

To Teach As Jesus Did

Book Discussion

3 hours Credit

Facilitated by

Mary Jo Sullivan-Worley

To Teach As Jesus Did

- 1. What makes up the threefold educational ministry of the Church?**
- 2. While technology equips us with unprecedented means of communication, it also poses threats to the dignity of the person. Explain.**
- 3. Religious education should foster unity within the family and Church, but in today's world it can cause division. Give examples.**
- 4. How do we as catechists make authentic doctrine relevant to today's parents and youth?**
- 5. Diocesan-approved family life education is a "grave obligation" of Catholic school educators to assist parents in the area of human sexuality. This was very controversial 20 years ago. Have we seen any positive or negative changes in this area in our school?**
- 6. Identify the roles of Campus Ministry at the elementary school level.**
- 7. Has the close proximity to Catholic institutions of higher learning (colleges, universities, seminaries) aided us in our vocations as Catholic school educators? Identify examples.**
- 8. The American history of Catholic elementary and secondary schools demonstrates a deep conviction to Catholic education. Why then do so many of our Catholic youth attend public schools? Is there tension between children educated at the parish school vs. at a public school? What can we do to build community with all our Catholic children and families?**
- 9. The trend in today's world is to compartmentalize learning and to isolate the religious dimension from other areas of human life. Identify how our Catholic school integrates religious truths and values with the rest of our students' lives.**
- 10. How do Catholic schools benefit our nation?**

**11. The bishops affirmed in this document that “Catholic schools which realize the threefold purpose of Christian education – to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve – are the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people.” What action can be taken now by bishops, pastors, principals, development directors, school boards, teachers, parents, and parishioners to address the financial and social challenges in our schools?
Write a development outline indicating the tasks for each group.**

**12. Name three tasks for ministry to youth that encourage and enable young people to participate in the Church.
Do you know of any parish having great success in this area?
What works?**

13. What steps can be taken to provide for those who suffer most from educational disadvantage?

To Teach As Jesus Did

1. What makes up the threefold educational ministry of the Church?

Answer: Message, Community, Service (pages 5-9)

Activity: Identify how these aspects are fulfilled in your parish.

- ex. 1. Message – DRE programs and school teach authentic doctrine
- 2. Community – RCIA Scrutinies, Sacramental celebrations, Scripture Study . . .
- 3. Service – Community Ministry, outreaches . . .

2. While technology equips us with unprecedented means of communication, it also poses threats to the dignity of the person. Explain.

Answer: Accumulation of wealth, violence, bullying, distraction from helping others or serving God. Doesn't satisfy needs of stability, friendship, or meaning of life. Idealism and reform vs. greed and self-indulgence. (pages 10-11)

3. Religious education should foster unity within the family and Church, but in today's world it can cause division. Give examples.

Answer: Divorce, birth control, clergy sex scandals, decreased emphasis on ritual/traditions by some catechists . . . (pages 14-15).

4. How do we as catechists make authentic doctrine relevant to today's parents and youth?

Answer: Parents must have ongoing education as to how the authentic teachings haven't changed but the method of transmission may have. For example – less memorizing and more learning through doing. (page 15-17) Media/technology and methodologies employed that youth respond to – content must remain authentic.

5. Diocesan-approved family life education is a “grave obligation” of Catholic school educators to assist parents in the area of human sexuality. This was very controversial 20 years ago. Have we seen any positive or negative changes in this area in our school?

Answer: As parents have become educated to the spiritual and physical aspects of this age-appropriate instruction, anxiety decreased, and most of our school parents are appreciative of this instruction. However, there may be some communities where there is opposition to this instruction. (page 16)

6. Identify the roles of Campus Ministry at the elementary school level.

Answer: Facilitates liturgies, prayer experiences, service opportunities, helps build community and respect for diversity, trains students in ministries (reader, lector, altar server, Eucharistic Minister, liturgical music – singers, instrumentalists, dancers . . .). Builds involvement in parish. (pages 20-22)

7. Has the close proximity to Catholic institutions of higher learning (colleges, universities, seminaries) aided us in our vocations as Catholic school educators? Identify examples.

Answer: Catholic Leadership Program, theological resource, faculty members can be tapped for retreats and ongoing adult education, use of facilities for diocesan events, Catholic events (Justice Symposium, guest speakers or liturgical music concerts . . .), seminarians work in some parishes and with school children . . .
Santa Clara University, University of San Francisco, Dominican College, Notre Dame in Belmont, St. Patrick Seminary. . .

8. The American history of Catholic elementary and secondary schools demonstrates a deep conviction to Catholic education. Why then do so many of our Catholic youth attend public schools? Is there tension between children educated at the parish school vs. at a public school? What can we do to build community with all our Catholic children and families?

Answer: Cost, bad experiences/feelings remaining from some parents educated in Catholic schools.
Work as sacramental teams vs. imposing instruction by the DRE or school.
Work out partnerships in use of facilities instead of a them vs. us mentality.
Prayer partners between catechetical ministry students and school students.
Joint retreats and social gatherings. Children's or Youth Choirs a mix of both and shared liturgical celebrations.
Teachers in school and catechist program have some shared ongoing educational events (speakers and/or social get togethers).
(pages 23-25)

9. The trend in today's world is to compartmentalize learning and to isolate the religious dimension from other areas of human life. Identify how our Catholic school integrates religious truths and values with the rest of our students' lives.

Answer: Teachers are professionals trained to integrate the three (message, community, service) educational goals of Catholic Education with academic mastery. Many opportunities are facilitated to apply what students have learned to real-life experiences through service and discussions of moral and religious events/discussions.

Able to address concerns/issues as they unfold locally and globally. Parents committed to children's religious, as well as, academic development.

Parish involvement-clergy interaction with school, parent and teacher interaction on parish committees and parish liturgies and social events. (pages 28-30)

10. How do Catholic schools benefit our nation?

Answer: Educate students with a commitment to a moral code, service to others, and patriotism.

Produce responsible citizens of the community, nation, and greater world.

Give diversity in the American educational system. Promote educational freedom of choice.

High expectations/standards/achievement raise the bar for all schools.

Economically, relieve some of tax burden of society.

(page 31)

11. The bishops affirmed in this document that "Catholic schools which realize the threefold purpose of Christian education – to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve – are the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people." What action can be taken now by bishops, pastors, principals, development directors, school boards, teachers, parents, and parishioners to address the financial and social challenges in our schools?

Write a development outline indicating the tasks for each group.

Answer: Advertising clear and distinctive goals, building partnerships with public and nonpublic schools (sharing resources), practice fiscal, professional, academic, and civic accountability, create vigorous student recruitment plans, exercise firm control over costs and efficient use of facilities and personnel, consolidate or reorganize schools, come up with new ideas for sponsorship and collaboration . . . (pages 32-35)

12. Name three tasks for ministry to youth that encourage and enable young people to participate in the Church.

Do you know of any parish having great success in this area?

What works?

Answer: 1. Adults who lead youth groups act as guides and mentors and embrace their role as religious educators. Facilitate opportunities for action projects exemplifying what it means to be a Christian.
2. Provide experiences of community with youth from diverse backgrounds and advocate their concerns and causes.
3. Develop peer group ministry that develops leadership.
(pages 36-37)

13. What steps can be taken to provide for those who suffer most from educational disadvantage?

Answer: Freedom of school choice (legislation).

Diversity of choice in our schools.

Scholarships and other forms of funding for poor families so our schools do not become elite institutions.

Recruit professional faculty committed to the work of the Church.

(pages 40-41)