

***Fostering Equity and Inclusivity in Catholic Schools:
Some Key Concepts and Terms***

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Contents

Introduction	1
1. Dignity of All Persons: Basis for Our Commitment	1
<i>i) In God’s Word</i>	1
<i>ii) In Church Teaching: Upheld With Rights and Responsibilities</i>	1
a) Right to Receive Truths of the Catholic Faith	2
b) Responsibility to Correct Error.....	2
<i>iii) The Duty to Refrain from Judgement</i>	3
2. Discrimination	3
<i>i) Key to Understanding, Constitutionally Guaranteed</i>	3
<i>ii) Just Discrimination: Ensuring Integrity</i>	3
<i>iii) Unjust Discrimination</i>	4
<i>iv) Extremes to be Avoided</i>	4
3. Bias, Blind Spots and Conversion	4
<i>i) Blind Spots</i>	4
<i>ii) Blind Spots and the Need for Conversion</i>	5
<i>iii) Challenging Blind Spots: A Moral Duty</i>	5
4. Diversity	5
<i>i) Diversity and the Body of Christ</i>	6
<i>ii) Diversity and Character</i>	6
<i>iii) Diversity – Flourishing Through the Virtues</i>	7
<i>iv) Diversity and Perspective</i>	7
<i>v) Diversity, Perspective and Discernment</i>	8
<i>vi) Diverse Perspectives – Listening in Faith</i>	8
5. Hospitality and Welcoming the Stranger	8
<i>i) Hospitality and Religious Accommodation</i>	8
6. Catholic Social Teaching: Language and Framework for Equity & Inclusivity	9
<i>i) Human Dignity & Common Good: Cornerstones of Catholic Social Teaching</i>	9
a) <i>Dignity of the Human Person</i>	9
b) <i>The Common Good</i>	9
<i>ii) Additional Principles</i>	10
a) <i>Human Rights and Responsibilities</i>	10
b) <i>Fundamental Option for the Poor</i>	10
c) <i>Solidarity</i>	10
d) <i>Subsidiarity</i>	10
e) <i>Dignity of Work</i>	10
f) <i>Distribution</i>	11
g) <i>Stewardship for Creation</i>	11
Concluding Remarks	12
Bibliography	13
Appendix: Theological and Cardinal Virtues Reference Sheet	15

Introduction

Catholic Education in Ontario has always been deeply committed to equity and inclusivity in its affairs. As sharers in the Catholic Church's evangelizing mission, the language and vision we draw on to express and carry out this commitment are rooted in:

- ❖ Scripture – the word of God
- ❖ Tradition – the living body of Christ's teaching that continues unbroken from the Apostles through their successors, the Bishops.

This paper does not seek to address specific individual issues covered by the *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools*¹ document. Rather, it outlines major concepts and terms to inform our commitment to equity and inclusivity, in the rich and distinctive language of our Catholic faith.

1. *Dignity of All Persons: Basis for Our Commitment*

i) In God's Word

The dignity of the human person is the central principle which informs our commitment to equity and inclusivity. This principle is rooted in the biblical account of man and woman's creation in the image and likeness of God. (Gen 1, 27) It is affirmed in the incarnation of Christ: In the fullness of time, God the Son took flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary, glorifying our common humanity. (Cf. Gal 4,4; Jn 1, 14).

ii) In Church Teaching: Upheld With Rights and Responsibilities

The dignity of the human person gives rise to certain rights and responsibilities that all of us must abide. The Second Vatican upholds this fact:

[T]here is a growing awareness of the sublime dignity of human persons, who stand above all things, and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable.²

[T]his council lays stress on reverence for the human person: everybody should look upon his or her neighbor (without any exception) as another self, bearing in mind especially their neighbor's life and the means needed for living a dignified way of life...³

¹Ontario Ministry of Education, *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools. Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation. Realizing the Promise of Diversity*. 2009.
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

² Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)*, No. 26.

