

CODE OF CANON LAW
Catholic Education – Schools (Cann. 793-821)

Can. 793 §1. Parents and those who take their place are bound by the obligation and possess the right of educating their offspring. Catholic parents also have the duty and right of choosing those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of their children, according to local circumstances.

§2. Parents also have the right to that assistance, to be furnished by civil society, which they need to secure the Catholic education of their children.

Can. 794 §1. The duty and right of educating belongs in a special way to the Church, to which has been divinely entrusted the mission of assisting persons so that they are able to reach the fullness of the Christian life.

§2. Pastors of souls have the duty of arranging everything so that all the faithful have a Catholic education.

Can. 795 Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life.

CHAPTER I. SCHOOLS

Can. 796 §1. Among the means to foster education, the Christian faithful are to hold schools in esteem; schools are the principal assistance to parents in fulfilling the function of education.

§2. Parents must cooperate closely with the teachers of the schools to which they entrust their children to be educated; moreover, teachers in fulfilling their duty are to collaborate very closely with parents, who are to be heard willingly and for whom associations or meetings are to be established and highly esteemed.

Can. 797 Parents must possess a true freedom in choosing schools; therefore, the Christian faithful must be concerned that civil society recognizes this freedom for parents and even supports it with subsidies; distributive justice is to be observed.

Can. 798 Parents are to entrust their children to those schools which provide a Catholic education. If they are unable to do this, they are obliged to take care that suitable Catholic education is provided for their children outside the schools.

Can. 799 The Christian faithful are to strive so that in civil society the laws which regulate the formation of youth also provide for their religious and moral education in the schools themselves, according to the conscience of the parents.

Can. 800 §1. The Church has the right to establish and direct schools of any discipline, type, and level.

§2. The Christian faithful are to foster Catholic schools, assisting in their establishment and maintenance according to their means.

Can. 801 Religious institutes whose proper mission is education, retaining their mission faithfully, are also to strive to devote themselves to Catholic education through their schools, established with the consent of the diocesan bishop.

Can. 802 §1. If schools which offer an education imbued with a Christian spirit are not available, it is for the diocesan bishop to take care that they are established.

§2. Where it is expedient, the diocesan bishop is to make provision for the establishment of professional schools, technical schools, and other schools required by special needs.

Can. 803 §1. A Catholic school is understood as one which a competent ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person directs or which ecclesiastical authority recognizes as such through a written document.

§2. The instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life.

§3. Even if it is in fact Catholic, no school is to bear the name Catholic school without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.

Can. 804 §1. The Catholic religious instruction and education which are imparted in any schools whatsoever or are provided through the various instruments of social communication are subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the conference of bishops to issue general norms about this field of action and for the diocesan bishop to regulate and watch over it.

§2. The local ordinary is to be concerned that those who are designated teachers of religious instruction in schools, even in non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in correct doctrine, the witness of a Christian life, and teaching skill.

Can. 805 For his own diocese, the local ordinary has the right to appoint or approve teachers of religion and even to remove them or demand that they be removed if a reason of religion or morals requires it.

Can. 806 §1. The diocesan bishop has the right to watch over and visit the Catholic schools in his territory, even those which members of religious institutes have founded or direct. He also issues prescripts which pertain to the general regulation of Catholic schools; these prescripts are valid also for schools which these religious direct, without prejudice, however, to their autonomy regarding the internal direction of their schools.

§2. Directors of Catholic schools are to take care under the watchfulness of the local ordinary that the instruction which is given in them is at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area.