

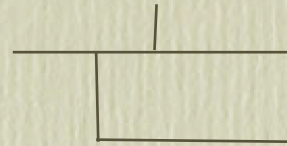
# Mission



Too busy - Iso gashii



Heart



Destruction

Jesus said to his apostles, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure ... And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.





Matthew 11:28-29



- The word "educate" comes from the Latin "ducare"(to lead)
- with the prefix "ex"(out from).
- Michelangelo





# All-embracing Mission    Vatican II Gaudium et Spes

‘The joys and the hopes,  
the griefs and the anxieties  
of the men and women of this age,  
especially those who are in any way afflicted,  
these are the joys and hopes,  
the griefs and anxieties  
of the followers of Christ.

Indeed nothing genuinely human  
fails to raise an echo in their hearts,  
for theirs is a community composed of men and women.

United in Christ,  
they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey  
to the kingdom of their Father  
and they have welcomed **the news of salvation  
which is meant for everyone**’(n. 1).



Catholic is not a brand name

The Church reverences and respects the unique mystery of each person's experience and the many ways in which people's experience is expressed culturally.



- The Church's mission is to share (with everyone who wants to listen) the Good News of what Jesus revealed about God

about the meaning of life

about how we can best live to the full.



- The Church aims to do this by what we teach, but words won't do it on their own.

The Church aims to create communities that live the love that filled Jesus' heart and to invite people to share this experience.

As we share this experience we will, of course, want to adjust our thinking and our behaviour.

The Church is not given a mission to control or force.

The Church is only to present and attract, leaving people free to accept or reject, for that is the nature of love. That is the nature of God as revealed by Jesus.



Of course accepting or rejecting the Good news has consequences in people's lives. We want people to accept the love being offered.

The Church, like a parent, gives all her love to attract people to embrace Jesus and the life of the community that lives by his Spirit.

But the word 'attract' is vital.

Pressure, other than the pressure of love, is a contradiction of our mission.



## Respect for people's experience and freedom

- Central to the mission of the Church is respect and reverence for each and every person

for the ways in which God is acting in their lives

and the ways in which, whether they realise it or not, they are responding to grace.

This means respecting people's freedom as to how they choose to respond to the Good News that we never cease to offer them.



‘The quality and effectiveness of religious education are dependent on how much individual freedom is respected’

(Crawford & Rossiter, page 47).

‘Create a respectful free ‘space’ around the young people’s faith. There is no principle more important than this in religious education’(C&R, page 48).

‘He was nine years old; he was a child; but he knew his own soul and treasured it, guarding it as the eyelid guards the eye’(Tolstoy L. Anna Karenina)



What, then, is the mission of your school?

We would like to be able to welcome every parent and every child and every person who would like to be part of, and contribute to, the school community.

As a school that is committed to be Catholic, we would want to welcome everyone's gift, everyone's experience, and share everyone's journey in an environment where the Good News of Jesus is lived in word and in lifestyle.

Our heart wants to be as large as the heart of Jesus and the heart of God.



While it is important that we have a truly Catholic heart, there are constraints of space, and so selections have to be made, obviously.

It is reasonable that, granted the limited available space, the school offers education especially to those families who are committed to the life and mission of the Church,

and, with a view to creating an effective Catholic environment in which to nurture the children and their parents, to invite onto the staff teachers and others who share this same commitment.



There is no point in inviting someone to be a member of an orchestra if they have no interest in playing an instrument.

But for staff and students we are not talking about a baptismal certificate. We are talking about commitment to the mission.



- The mission must include complete respect for the gifts and talents and commitment of each and every person here, for the Church is committed to such respect.

What we are asking today is: how can I see myself contributing to the school's mission?



How can we, as a staff, embrace this contribution with joy and gratitude.

We are all on a journey. We can only do our best.

The widow's gift



- Essential to the mission of the school is that together as a community we live to the best of our ability the life shown by Jesus,

and present this life to the children in the spirit or ‘feel’ of the school, in the way we treat each other, and in our teaching.



The Roman Congregation with special responsibilities for Catholic Education, in a document entitled: Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith, states: 'The Catholic Educator must be committed to the task of forming men and women who will make the civilization of love a reality'(n.19).



As regards what we present in our school, the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes with approval a statement from the Preface to the Roman Catechism published in 1566, just after the Council of Trent:

‘The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends.

Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action,

the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love.’



## To summarise:

Some of the elements of our mission are

- to be open to embrace every person in his or her uniqueness, to be open to welcome each child, each parent and each member of the staff into the community of the School and the community of the Church of which the school is a most significant missionary arm.
- to welcome each person's gifts and insights
- to respect each person's freedom



So what is our vision? What will give us energy to engage in this mission?

We are to love one another as Jesus loves us (John 15:12).

God dwells in our community and makes his home in each person in it (John 14:23).

If we stay close to Jesus we will bear much fruit, but if we are separated from him we will be unable to produce that special fruit of love that he inspires (John 15:5).

We are invited to allow grace to purify our minds and hearts to be as pure as Jesus in our loving (1 John 3:3).