³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 27.

a) Right to Receive Truths of the Catholic Faith

Within Catholic schools, reverence for the dignity of students we serve impels us to pass on to them the riches of our Catholic faith which are rightly theirs to receive. This is done through a distinctive curriculum animated by Catholic values which help guide us to eternal life in Christ, in communion with His Church.⁴

b) Responsibility to Correct Error

Reverence for the dignity of the human person leaves us duty-bound to correct error which undermines the truths our mission calls us to uphold in policy and practice. Correcting error in policy and practice helps ensure that staff and students are provided with the best possible information and example (i.e., faith witness) to make informed decisions for their lives – to reach their fullest potential physically, spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Reverence for one another's dignity requires that any corrective words or actions

- ❖ differentiate between error and persons in error
- ❖ provide correction in a spirit of love

The Second Vatican Council elaborates this point:

Love, in fact, impels the followers of Christ to proclaim to everyone the truth which saves. But we must distinguish between the error (which must always be rejected) and the people in error, who never lose their dignity as persons even though they flounder amid false or inadequate religious ideas.⁵

This same duty of love is an expression of God's own pedagogy, which invites a progressive and free response (in love) to the call of maturity and transformation for discipleship and witness.⁶

⁴ These values are distilled into fifty-two *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* (Institute for Catholic Education, 1999). A rich body of foundational documents have been published by the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) to support and guide the development and implementation of Catholic curriculum in Ontario. Of particular note are Larry Trafford's *Educating the Soul. Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools*. (ICE, 1998) and *Curriculum Matters. A Resource for Catholic Educators*. (ICE, 1996). Additional foundational documents from ICE can be downloaded at: <http://www.iceont.ca/ice-publications.aspx>. Other key documents include Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario's *This Moment of Promise*, 1989 and *Fulfilling the Promise*, 1993. Fr. Eric Reichers' *Build Bethlehem Everywhere*, (Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association, 2002) continues to inform distinctive Catholic school culture and curriculum throughout Canada. Access to further documents on Catholic Education's distinctiveness can be accessed at: <http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/religiouseducation/catholic-curriculum/>

⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*. No 28.

⁶ See *General Directory for Catechesis*. Part III: *The Pedagogy of the Faith*, Chapter I: *Pedagogy of God, Source and Model of the Pedagogy of the Faith*. (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997). No 139-147. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccclergy/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_17041998_directory-for-catechesis_en.html

iii) The Duty to Refrain from Judgement

Commitment to upholding the dignity of staff and students moves us to proclaim the truth of our faith through administrative policy, practice and curriculum, and to correct error which contradicts it. We approach this task confidently, but humbly, aware of our own brokenness and ongoing dependence on God’s mercy and grace, and on forgiveness from God and neighbour. This commitment, therefore, does not allow us to judge another person’s conscience – something which God alone can do. The Council continues:

God, who alone is the judge and the searcher of hearts, forbids us to pass judgment on the inner guilt of others.⁷

2. Discrimination

i) Key to Understanding, Constitutionally Guaranteed

Catholic education has always taught students to discriminate between facts, between correct and incorrect information, between truth or error. Catholic schools also bear the constitutionally-guaranteed right to discriminate on religious or moral grounds in their recruitment, hiring and placement of teachers.⁸

ii) Just Discrimination: Ensuring Integrity

A just discrimination in the above sense is critical to ensuring the Catholic school system’s integrity. In this sense, discrimination becomes a responsibility and duty. James T. Mulligan comments on the decisions of Justice Robert Sharpe and their importance in this regard:

He [Justice Sharpe] insists that for the Catholic school to be true to its purpose, the teacher must know the [Catholic] tradition, agree with its belief system and be imbued with its values and vision.⁹

⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*. No 28.

⁸ This right has been upheld by the Ontario Court of Justice and Ontario Court of Appeal. Justice Robert Sharpe’s December 17, 1997 decision declared that the 1985 Education Act violated constitutional rights enshrined in the *Constitution Act* of 1877; this decision was upheld by the Ontario Court of Justice, Ontario Court of Appeal on April 27, 1999. See James T. Mulligan, *Catholic Education. Ensuring a Future*. Novalis: 2005. Pp. 231-239. See also Kevin Feehan, *The Constitution and the Catholic Community* (Delivered at CCSTA’s *Catholic Education: A National Conversation* Conference at Ottawa, Ontario, September 26, & 27, 2008).

Justice Sharpe’s decision reflects the earlier decision of Anglin CJC in *Tiny Separate Schools vs The King* S.C.R. 637 at 656 which states: “The teacher is expected to be an example consistent with the teachings of the Church, and must proclaim the Catholic philosophy by his or her conduct within and without the school.” Mulligan, *Catholic Education. Ensuring a Future*. P. 238.

