



CHARACTERISTIC OF MARIANIST EDUCATION:

Educate for Formation in Faith

A. Strive to imitate Mary's example of faith and discipleship.

(21) Students in Marianist schools see Mary as a woman who is strong in faith, especially through the examples and teachings of their Marianist educators. They see her as a young woman who trusted God and said “yes” to a call into an unknown future that transformed her life. They see her faith expressed in the care and concern evident in her visit to her cousin Elizabeth, the steadfast devotion and courage in her presence at the foot of the cross, and the way her presence strengthened the faith of the disciples at Pentecost. They see that their Marianist educators strive personally to take on Mary's mission of bringing Christ to life in their students. So, as Mary formed her son, Jesus, the Marianist educator fosters in each student the virtues necessary for faithful discipleship.

B. Be a living witness through a personal and committed faith of the heart.

(22) Young people need to find a meaning for life that will direct them in their daily activities, stimulate their practice of personal values and develop their faith. Marianist educators, with their

mission of forming others in faith, accompany students in their search for meaning, enable them to recognize and welcome the sacred and guide them toward contemplating the good, the true and the beautiful. Regular and creative liturgical services both form and express this lived faith. With simplicity and humility, Marianist educators teach and model the Catholic faith in which their schools are grounded. This foundation allows students and educators to engage in interreligious dialogue with others inside and outside the school.

C. Foster dialogue between faith and culture.

(23) In the search for truth, the Marianist educator is called to both lead and learn from dialogue between faith and culture. Marianist schools provide opportunities for faith sharing and quiet reflection for both students and staff members. These opportunities encourage a deeper understanding of the interrelationship of faith and the rest of life, an appreciation of the importance of gospel values in a world where they are often missing, and the practice of open-mindedness and tolerance that includes being a prophetic witness. Marianist educators—valuing both faith and reason—utilize the rich culture of our Marianist educational traditions while adapting to the cultural differences present in the school community to stimulate meaningful dialogue in and out of the classroom.

[The Catholic school] must develop persons who are responsible and inner-directed, capable of choosing freely in conformity with their conscience.^{xiii}

D. Form students in gospel values and Christian attitudes.

(24) Marianist educators know that religious practices are formative. By aiding students in the practice of Christian virtue, Marianist educators hope, with Father Chaminade, to create a “people of saints.” Further, Marianist educators commit themselves to living gospel values and working to form students to be Christ-like. Students who respond to moral and ethical problems with

the courage and compassion that the gospel teaches are prepared to become full and active members of their communities and are motivated to build a society of solidarity, justice and peace.

Through Mary, Marianist education invites students to consider a powerful, but gentler side of faith I think most Catholic schools call students to a relationship with Jesus. Marianist schools take it a step further and invite young people to a relationship with Christ and with Mary.^{xiv}

E. Build communities of faith that bring the gospel to life.

(25) Communities of faith and hope renew all creation and make known the reign of God. By their personal example in living out the Marianist charism, Marianist educators challenge their students to develop an authentic interior spirit and a personal response to God's call. Together, teachers and students create model communities of faith centered in love and service. Such communities bear witness to the truth of Chaminade's words, "The Gospel can be lived today as in the early days of the Church." True to Mary's mission, we bring Christ to the world and believe that with God, all things are possible.



Quotations from Marianist Sources

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(26) “Our primary objective is formation in faith. In particular, we aim to motivate and train apostles and to foster communities of dedicated lay people.” —*RL 71*.

(27) “Christian education is unthinkable outside a climate permeated by faith The spirit of faith helps them [educators] to free themselves from self-love ... and all personal ambition.” —*Paul J. Hoffer, SM, Pédagogie Marianiste (Paris: Centre de Documentation Scolaire, 1956), 468*.

(28) “Going back to the fundamental principles of Marianist education demands that we seriously rethink about what understanding of God we are conveying, what experience of God we are communicating as we teach.” —*José María Arnaiz, SM et al, Principles of Marianist Educational Praxis (Rome: SM General Administration, 2014), 91*.

(29) “The place where faith is witnessed by the community should be beautiful. Beauty and art convey a different level of the experience of God than do intellectual study or even faith-sharing within the community.” —*Stephen M. Glodek, SM, Marianist Educational Praxis: Institutions, Agents and Recipients (Rome: SM General Administration, 2014), 60*.

(30) “Each Marianist school should make every effort: to maintain the Catholic and Marianist identity of the school; to encourage commitment among all faculty members to personal spiritual growth and the formation of faith of the entire school community—students, service workers, alumni, and parent groups; to provide for the involvement of lay teachers in the Marianist spirituality and approach to the apostolate ...” —*Vision and Journey, Document of the SM General Chapter of 1986, no. 34*.