

Canons Pertaining to Catholic Education

Canon 776

By virtue of his office, the parish priest is bound to ensure the catechetical formation of adults, young people and children. To this end, he is to avail himself of the help of clerics attached to the parish, as well as of members of institutes of consecrated life and of societies of apostolic life, being mindful of the character of each institute; and the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful, especially catechists. All of these, unless they are lawfully impeded are not to refuse to give their labors willingly. The parish priest is also to promote and to foster the role of parents in the family catechesis mentioned in can. 774, § 2.

Canon 777

In a special way, the parish priest is to ensure, in accordance with the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, that:

1. an adequate catechesis is given for the celebration of the sacraments;
2. children are properly prepared for first confession and first holy communion, and for the sacrament of confirmation, by means of catechetical formation over an appropriate period of time;
3. children, after they have made their first holy communion, are given a richer and deeper catechetical formation;
4. as far as their condition allows, catechetical formation is given to the mentally and physically handicapped;
5. the faith of young people and of adults is strengthened, enlightened and developed by various catechetical methods and initiatives.

Canon 793 § 1

Parents, and those who take their place, have both the obligation and the right to educate their children. Catholic parents have also the duty and the right to choose those means and institutes which, in their local circumstances, can best promote the Catholic education of their children.

Canon 793 § 2

Parents have moreover the right to avail themselves of that assistance from civil society which they need to provide a Catholic education for their children.

Canon 794 § 1

The Church has in a special way the duty and the right of educating, for it has a divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian life.

Canon 794 § 2

Pastors of souls have the duty of making all possible arrangements so that all the faithful may avail themselves of a Catholic education

Canon 795

Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person, so that all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children and young persons are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life.

Canon 796 § 1

Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfill their role in education.

Canon 796 § 2

There must be the closest cooperation between parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem.

Canon 797

Parents must have a real freedom in their choice of schools. For this reason Christ's faithful must be watchful that the civil society acknowledges this freedom of parents and in accordance with the requirement of distributive justice, even provides them with assistance.

Canon 798

Parents are to send their children to those schools which will provide for their Catholic education... If they cannot do this, they are bound to ensure the proper Catholic education of their children outside the school.

Canon 799

Christ's faithful are to strive to secure that in the civil society the laws which regulate the formation of the young, also provide a religious and moral education in the schools that is in accord with the conscience of the parents.

Canon 800 § 1

The Church has the right to establish and to direct schools for any field of study or of any kind and grade.

Canon 800 § 2

Christ's faithful are to promote Catholic schools, doing everything possible to help in establishing and maintaining them.

Canon 801

Religious institutes which have education as their mission are to keep faithfully to this mission and earnestly strive to devote themselves to Catholic education, providing this also through their own schools which, with the consent of the diocesan Bishop, they have established.

Canon 802 § 1

If there are no schools in which an education is provided that is imbued with a Christian spirit, the diocesan Bishop has the responsibility of ensuring that such schools are established.

Canon 802 § 2

Where it is suitable, the diocesan Bishop is to provide for the establishment of professional and technical schools, and of other schools catering for special needs.

Canon 803 § 1

A Catholic school is understood to be one which is under the control of the competent ecclesiastical authority or of a public ecclesiastical juridical person, or one which in a written document is acknowledged as Catholic by the ecclesiastical authority.

Canon 803 § 2

Formation and education in a Catholic school must be based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and the teachers must be outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

Canon 803 § 3

No school, even if it is in fact Catholic, may bear the title 'Catholic School' except by the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority.

Canon 804 § 1

The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school, and through various means of social communication, is subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the Episcopal Conference to issue general norms concerning this field of activity and for the diocesan Bishop to regulate and watch over it.

Canon 804 § 2

The local Ordinary is to be careful that those who are appointed as teachers of religion in schools, even non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in true doctrine, in the witness of their Christian life, and in their teaching ability.

Canon 805

In his own diocese, the local Ordinary has the right to appoint or to approve teachers of religion and, if religious or moral considerations require it, the right to remove them or to demand that they be removed.

Canon 806 § 1

The diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of religious institutes. He has also the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of Catholic schools; these directives apply also to schools conducted by members of a religious institute, although they retain their autonomy in the internal management of their schools.

Canon 806 § 2

Those who are in charge of Catholic schools are to ensure, under the supervision of the local Ordinary, that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area.