



CHARACTERISTIC OF MARIANIST EDUCATION:

Educate in Family Spirit

A. Demonstrate the Marian traits of hospitality, graciousness and community-building.

(43) Father Chaminade believed the Holy Family of Nazareth was the model for Marianist communities. Marianist educational communities draw from Mary, the soul of the family of Nazareth, as our inspiration for family spirit. Mary, who pondered things in her heart, spoke prophetically with words chosen wisely and was receptive at every moment of her life. She noticed at the wedding feast at Cana that there was an embarrassing lack of wine, acted boldly to approach Jesus and then engaged the servants to “do whatever he tells you.” Modeling Mary’s solidarity with those in need, we give and receive freely each day with gratitude and openness to the action of God. Our welcoming spirit signifies our trust in other people and our faith in God’s loving acceptance of us.

B. Cultivate a nurturing educational culture.

(44) Marianist family spirit is a way of life, with specific traits discernible in the educational communities it animates. By providing a climate of acceptance and love, the school acts as an

extended family, nurturing growth, development and personal responsibility. The school's culture is rooted in gospel values and the Marianist charism, and we welcome all people who wish to enrich that culture. Sustaining, assessing and enhancing the school's culture is the responsibility of all members of the school community.

C. Cultivate interpersonal relationships characterized by openness, respect, integrity, acceptance and dialogue.

(45) In the Marianist tradition, all members of the educational community, including boards of directors, administrators, faculty, staff, parents and students, strive to communicate respectfully and treat with dignity all members of the community. We prize physical presence in our communication. We strive to create a gracious environment by providing time to teach, think and organize, as well as to praise, thank and celebrate members of the school community. We listen attentively and engage in dialogue with trust and empathy, recognizing that we educate by “our every word, gesture, and look.” By being available and open to others, we continue to make the gospel vibrant in the daily life of our schools.

In this way a community of learning becomes an experience of grace, where the teaching programme contributes to uniting into a harmonious whole the human and the divine, the Gospel and culture, faith and life.^{xvii}

D. Form an educational family with collaborative structures and processes.

(46) The Marianist educational tradition has long been characterized by shared responsibility for decision-making at the appropriate levels. Effective collaboration requires good communication, clear lines of authority, and respect for the principle of subsidiarity—decision-making at its most immediate level. Marianist collaboration is evidenced both informally and

through intentional structures and processes that encourage teamwork among administrators, faculty, staff and students. We seek effective ways to work with the families of our students for mutual support and to reinforce our common mission. We extend this collaborative spirit in our dealings with ecclesial, civic and other entities and systems within the Marianist world and beyond.

E. Model leadership as loving and dedicated service.

(47) In Marianist educational communities, authority exists not for its own sake, but for the common good, and helps students to learn, teachers to educate and administrators to lead with an inclusive and participative style. Leaders in Marianist educational communities facilitate change, provide direction, foster participation and accountability, and communicate clearly with trust and honesty. Our charism's underlying spirit of love and nurturing encourages a "prudent tendency to leniency." With compassion and understanding, we call each student to personal and communal reflection and responsibility.



Quotations from Marianist Sources

Educate in Family Spirit

(48) "Integral to family spirit was collaboration, which finds its deepest rationale and motivation in the scriptural image of the mystical body of Christ Several of the schools founded by Chaminade owed their existence to the efforts of sodalists who sought the presence of the Society of Mary or the Daughters of Mary in their towns." —*Joseph Lackner, SM, Marianist Charism and Educational Mission (Rome: SM General Administration, 2014), 57.*

(49) "Respect for the dignity and freedom of the person leads the Marianist educator not only to respect individuals, but to love them and to interact with them as God does. That interaction, from love and respect, requires dialogue instead of imposition, and collaboration instead of authoritarianism." —*Manuel Cortés, SM, "Marianist Spirit and Education" in Identity of Marianist Education,*

Charles-Henri Moulin, SM, and Eddie Alexandre, SM et al (Rome: SM General Administration, 2017), 264.

(50) “The first task of a good administration is to take from the great Marianist educational heritage all the affective, moral and intellectual resources which allow the school to set out anew, to offer a valid, committed and innovative program. Both Mission and Vision are the first and most important responsibility of the leadership function.” —*Javier Cortés Soriano, SM, and Jesús Àngel Viguera Llorente, Leadership and Animation: Administration in the Service of Education (Rome: SM General Administration, 2015), 41.*

(51) “Marianist-educated persons exhibit Family Spirit in relationships. They are capable of developing balanced interpersonal relationships and successfully maintaining those relationships Their personal experience of community has taught them the importance of community for ongoing personal development. They have come away from their Marianist educational experience with some basic skills in the formation of community, in whatever circumstances they will find themselves. They have commitment to and have the skill in ‘staying at the table’ when relationships or community life are strained by conflict.” —*Stephen Glodek, SM, Marianist Praxis, Building Marianist Educational Culture (Dayton: North American Center for Marianist Studies, 2012), 11f.*

(52) “Granting that educators are prudent and religious persons, I claim that to impart a good education they must live the life of the family with their pupils There are three ways of giving an education: by instruction, by example, and by living in community Example becomes proximate, teaching is understood and felt only through community life.” —*Jean-Baptiste Lalanne, quoted in The Spirit of Our Foundation, vol. 3, no. 379.*