⁹ *Ibid.*

iii) Unjust Discrimination

The courts uphold the right and duty of Catholic school boards to justly discriminate in what is taught and which teachers are recruited, hired and placed. At the same time, we are morally-bound to reject any form of discrimination which undermines a person's dignity as image and likeness of God regardless of position.¹⁰ Such action has nothing to do with safeguarding the mission of Catholic education, and is rightly termed *unjust discrimination*.

iv) Extremes to be Avoided

To summarize, then – while discrimination is critical to the integrity of Catholic education, two extremes are to be avoided at all costs:

- ❖ *failure to justly discriminate* in ways that fail to support the mission of Catholic education (e.g., in recruitment, hiring and placement of teachers)
- ❖ *unjustly discriminating* in ways that condemn persons rather than errors or disparage a person's human dignity

Either of these extremes will undermine the mission of Catholic schools from within. The words of the Prophet Micah capture the spirit of how we are to use our discriminating faculties and responsibilities in this regard:

This is what the Lord asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

3. Bias, Blind Spots and Conversion

The word *bias* is a neutral term. Catholicism is biased toward what is good, true and morally right, as revealed through Scripture and Tradition. Catholic educators are called to instruct within this bias to provide a formation of the whole person: physically, spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Biases which prevent us from understanding and acting in truth, goodness and moral righteousness are more correctly referred to as *blind spots*.

i) Blind Spots

Blind spots were described by Canadian philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan as

a flight from understanding which results from an incomplete development of intelligence and reasonableness¹¹

¹⁰ A clear example is found in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 2358 which states that homosexual persons “must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.” http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm

¹¹ See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1970, 1958). P. xi.

Knowing that our capacity for intelligent and reasonable decision-making is at times impeded by blind spots, we rely on the wisdom of colleagues and the believing community to guide us in our work.

ii) Blind Spots and the Need for Conversion

All of us have blind spots which can prevent us from intelligently and reasonably acting in the Gospel's truth. Because of this, every one of us is in need of conversion. We journey as members of the pilgrim Church which,

embracing in its bosom sinners, [is] at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, [and] always follows the way of penance and renewal.¹²

iii) Challenging Blind Spots: A Moral Duty

As participants in the pilgrim Church's evangelizing mission, we are duty-bound to uncover and correct blind spots in our policies and practices – through our bias toward goodness, truth and moral righteousness, as revealed in Scripture and Tradition. Operating within our denominational rights as Catholic schools, our faith heritage informs our efforts to help staff and students uncover and correct their own blind spots – respecting their dignity, challenging them to embrace the truths which are rightfully theirs to receive, encouraging them to discriminate between truth and misinformation. In this way, we provide a student formation which promotes service to one's neighbour for the sake of the Gospel and the betterment of the world:

The Catholic school has as its specific duty the complete Christian formation of its pupils... It knows that this integration of faith and life is part of a life-long process of conversion until the pupil becomes what God wishes [them] to be. Young people have to be taught to share their personal lives with God. They are to overcome their individualism and discover, in the light of faith, their specific vocation to live responsibly in a community with others. The very pattern of the Christian life draws them to commit themselves to serve God in their [brothers and sisters] and to make the world a better place for [humankind] to live in.¹³

4. Diversity

We are a single human race of over six billion persons whose diversity reflects God's infinite beauty.¹⁴ Our supreme human dignity (surpassing that of all creatures) is the starting point for discussing issues of diversity. Using human dignity as our point of departure in discussions of

¹² Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)*. No. 8.

¹³ *The Catholic School*, (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988). No. 45

¹⁴ "Because of its common origin, the *human race forms a unity*, for "from one ancestor [God] made all nations to inhabit the whole earth." (Acts 17:26; cf. Tob 8:6) (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 360)

diversity enables us to recognize every person working or studying in our Catholic school boards as a priceless gift to the human family. Starting from this point enables our Catholic schools to consciously create an environment where all are safe and welcomed to work and learn in accordance with our mission and vision.

i) Diversity and the Body of Christ

St. Paul writes about diversity in the body of Christ, whose members find unity in the Spirit and share a common call to serve, each “according to the measure of Christ’s gift.” (Eph 4:7; Cf. 1Cor 12:4-11) With Christ as our head, all are invited to assume their rightful role in building up the community:

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member, but of many. If the foot would say, “because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ...But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ...As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’, nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’
Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1Cor 12:14-16, 20-21, 27)

Just as each member of the Body of Christ is gifted by the Spirit to build up the community, so too each member of the human family is equipped with gifts and attributes to serve the common good. Each in their diversity shares a common inherent and irreplaceable dignity that deserves the recognition, protection and guidance we offer through Catholic education.

