines the character of the establishment. In other words, an establishment must respond to the needs and conditions of its students, since every educational institution is established for the students it admits. It assumes the tasks of training these students not in an aimless manner, but with a view to their future career and to the situations in which circumstances place them.” (MARIANIST BOOK OF CUSTOMS, 1933)
- “The atmosphere of intimacy and of family spirit that characterizes all of our schools is born of tender devotion to Mary, whose image should adorn all of the classrooms.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “What a grand vision we have been given! You have been called stewards of a great tradition. But sometimes stewards of great traditions can become museum keepers. Yours is not a call to tend museums, but a call to be leaders in translating the Marianist culture into our times and your institutions.” (Stephen Glodek, S.M.)
- “The environment of the school should be pleasant and wholesome, not only were the physical surroundings to be conducive to happiness, but the teacher was to maintain a certain cheerfulness in the classroom.” (MARIANIST, SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDATION)

- “The most effective means of inculcating devotion to Mary is to radiate in our own lives Mary’s goodness and kindness, and to always manifest this devotion in our relationships with our students. By this means they will see how pleasant it is to live under the guidance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and they will feel themselves attracted to her service.” (Francis Wohleben, S.M.)
- “Teachers will be able to exercise their moral authority with children only if they establish with them the same relationships that those children enjoy with their fathers and mothers within the family. . . . the school will never become an educational home, unless it succeeds in being a second family for the student. You can scatter the seeds at the intellect, but unless the child can hear a friendly and familiar voice, you will never reach the fertile ground of the heart.” (Jean Lalanne, S.M.)
- “When there is a conflict of wills, between the teacher and a child, there may be a temptation for the teacher to impose his (her) will on the weaker child, rather than finding a way to lead the child to see the value of his position. Such an imposition has nothing to do with formation of the will, given the fact that it is destroyed in the process.” (Francois Kieffer, S.M.)
- “Each of the schools sponsored by the Society of Mary is meant to become an authentic community.” (Marianist RULE OF LIFE, 1983)
- “What I see boys get from being here is a sense of brotherhood. By that, I mean a sense of caring. I watch how they treat each other, how much they love each other and stay connected through the alumni network long after they graduate. If they didn’t have a quality experience, this deep sense of family spirit, I don’t think they’d continue to seek each other out.” (Tammy Schrader, Central Catholic High School.)
- “Being a Marianist leader is a challenge, but having such a call from a community is to receive grace from that call. God will work together all things for the good of the community if the leaders will be faithful, Marian, and prayerful. God does keep promises and Mary will never abandon her children.” (Walter Oberster, S.M.)
- “It is necessary that at school children who have just left their parents, feel from the very first moments that they do not find themselves among strangers, but rather that they have come among friends who are interested in them. We must welcome them . . . . (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
- “Any school and any educator who wishes to be effective has to cultivate family spirit, the only characteristic that will make it appealing to the child and will permit the child to assimilate the good examples given there.” (F. Armentia, S.M.)

## **Provide an Integral Quality Education**

- “I have a great liking for music and I desire that vocal and instrumental music be taught to those pupils who have the required talent.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “We must win the world, especially the young by kindness, amiability, and patience.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “I am strongly desirous that the schools . . . measure up to the standards set by ours and that they may become models for all others of the diocese . . . . If we intend to do business by halves, it will not be worth the while to take so much trouble . . . . Above all I am determined to form really good establishments, before being solicitous about their numbers.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Speak simply, act simply, go straight to the goal: the truth. . . . (Marie Therese de Lamourous)
- “Marianist teachers teach in order to educate.” (MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN PEDAGOGY FOR USE OF THE BROTHERS OF MARY, 1899)
- “(The teacher) imparts a Christian lesson by every word, every gesture, and every look; by modesty (he/she) preaches a constant lesson on all the virtues to (his/her) pupils.” (MARIANIST CONSTITUTIONS, 1839)
- “Marianist education is directed towards promoting the integral development of the person, leading students to the acquisition of human knowledge, helping them to develop critical thought and stimulating their yearning for truth, both in the theoretical realm and in everyday life.” (Marianist, RULE OF LIFE, 1983)
- “A well rounded teacher is dynamic, responsible, flexible, creative, a dreamer, courageous in facing the future, maintains a sense of humor, eyes are on the stars and feet on the ground, and sees students as the children of Mary.” (John O’Connor, S.M.)
- “A zealous teacher who realizes the role of the educator . . . is intent upon opening the minds of his/her pupils, on expanding the circle of their ideas, ideals, and preoccupations.” (Joseph Sorret, S.M.)
- Each Marianist school should make every effort to develop a school which truly educates, i.e., one in which students and faculty develop a love for learning and a thirst to know truth for its own sake, thus entering the dialogue of faith and culture.” (VISION AND JOURNEY)



