

## Catholic School Community Beliefs and Commitments: Catholic School Parents and Guardians

By enrolling your child in our school, you are joining our Catholic educational mission in our school and acknowledge that we are a Catholic community composed primarily of adherents to a religious faith. Further, you are acknowledging that the mission of the Catholic school is to bring your child to encounter Jesus Christ and the truths of our Catholic faith through their intellectual, spiritual, moral, and human formation.

The mission of a Catholic school is a fundamentally different endeavor than enrolling your children in a secular school institution. Catholic schools exist to be sanctuaries of education which serve your family, in order that our school might help you as you bring your children into an encounter with Jesus Christ. We desire to serve you as parents and support your desire for your children to be transformed by a relationship with Jesus Christ, grow in wisdom and virtue, and discover their call for their lives as young men and women created in God's image and likeness. This understanding of our mission is vital if we are to properly serve your family for the sake of your child's education and formation. Our schools do not function in our mission to help bring children to Jesus Christ if not for bringing them to Jesus Christ through your family.

We believe with the Church that you are the primary educators of your children, and the family is the first school of the faith. Your children have been given to you by God the creator. The mission of your family is to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel to your children. Part of this mission is to form a home in which your children can encounter Christ so that your children can grow in wisdom and virtue through everything they encounter in their homes with you. The mission of your family is also to joyfully proclaim the Good News to the world through your words and witness. The school is considered an extension of the home. The best way for families to support our mission in the school is to live a happy, holy family life that shows children the riches of relationship, the Church's culture, and models of relationship with Jesus Christ himself. Even families who do not share our religious faith are important members of our community and are called to lives of virtue and truth.

Unfortunately, the assumptions of the secular culture from which all members of our community, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, come from are increasingly at odds with the teachings of our faith. Thus, it is important for all members of our community to be aware of this disconnect and ultimately, understand and accept our community's worldview and convictions.

- ❖ For our community, the sanctity of life from the moment of conception to natural death, and the givenness of our sexuality, in all its aspects as male and female created in God's image and likeness, is the basis for human dignity and identity. It is an essential means by which we come to know God, to understand our identity as his sons and daughters, to understand how we are to love and honor one another, and to understand the vocation for which he has created us. It provides the foundation for the education and formation of the human person.
- ❖ Catholic teachings on sexual identity, marriage, family, and parenting are inseparable from the way we live and interact. These teachings allow us to fully comprehend how to love God with our whole mind, heart, and soul, and our neighbors as ourselves. We believe that sexual expression contributes to human flourishing in as much as it is integrated with a view toward its natural ends: faithful, covenantal love between a man and a woman, and a self-gift ordered to procreation. "Willed by God in the very act of creation, marriage and the family are interiorly ordained to fulfillment in Christ and have need of His graces in order to be healed from the wounds of sin and restored to their 'beginning,' that is, to full understanding and the full realization of God's plan." (*Familiaris Consortio*, 1981).
- ❖ As a community we believe that, far from being within the domain of mere opinion, a true understanding, expression, and living out of human sexuality is a foundational part of who we are and how we see the world. Given that our faith is lived out and transmitted in all aspects of our lives, it is important that all members of our community, respect these beliefs.

Our mission requires attention not merely to academic outcomes, but it requires that all students be given an education and formation rooted in our understanding of the dignity and vocation of the human person as male and female created for heaven. Therefore, in our community you can be assured that:

- ❖ All aspects of our Catholic school program will be ordered to the highest aims of education: the cultivation of wisdom and virtue, and the formation of the supernatural man and woman who thinks, judges, and acts according to right reason illuminated by the fullness of the teachings and example of Jesus Christ and his Church (*Divini Illius Magistri*, #98).
- ❖ Our Catholic School faculty and staff take to heart the school's mission to partner with and support you to guide and form your children in the fullness of truth as revealed by Jesus Christ and taught by the Church, not personal or worldly political preferences, ideologies, or agendas.
- ❖ Our Catholic School faculty and staff will be men and women who are outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life and who desire to grow in their love for Jesus Christ and his Church, joyfully giving witness to the truth of the Gospel.
- ❖ Our Catholic schools will be fully pro-life institutions, not merely recognizing the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death, but unabashedly defending it and forming students in the knowledge of the truth of the sanctity of life that they might be freed from the culture of death that pervades our world today.
- ❖ Our Catholic School will provide and protect:
  - A joyful respect and proclamation of the good of the Christian family as a domestic Church in which children can first encounter their identity as beloved children of God, the Father.
  - A curriculum that encourages children to talk to their parents and siblings about what they are learning and understanding and an education that seeks to strengthen the relationships in your family through the joyful shared pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness.
  - An understanding of History as the drama of our salvation by Jesus Christ from sin and death, in the study of human lives.
  - Instruction in math and science that allows students to come to know the logic and order of the genius behind creation.
  - Literature that forms a sacramental imagination and moral imagination in young men and women through grappling with the big questions of life in pursuit of what is true, good, and virtuous.
  - Physical formation that trains students to be a gift of self to others.
  - An immersion in art and music that seeks to form your children in recognizing and loving beauty.
  - Formation of the mind and heart which allows students to submit their identity, feelings, and desires to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
  - An environment that holds respect for the dignity of the human person, ensuring that all interactions by all members of the community towards each other and towards others outside of the school are grounded in the proper Christian charity and respect.
  - An environment that addresses issues of race, gender, poverty, and inequality in a manner that is consistent with Church teaching and avoids the influence of secular, critical philosophies and theories that contradict Church teaching.

For our school to properly support you as the primary educators of your children and partner with you in the formation and education of your children, all Catholic school families must understand and display a positive and supportive attitude toward the Catholic Church, her teachings, her work, and the mission of the Catholic school. As the Church notes, "Everyone has the obligation to recognize, respect, and bear witness to the Catholic identity of the school," (*The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue*, 2022). While this does not mean members of our community are expected to be perfect and sinless, for the good of our community, families must refrain from public promotion or approval of any conduct or lifestyle that would discredit, disgrace, or bring scandal to the School, and the Church in the Archdiocese of Denver, or be considered a counter-witness to Catholic doctrine or morals.

Lastly, it is necessary for parents to cooperate closely with the leadership, faculty, and staff. By enrolling your child in our school, you are committing to maintaining a relationship rooted in the trust and confidence that our school and its personnel are operating for the good of your family and your child's learning and formation. Our school and personnel at some point may need to bring attention to academic, behavioral, or social concerns with your child. It is in these moments where there may be conflicts or disagreements that arise between the school and the family. In these moments, you can expect our school to engage with you to address complex issues with great respect and love for you and your child. In turn, families are asked to engage with trust that the school is seeking the best for its mission and your child and thus, expected to cooperate fully and respectfully with our school and its personnel to bring about the best resolution and outcome.

Thank you for partnering with us to support you in the mission of educating and forming your children. It is an honor to serve your family.