ii) Diversity and Character

In our diversity, no two persons are alike; no two human lives develop in the same way. In addition, each of our personalities has its own unique temperaments. Despite our differences, we all bear a heart (will) created for *goodness* and a mind (intellect) created for *truth*. The concept of character respects our diverse personalities and holds out the possibility of moral growth (in goodness and in truth) as contributing members of a community, society and world. The Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (now the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario [ACBO]) draws on the work of Canadian philosopher Christine McKinnon to examine the interplay of personality and character in their position paper, *Character Development and the Virtuous Life*:

The Canadian philosopher Christine McKinnon, in her book *Character, Virtue Theories and the Vices*, [Peterborough: Broadview Press, c1999] suggests that the concept of character can be best understood when compared with that of personality. For her, personality is something of a given, the matter from which we must build character. Personality is what I am, not something I choose and not something that can be evaluated ethically.

On the other hand, character is something that is constructed, something I choose more or less deliberately. It is what I make of myself. This can be evaluated ethically. She writes: “A person’s character is a complex of innate dispositions, shaped by environmental influences as well as traits acquired through habituation, reasoned assessments and voluntary choices [p. 66]... To talk about a person’s character is to talk about a complex of virtues and vices and more ethically neutral skills, abilities and dispositions she possesses as well as to talk about the ways she values them and identifies with them and the roles she has constructed for them in her life [p. 71].”¹⁵

iii) Diversity – Flourishing Through the Virtues

Character development enables us in our diversity to orient the heart and mind toward what is good and true. Fostering character development through the virtues provides us with a solid, time-tested approach to this task.¹⁶ It celebrates the dignity of each member of our educational community, and challenges us to develop and grow as persons who share a common vision rooted in the Gospel of Christ and the teaching Tradition of His Church. The Bishops continue:

For McKinnon, the acquisition of virtues is one of the fundamental elements in the development of character. Following her lead, we suggest that the concept of “virtue,” a concept central to Catholic moral doctrine, is key in linking the Character Development Initiative to the Catholic school education project.¹⁷

Character development through the theological and cardinal virtues enables our diverse personalities to flourish for the benefit of the entire home-school-parish and wider community. In this sense, fostering diversity through the virtues celebrates the inherent goodness and irreplaceable value of each student and staff member.

iv) Diversity and Perspective

Diverse personalities, character, life experiences and insights give rise to many perspectives. The broad spectrum of perspectives within the body of Christ (and even without) is therefore a kind of guarantee to ensure that issues and solutions to problems in any community will be appraised and approached in a variety of ways. Perspective can be affirming – when it upholds the truth; it can be prophetic – sometimes disconcertingly awakening consciences to the demands of justice; it can also be destructive – when it seeks to undermine the dignity of any person or group of persons.

¹⁵ Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) Education Commission, *Character Development and The Virtuous Life. A Position Paper*. 2008. P 2.
<http://www.acbo.on.ca/englishdocs/OCCB%20position%20paper%20on%20CDI%20FINAL-%20August%202008%20.pdf>

¹⁶ See Appendix: *Theological and Cardinal Virtues Reference Sheet* (Renfrew County CDSB, 2010).

¹⁷ ACBO *Character Development and The Virtuous Life*. P. 2.

v) Diversity, Perspective and Discernment

We have been given the “Spirit of truth,” (Jn 14:17a) to assist us in discerning among the diverse perspectives within staff and student ranks. We draw on our rich heritage and rely on the gifts of the Spirit, given to each “according to the measure of Christ’s gift.” (Eph 4:7) Emboldened by the Spirit and rooted in the Catholic faith’s twin pillars of Scripture and Tradition, we can listen to one another’s diverse perspectives and come to decisions which will uphold the dignity of every member and reflect the best of what we believe in as sharers in the Church’s evangelizing mission through Catholic education.

vi) Diverse Perspectives – Listening in Faith

Animated by our Catholic faith, we seek out the perspectives of our diverse community partners. Listening to them with the heart and mind of Christ (Cf. Phil 2: 1-11; Heb 8:10) can make us aware of systemic unjust discrimination and blind spots which impede student learning and prevent full participatory school-community relations.

