

THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING

Teachers and school administrators are called by God to help raise up the young in the ways of faith. Jesus, the Savior, was also a teacher. He gathered his disciples and others around him and taught with such conviction and truth that the “many who heard him were astonished, saying, ‘Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hand!’” (Mark 6:2). His apostles, likewise, were teachers and gave witness “with great power,” through their words and their deeds, and “gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).

The ministry of teaching obligates the teacher to assist his or her students in understanding not only mathematics or physics, but how the order and discipline of mathematics or physics reveals the mind of God. It obligates one not only to instruct in geography and history, but to inculcate the faith by helping the students know that God created the mountains, the sea, the rivers, the deserts, the forests, the plains, and all the creatures that inhabit them, and to learn that human discoveries, empires, conflicts, and social movements are measured by the divinely ordained order. The ministry of teaching requires one not only to help students acquire skill in spelling, reading, grammar, and writing, but to understand that human language is a primary means by which students might explore the wonders of poetry and narrative and sacred Scripture itself—all of which indirectly or directly disclose salvation history. Regardless of the subject, true teachers minister to their students by helping them follow Paul’s admonition:

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil. 4:8–9).

Teachers in a Christian school must be ever mindful that they instruct not only through rational explanation of formal subject material but even more powerfully through word, deed, example, and shared experience. Simply put, they teach the faith by modeling the faith and by modeling faithfulness. This is why all teachers, even before their first meeting with students, must subscribe to the school’s Statement of Faith. This is why teachers are required to give a godly example, both at school and away. Teachers must teach truth and avoid falsehood. “Therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ... Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear” (Ephesians 4: 25, 29).

Teachers minister to their students by providing them with faith experiences. They lead the youth in prayer, praise, and mercy. Paul urged Christians to “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander to be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:31–32). Teachers also model the Christian life by being active in their own church community and by serving as an intermediary assisting their students in becoming active in their respective church communities so that those students might be further nurtured in faith with their friends and family around them.