- “We should be convinced that the student is not a glass that is to be filled, but rather a fire that is to be kindled.” (Domingo Lazaro, S.M.)
- “School is a place where the ‘fair and the good’ life is learned and not merely from books and exercises, from the dry bones of routine school work, but from the living and vivifying influence of the teacher.” (MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN PEDGAGOGY, 1897)
- “A teacher should be an inspiration for his/her pupils and not a mere drill-master; he/she should not think for them, but should make them think; he/she should not attempt to teach them everything, but he/she should in all events teach them how to learn and how to live.” (MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN PEDAGOGY, 1897)
- “The true educator respects the student’s personality.” (Domingo Lazaro, S.M.)
- “The teacher should give more attention to the formation of intelligence than to the acquisition of knowledge.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “Let us not be afraid to be too kind; nor should we think that kindness is a sign of weakness.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “Make your instruction interesting, teach with a will and with pleasure, teach well . . . do not be fussy, keep cool! do not do the thinking for the pupils .” (MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN PEDAGOGY, 1897)
- “A zealous teacher who realizes the role of the educator . . . is intent upon opening the minds of pupils, on expanding the circle of their ideas and ideals . . . (Joseph Sorret, S.M.)
- “Above all the educator should help the student to become aware of his (her) own capacities and stimulate growth. It is not so much a question of sowing some new seed in the soul of the child as it is of cultivating and protecting what is already there.” (Julian Gonzalez, S.M.)
- “To educate is to actively help the student to discover and develop his/her native talents and to guide him/her toward bringing them to their fullest realization.” (Domingo Lazaro, S.M.)
- “We need more of the philosophy of life in our classrooms, and a little less of that mere information that gives no training; a good deal less of that knowledge that can be bought for ten cents in a pocket encyclopedia or for ten dollars in a dictionary. We need more of the art of living and thinking, more the science of the human heart that never gets into print . . . . (T.F.E., S.M.)

- “Of what good is it to read, if one does not understand what he/she reads or if, unable to distinguish truth from falsehood, (the student) merely substitutes error for ignorance? Of what use is it to know how to write, if one does not have correct ideas or noble sentiments to express? Of what good is it to know how to calculate, if right reason and true conscience do not govern the calculations and prevent them from becoming the instruments of selfishness and greed? The purpose of education is not so much to impart certain skills as to develop faculties, so that, as a rational being, the student will know how to safeguard his/her moral and intellectual nature in a material and sensual environment and to appreciate those things which lead to truth and virtue.” (MARIANIST MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION)
  
- “Study, discipline, devotion, and work are the cornerstones of the great edifice of life. Teachers are more than mere academic guides. They should be involved in the lives of their students and take a personal interest in the intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual development of each of them.” (Domingo Lazaro, S.M.)
  
- “To be Christian, it is necessary to be fully human. Nobody complies with the law of grace who has not first complied to the full with the law of nature. To educate a child is to work to transform that child into a perfect human being, by seeking the complete, not practical development of that child’s physical, intellectual and moral capabilities.” (Joseph Simler, S.M.)
  
- “What pleased Father Chaminade . . . is the manner in which educators have for forming both the spirit and heart of pupils while, at the same time, they teach them to read and write.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
  
- “We don’t educate for the school, not merely for the years one is in school, but for life.” (F. Armentia, S.M.)
  
- “A child and a young person really ought to educate themselves since they cannot truly assimilate what they have not yet personally encountered, experienced, and decided for themselves.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
  
- “The athlete should make an effort to play as well as possible. He/she should try to win, but not sacrifice the beauty of the game for the sake of victory. Sportsmanship, self control, obedience, and perseverance are the fruits of a healthy approach to sports. Teachers should congratulate the team . . . for their good work.” (Theodore Hoeffken, S.M.)