5. Hospitality and Welcoming the Stranger

Hospitality is an integral part of Catholicism’s rich heritage. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that we are to provide hospitality to strangers, never knowing when we, like Abraham and Sarah, might be entertaining angels. (Heb 13:2) Jesus draws on the tradition of Deuteronomy and the prophets to remind his hearers that true righteousness requires welcoming Him in the stranger: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” (Matt 25: 35b. Cf. Deut 24:17,20-22; 26:1-11) The Catholic Church has a rich history of upholding the rights of migrant peoples, summarized in the recent words of Benedict XVI:

Every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance.¹⁸

It is with this attitude that our Catholic school boards are places where students and staff from many cultures, language backgrounds and faiths can find a place to work and learn.

i) Hospitality and Religious Accommodation

Holding fast to Scripture and Tradition, we welcome all who seek a share, as staff and students, in our mission to educate in the light of the Catholic faith. We recognize that the desire for God’s salvation has been planted in every human heart. We are aware that God’s mysterious saving plan is at work in the world’s great religions, which “often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men and women.”¹⁹ While anchored in our share in the Church’s call to *go out*

¹⁸ Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*. (*On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth*). 2009. No. 62. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html

¹⁹ Second Vatican Council, *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate)*, No. 2.

and preach the Good News (Cf. Matt 28:18-20), we can welcome members of other faiths and engage them in respectful dialogue:

This missionary duty, moreover, does not prevent us from approaching dialogue *with an attitude of profound willingness to listen.*²⁰

With reverence for our common origin and destiny,²¹ we can provide dignified spaces, times and accommodations for their religious observances, heeding the call of the Second Vatican Council's *Declaration on Non-Christian Religions*:

Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, together with their social life and culture.²²

6. Catholic Social Teaching: Language and Framework for Equity & Inclusivity

Fostering leadership and professional learning with equity and inclusivity among staff and students must be grounded in justice, human rights and responsibilities. These tasks are best addressed in Catholic schools with the rich language of Catholic Social Teaching. Its key elements are briefly set out below:

i) Human Dignity & Common Good: Cornerstones of Catholic Social Teaching

a) Dignity of the Human Person

All persons are made in God's image and likeness and bear supreme value above all creatures. We must do all we can to defend the dignity of all persons at all stages of life from conception until natural death. All board policies and practices must uphold this principle in dealings with staff, students, parish and wider community.

b) The Common Good

The common good requires that all persons have what they need in order to live a fully human life. This includes: the right to food, safety, work, shelter, clean water, education, freedom of association and religious liberty. If one person or group suffers without, the common good suffers. The principle of the common good is critical to fostering equity and inclusivity.

²⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (Apostolic Letter to the Bishops, Clergy and Lay Faithful at the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000), Jan. 6, 2001. No.56.

²¹ See *Nostra Aetate*, No. 1.

²² *Nostra Aetate*, No. 2.

ii) Additional Principles

a) Human Rights and Responsibilities

Human rights and responsibilities are rooted in human dignity and the common good. We have rights and responsibilities toward one another as God's children. Further elaboration of these principles vis-à-vis equity and inclusivity can be found in preceding pages of this document.

b) Fundamental Option for the Poor

The poor are a “special presence of Christ,”²³ who identifies with the least among us. Their needs have a privileged place in the Christian community. Those who ignore the needs of the poor ignore Christ. There are many kinds of poverty. Fundamental option for the poor dictates that we include their voices and needs in our equity and inclusivity initiatives.

c) Solidarity

All human persons are members of “a fraternal communion transcending every barrier [which] is called into being by the word of God-who-is-Love.”²⁴ Christ models true solidarity by assuming our human nature and redeeming it. Created “through Him and for Him” (Col 1,16), we are made to stand in solidarity with one another. Solidarity often involves standing together with people who suffer, especially due to injustice and/or deprivation. Advocacy for their equity and inclusivity is an important form of solidarity which ensures that persons who suffer are supported in and by our Catholic educational system.

d) Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity upholds the right of people to make decisions that affect their lives. Subsidiarity is undermined when decisions that should be made locally are unnecessarily taken by higher decision-making bodies. Subsidiarity is therefore crucial to equity and inclusivity in local school boards and their communities, given that not all municipalities will have the same demographics and concerns. In addition, Catholic boards of education must be free to uphold provincial government directives by articulating policies using their distinctive language.

e) Dignity of Work

Working is both intrinsic to our humanity and holy. We are made in the image and likeness of God, who is portrayed in Genesis as working six days to bring creation into existence, and resting on the seventh. Work allows us to participate in God's ongoing creation of the world, making us in a sense, co-creators with God. Work exists to serve the good of the human person; its importance must never be placed above that of the person who works. Equity and inclusivity recognize the dignity of every working (and learning) position in our school board by virtue of the supreme dignity of the person who occupies it.

