

## **Hiring of Non-Catholic Teachers in Catholic Schools**

In some instances it is not always possible to find a person with the content knowledge available to teach a specific subject in a Catholic school. Ideally, all teachers should not only know the content knowledge of the subject areas they teach, but should also know (and practice) the doctrine and traditional teachings of the Catholic Church. When time is of the essence, and a teacher must be secured to fulfill an instructional position in the classroom, care must be taken that this person will not harm the Catholic identity of the school. As one safeguard to ensuring this, many schools have required that these individuals sign Oaths of Fidelity and employment contracts that attest to their Christian character and their willingness not to contradict or openly question the teachings of the Catholic Church. While honest inquiry is encouraged, open dialogue that is defamatory to Church teachings in the presence of students can seriously call into question the formation that has been established.

## **Hiring Committed Catholics**

To fulfill their responsibility of speaking about the Father, educators in Catholic schools, with very few exceptions, should be practicing Catholics who are committed to the Church and living her sacramental life. Despite the difficulties sometimes involved, those responsible for hiring teachers must see to it that these criteria are met. When addressing Catholic-school principals in the *National Directory for Catechesis* (2005), the American bishops give unequivocal direction: "Recruit teachers who are practicing Catholics, who can understand and accept the teachings of the Catholic Church and the moral demands of the gospel, and who can contribute to the achievement of the school's Catholic identity and apostolic goals." Elsewhere the bishops also affirmed, "While some situations might entail compelling reasons for members of another faith tradition to teach in a Catholic school, as much as possible, all teachers in a Catholic school should be practicing Catholics."

When such a policy is ignored, it is inevitable that children will absorb, even if they are not explicitly taught, a soft indifferentism that will sustain neither their practice of the faith nor their ability to imbue society with Christian values. Principals, pastors, school-board members, parents, and bishops share in the serious duty of hiring teachers who meet the standards of doctrine and integrity of life essential to a flourishing Catholic school.

The Holy See shares the solicitude of the American bishops about employing teachers with a clear understanding of and commitment to Catholic education. A primary way to foster a school's catholicity is by carefully hiring men and women who enthusiastically endorse its distinctive ethos, for Catholic education is strengthened by witnesses to the gospel.

*FROM Five Essential Marks of Catholic Schools*

ARCHBISHOP J. MICHAEL MILLER, C.S.B

Retrieved from <http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/education/catholic-contributions/five-essential-marks-of-catholic-schools.html>

### **Non-Catholic Employment Contract Language**

#### Sample #1

Teachers must be Catholic, if possible. They must be persons whose attitudes and values are consistent with the Catholic philosophy of education. They must have the personal qualities and the experience needed to participate in the Church's educational mission. Should it be impossible to hire Catholics, those employed should be persons whose adherence to the Christian tradition is unquestioned regardless of the Church with which they are associated.

#### Sample #2

This employment agreement is entered into between \_\_\_\_\_ School ("the school") and the academic team member set out below and becomes effective only once signed and initialed by the Head of School. I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge, accept and embrace my vocation to teach at \_\_\_\_\_, and the blessings and responsibilities that accompany that vocation. I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ is a communion engaged in the formation of mind, body, heart and soul. It is a communion of God, the Roman Catholic Church (the "Church") our students, their families, all of our faculty, our staff, priests and religious, and me. As a teacher, I know that I am a crucial role model for the students and all others in our communion. I know and embrace the fact that our Catholic faith is interwoven throughout the life of the school, and that therefore the teaching of the tenets and disciplines of the faith are an intrinsic element of every Academic Team Member's responsibilities. Therefore I pledge to enthusiastically support the doctrine of the Church, and not to undermine her in any way. I know that unless waived in writing by the Head of School, I must be and remain a practicing Catholic in communion with the Church. I also understand that as an Academic Team Member, and in accord with my being in communion with the Church, I pledge to live my life, privately and publicly, in accord with the moral teachings and disciplines of the Church. Even if I am not Catholic, I pledge to lead my life, privately and publicly, in a manner that is not contrary to the moral teachings of the Church.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Team Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parish

## **Samples of Source Documents on Qualifications of Catholic School Teachers.**

Their daily witness to the meaning of mature faith and Christian living has a profound effect on the education and formation of their students. *Teach Them*, p. 3

All members of the faculty, at least by their example, are an integral part of the process of religious education....Teachers' life style and character are as important as their professional credentials. *Teach Them*, p. 7.

Recruit teachers who are practicing Catholics, who can understand and accept the teachings of the Catholic Church and the moral demands of the gospel, and who can contribute to the achievement of the school's Catholic identity and apostolic goals. *National Directory for Catechesis* (2005), American bishops, p. 231.

The distinctive Catholic identity and mission of the Catholic school also depend on the efforts and example of the whole faculty...All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry... While some situations might entail compelling reasons for members of another faith tradition to teach in a Catholic school, as much as possible, all teachers in a Catholic school should be practicing Catholics." *National Directory for Catechesis* (2005), American bishops, p. 233.

### **Sample Questionnaire for Church Affiliation.**

Non-Catholics may be hired to teach at Holy Angels Academy if:

- a. They have never been a Catholic
- b. Their lifestyle is consistent with Catholic moral standards

Examples:

Remarriage after divorce is not acceptable.

Co-habitation without marriage is not acceptable.

Practicing or avowed homosexuality is not acceptable.

Public dissent from the official teaching of the Church is not acceptable.

- c. They do not teach or advocate a moral stance contrary to Catholic teaching.  
i.e. teaching or advocating abortion, sterilization or contraceptive techniques is not acceptable.
- d. They do not teach or advocate Scriptural interpretations at variance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- e. They support Catholic moral standards and doctrine when called to do so.
- f. They are willing to promote the Catholic faith with students.
- g. They are willing to be part of the prayer life and religious activities of the school. i.e., attend the Sacred liturgy and pray with students and staff.
- h. They accept the social justice teaching of the Church.

Are you willing to abide by these stipulations? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