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

- (Marianist schools) . . . are a powerful means of reforming people. The children there generally make such rapid progress and become so docile and Christian that they carry the good odor of virtue and religion into their perspective families. The children become, as it were, apostles to their parents, and their apostolate always produces some happy fruit. That is what makes me call the schools a means of reforming people.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Our work is sublime; it is magnificent. . . . it is because we are missionaries of Mary, who has told us to “do whatever He tells you.” Yes, we are missionaries because to each one the Blessed Virgin has delivered a mandate to work at the salvation of our brethren.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “By educating 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.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “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)
- “Schools offer us an excellent opportunity and responsibility to work for justice and peace. Our progress should develop a critical sense which prepares stents to build a just society and to promote unity and respect among all peoples.”  
(Marianist RULE OF LIFE)
- “There are several mutually related characteristics which are recognized in all Marianist schools around the world. They can be summarized as: family spirit, respect for the personality of the child, and prudent discernment open to the adaptations required by changing times and surroundings.” (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “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; others 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, 1983)
- “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.” (VISION AND JOURNEY)
- “Our educational institutions must avoid forming persons who for lack of a critical spirit assure the permanence of an unjust order or who form an elite using positions of prestige for personal advantage rather than providing needed services for the development of society.” (Marianist General Chapter, 1976)
- “The service of God and neighbor should dominate the whole educational program.” (E. Baumeister, S.M.)

## Educate for Adaptation and Change

- “New times demand new methods.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “We must courageously modify methods and forms that have nothing about them that is immutable in order to adapt to the varying needs of time, place, and customs.” (Blessed William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Not all novelty is to be condemned; if that were true, the road to progress would be closed. We must maintain an open mind, receptive to true progress.” (Francois Kieffer, S.M.)
- “Rooted in tradition, as well he should have been, (Blessed Chaminade) faithfully preserved the essentials and the basic elements that do not admit of change. However, he was flexible, even at the risk of causing surprise, or even opposition among those who were shackled by routine. ‘We must courageously modify methods and forms that have nothing about them that is immutable in order to adapt to the changing needs of time, place and customs.’” (Henri Rousseau, S.M.)
- “Let us be enemies of impudent innovation, just as we are of blind routine.” (Jean Lalanne, S.M.)
- “The great principles of education and teaching do not vary; but the application of these principles and methods must necessarily be adapted to the needs and requirements of human society. To admit absolute invariability in the form and matter of instruction would be to limit to a very short time the services and even the existence of an Institute, which devotes itself to education.” (MARIANIST CONSTITUTIONS, 1937, No. 277)
- “A school ought to be continually revising its methods, bearing in mind the complexity and instability of the real world. The development of new circumstances presupposes on the part of educators a calm affectivity and respectful humility in the face of truth. (Paul Hoffer, S.M.)
- “The authentic educator should possess the power of adaptation that allows him to adjust to the student, who is in the process of becoming, just as he must be able to adjust to the evolution taking place in the culture.” (Leopold Prochaska, S.M.)
- “What is beyond discussion is the fact that the future belongs to the enterprising, and that new times require people of action. Now then, this is the role for young people who do not have to reproduce the past, but rather have the challenge of creating new ways of thinking, of working in keeping with current intellectual developments.” (Henri Rosseau, S.M.)

- “The basic principles of education and of teaching do not vary; but the application of those principles, as well as methods, must of necessity be adapted to the needs and demands of human society. To insist on the absolute inalterability of methods and teaching materials would be at the same time to limit to a very short life the services and even the existence of an Institute dedicated to education.”  
(CONSTITUTIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY, 1839)
  
- “Though we are not (people) of the world, we are not for all that (people) of another age or of another country. Our lives are not hidden; they are not relegated to the desert, or passed within the narrow limits of a cell. To act on the world we are persuaded that we must know it, and hence our life is mingled with all the movements that influence the trend of the epoch, and call for a new order of requirements.” (Jean Lalanne, S.M.)
  
- “Our mission requires adaptability on the part of our members and a spirit of collaboration with all who serve in the church.” (Marianist RULE OF LIFE, 1983)

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December 2007