²³ Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (Apostolic Letter to the Bishops, Clergy and Lay Faithful at the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000), Jan. 6, 2001. No. 49.

²⁴ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 34.

-Priority of Labour Over Capital

The value of workers always comes before the value of goods they produce. Undermining the dignity of a paid or unpaid worker (student or staff) because of the perceived importance or lack thereof in their tasks contradicts Catholic social teaching and undermines any efforts to promote equity and inclusivity in a Catholic school board.

-Just Wage

Every labourer deserves a just wage that will enable him or her to live in dignity and support a family, if need be. The needs of workers for a liveable salary should also be part of discussions around equity and inclusivity.

-Participation

Workers should also have input into decisions governing their places of work – an important dimension of fostering equity and inclusivity in our Catholic school board.

-Freedom of Association

Workers have the right to form associations to secure just wages and safe working conditions – again, a fundamental right which must be recognized in fostering equity and inclusivity.

f) Distribution

The principle of distribution recognizes that the goods of the earth were made by God to be shared by all. No one group or person has the right to deprive others of the goods necessary to live a dignified human life. Our efforts to foster equity and diversity will be reflected in the measure in which our resources are made available to all who need them to work and learn with dignity (and by implication, safety) in our Catholic school system.

g) Stewardship for Creation

Man and woman have been given dominion over God's creation (see Gen 1:28-30). We are not to exploit the earth and its resources. Rather, we are to care for its riches so that it continues to "worthily accommodate and feed the world's population."²⁵ Implementing equity and inclusivity policies and practices may involve a wide variety of voices on how best to maximize use of resources we have been given to educate in light of the Catholic faith. This may result in used or unused resources remaining less contaminated or depleted so that others can draw on, share and use them wisely as well.

Fuller explanations of the above principles are available through the RCCDSB website at the links below:

<http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/religiouseducation/about/social-justice/>

<http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/religiouseducation/files/2010/06/FoundationalPrinciplesCST.doc>

²⁵ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, No. 50.

Concluding Remarks

The preceding pages outline principles which draw from the language of Scripture and Tradition to guide Catholic school boards as they seek to implement policies and practices for equity and inclusivity. Being informed by the language of our faith will help us in these tasks in ways that authentically reflect our distinctive identity as sharers in the Church's evangelizing mission.

Hopefully, then, this document will become a continuing point of reference as discussions and decisions around equity and inclusivity are undertaken. At the same time, these pages are but a brief distillation of a rich and wide time-tested body of wisdom which is available to all through the internet, print and video media. It is hoped that its contents will help properly ground, strengthen and transform our efforts at promoting equity and inclusivity within our distinctive mission to educate in the light of the Catholic faith.

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Appendix: Theological and Cardinal Virtues Reference Sheet

Theological Virtues

The three theological virtues (Faith, Hope and Love) are God’s gift to us at baptism. As we nurture our faith and practice these virtues, they guide our character as it develops over a lifetime of discipleship.

<p>Faith – <i>A new way of seeing, a shared way of believing</i> I believe in God, who loves me; I pray and worship, I show my faith in love for others.</p>
<p>Hope – <i>Trusting God’s promises in prayer and work for justice</i> I trust in God’s promises, I pray, I work for peace and justice.</p>
<p>Love - <i>Loving God above all things and others as God loves them</i> I worship God above all else, I practice kindness and try to give, like Jesus..</p>

Cardinal Virtues

Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude are the four cardinal virtues – practices on which all other virtues hinge (*cardo*, meaning *hinge* in Latin). These practices are learned and developed over time.

<p>Prudence – <i>Seeking, judging, acting – with confidence and love</i> I look for the most loving solution, and carry it out with joy.</p>
<p>Justice – <i>Seeking the good, meeting obligations to God and neighbour</i> I give God my worship, and show my neighbor mercy and fairness.</p>
<p>Temperance – <i>Enjoying life’s pleasures in keeping with the Gospel</i> I practice balance and self-control, I make healthy friendships, I am honest about who I am</p>
<p>Fortitude – <i>Practicing the good and just in challenging situations, patience with obstacles.</i> I practice doing what is right with patience, even when it is difficult.</p>