

## 2022-2023 Two Catholic Identity Standards Focus – Office for Catholic Schools

### Factor 1 The Catholic Identity of the School

The school is Catholic, approved by the Local Ordinary (Canon 803), providing authentic Catholic teaching, opportunities for community worship and participation in the Sacraments, and promoting evangelization and service to the community.

#### Prayers – Sacraments; **Sacramentals**

“Within such (school) communities, teachers and pupils experience together what it means to live a life of prayer, personal responsibility and freedom reflective of Gospel values.” (*To Teach as Jesus Did*, #107)

“In the New Covenant, prayer is the living relationship of the children of God with their Father who is good beyond measure, with his Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, United States Catholic Conference, 1994, #2565)

“Just as Baptism is the source of responsibilities and duties, the baptized person also enjoys rights within the Church: to receive the sacraments, to be nourished with the Word of God and to be sustained by the other spiritual helps of the Church.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, United States Catholic Conference, 1994, #1269)

**Standard: The school provides regular opportunities for the school community to experience prayer, retreats and the Sacraments.**

Checklist source: ISL 2012 Ap C-6 Catholic Identity, page 2.

- All children have the opportunity to attend Mass weekly.
- All staff celebrate Mass with the children.
- Children have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.
- Every class has a ‘prayer corner’ with religious imagery.
- Teachers pray with their students often during the day.
- Students experience a variety of prayer forms including memorized and spontaneous prayer.
- Students feel/are free to pray for special intentions (e.g., parents, family members, pets, etc.)
- Parents are responsible for teaching their children various memorized prayers as outlined by the school.
- Students have opportunities to experience some of the traditional forms of prayer and worship such as Benediction, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Stations of the Cross, Rosary, etc.
- There are special prayer events throughout the year (e.g., blessing of animals, blessing of throats, etc.)
- The school has a special celebration to recognize its patron saint.
- Special attention is paid to the liturgical cycle of the church.
- Children are encouraged to attend Mass on the weekend.

**Key Questions for reflection and discussion concerning Prayer and the Sacraments; cite evidence.**

Source: E3 2016 Accreditation Protocol page 37.

- How well does the school pray as an assembly? How well integrated is the prayer experience throughout the school – in all the classrooms?
- How well-organized/delivered are retreats? How systematic is the retreat program? How Christ-centered are the retreats?
- How does the school ensure that Catholic students experience the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation? What are the circumstances of these Sacramental celebrations with for/all students?
- How well does the school put students in touch with the liturgical life of the Catholic Church? What is the quality of any *spiritual direction* that students receive?
- In the interests of evangelization, how well does the school monitor and promote student’s experience of the Sacraments (notably experience of Baptism, of Eucharist, of Reconciliation and Confirmation)?

**Signs, Symbols and Sacraments**

**Standard: There is widespread use of signs, symbols, sacramental, traditions and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the school.**

Checklist source: ISL 2012 Ap C-6 Catholic Identity, page 6.

- \_\_\_ Every classroom has clearly displayed crucifixes.
- \_\_\_ Other religious imagery exists in classrooms and throughout the school.
- \_\_\_ Quotations from Church documents (e.g., *Gravissimum Educationis, To Teach as Jesus Did*), inspired writers (e.g., Thomas Merton, Joan Chittister) etc. are found in handbooks, on bulletin boards, in lesson plans, etc.
- \_\_\_ Students participate in a variety of traditions and rituals of the Church, e.g., May crowning, Advent Wreath prayers, daily Angelus, etc.
- \_\_\_ Students have opportunities and are encouraged to participate in prayer, traditions and rituals.

**Key Questions for reflection and discussion concerning Signs and Symbols and the Sacraments; cite evidence.**

Source: E3 2016 Accreditation Protocol page 39.

- How evident are Catholic signs and symbols throughout the school?
- How significant are the special religious traditions that the school annually observes?
- How effectively does the school celebrate its name/patron and teach the significant of this name/patron to students and their parents?