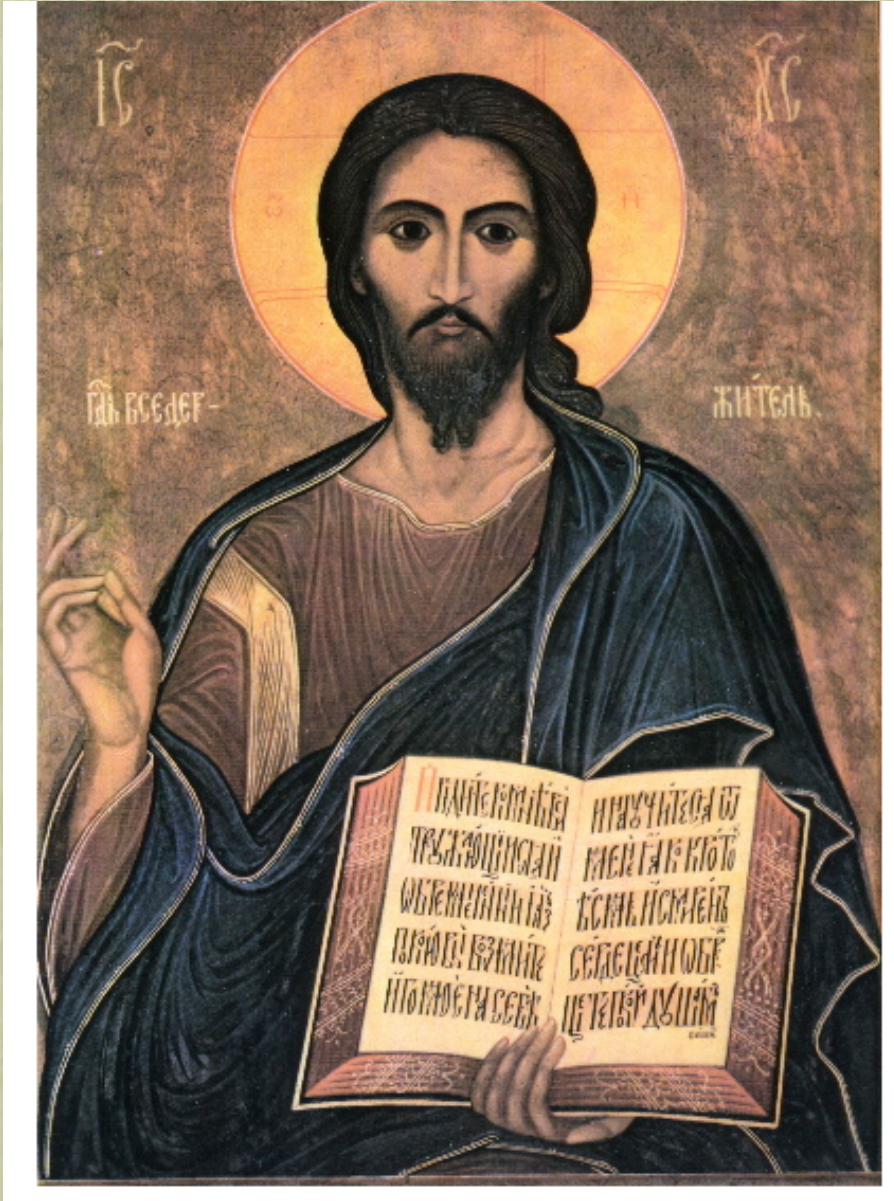


- ‘God is love’ and that ‘if we live in love we are living in God and God is living in us’(1John 4:16).

We might find inspiring these words of Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ. In an essay on purity of love he wrote:

‘Some day, after harnessing space, the winds,  
the tides and gravitation,  
we shall harness for God the energies of Love.  
And then, for the second time  
in the history of the world,  
we shall have discovered fire.’





Matthew 11:28-29

Make these sentiments my  
own in relation to the  
school community.





Renew us in our mission

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We are a pilgrim people  
of many tribes and tongues,  
scattered far in a wide  
and thirsty land.

We gather to remember,  
to be nourished by your song.

We come to touch  
the living heart  
in whom we all belong.





Renew us in your Spirit.  
Anoint us in your love.  
Lead us on to living water.  
Fulfil your plans for us.  
Strengthen us together  
to proclaim your loving Word.  
Renew us in our mission.  
May we be, may we be  
your heart on earth.





We thank you, God of wonder,  
for your witnesses in faith,  
for the ones who've walked  
beside us through the years.  
May their faith inspire courage,  
may we hear the call they heard.  
Awaken in our lives today  
the power of your word.





Renew us in your Spirit.  
Anoint us in your love.  
Lead us on to living water.  
Fulfil your plans for us.  
Strengthen us together  
to proclaim your loving Word.  
Renew us in our mission.  
May we be, may we be  
your heart on earth.





Like a tree surviving fire,  
like a town after the storm,  
By the cross and by your love  
we are reborn.  
As we share the bread of healing,  
your own body we become.  
In our world  
we are your presence.  
In your presence we are one.  
We are one.





Renew us in your Spirit.  
Anoint us in your love.  
Lead us on to living water.  
Fulfil your plans for us.  
Strengthen us together  
to proclaim your loving Word.  
Renew us in our mission.  
May we be, may we be  
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