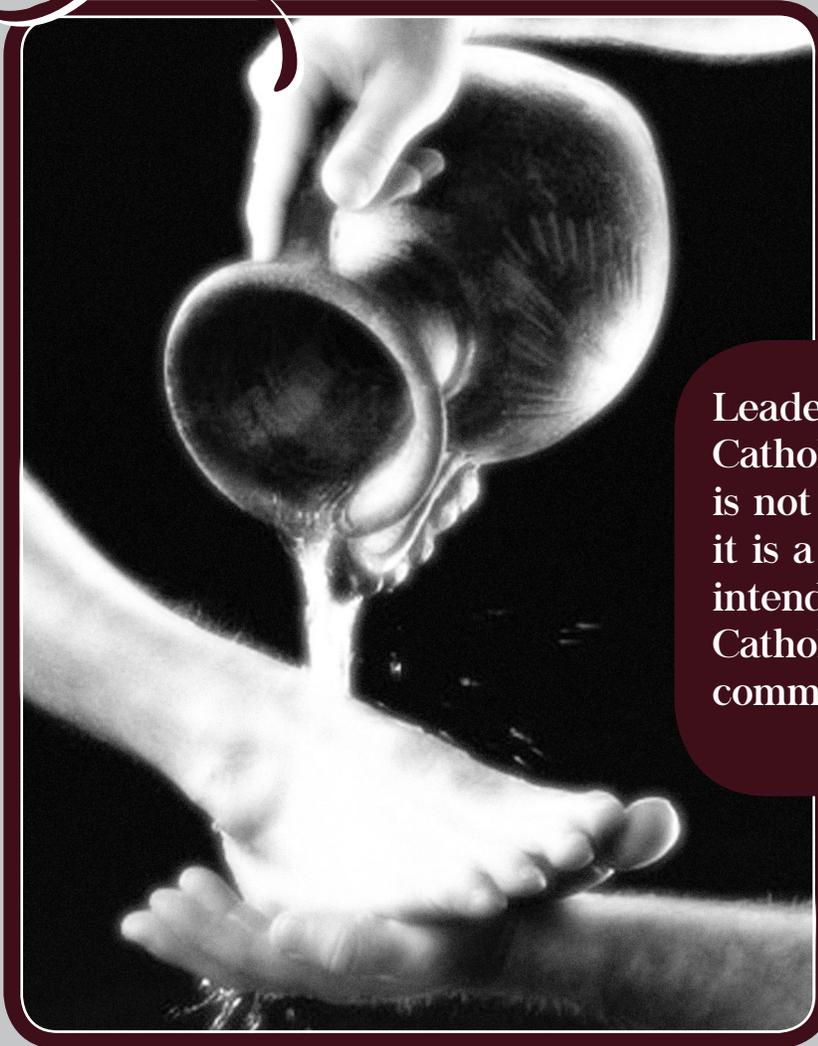


CATHOLIC EDUCATION:  
Marks of an Excellent Catholic

# Leader



Leadership in Catholic education is not a career; it is a vocation... intended to serve the Catholic education community.

Mulligan



# The Marks of an Excellent Catholic Leader



## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document has been created as a supplementary resource for leaders in Catholic Education. Building on the document *The Excellent Catholic Teacher* (CCSSA, 2015), *The Marks of an Excellent Catholic Leader* begins with the premise that superb Catholic school leaders are also master Catholic teachers. While embracing the essence of teaching excellence, this treatise goes beyond teaching to address the roles and responsibilities of both Catholic school and Catholic district leaders.

## HOW MIGHT THIS DOCUMENT SERVE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN ALBERTA?

This Catholic leadership framework may be used to:

- Inspire Catholic leaders in their service of Catholic education
- Offer a role description for Catholic leaders
- Provide indicators and offer exemplars
- Create conversations around Catholic leadership
- Assist leaders as they strive for excellence in their vocation
- Serve as a resource when identifying, recruiting and hiring Catholic school leaders

For those of you in leadership positions—the Catholic community presumes and depends on your administrative competence, but also seeks from you leadership and vision beyond that of the professional educator. What is needed is leadership that is rooted in spirituality and calls forth spiritual growth from others.

# Mark 1

## AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC LEADER EMBRACES THE DIGNITY OF ALL AS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

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### ROLE OF THE LEADER:

An excellent Catholic leader is responsible for ensuring the overall development of the whole person, by:

- Founding all aspects of the Catholic School on Jesus Christ, the Redeemer
- Recognizing and celebrating the gifts and talents of others
- Identifying and empowering key leaders who can ensure that the faith community flourishes
- Discerning an appropriate response to difficult situations using a personal and pastoral approach
- Ensuring that relationships are respectful and life giving
- Providing faith formation opportunities for staff and students
- Allocating resources to support and enhance the well being and the physical, emotional, academic and spiritual development of staff and students
- Integrating the message of eternal destiny into vision and mission

Leaders are also responsible for effectiveness by being enablers. They need to enable others to reach their potential both personally and institutionally..It begins with believing in the potential of people and trusting in the diversity of their gifts.

Palestini



# Mark 2

## AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC LEADER ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION WITHIN AND BEYOND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND MAKES DECISIONS ROOTED IN GOSPEL TEACHINGS.

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### ROLE OF THE LEADER:

An excellent Catholic leader is responsible for expressing and developing a living Catholic vision of the world by:

- Ensuring that all that happens in the Catholic school reflects a Catholic worldview
- Allocating time and resources to reflect Catholic priorities
- Articulating the spirit and teaching of the Catholic Church in order to inform policy and practice
- Speaking with one voice on matters of Catholic education by engaging with other Catholic leaders
- Developing and maintaining partnerships with other Catholic institutions, organizations and outreach groups
- Sharing and promoting Catholic education with non-Catholics
- Honoring, recognising and articulating the role of the Bishop's pastoral leadership in matters of Catholic education
- Visioning and creating physical spaces that visibly express the external signs of our Catholic faith
- Demonstrating a knowledge of local, national, and global issues and trends related to Catholic Church
- Encouraging members of the Catholic school community in their role as stewards of the environment

When a Catholic worldview permeates a school's life, then it is the driving force behind every activity, so that the Church's mission may be served effectively.

Archbishop Miller



# Mark 3

## AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC LEADER INTENTIONALLY DIRECTS AND FOSTERS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION THROUGH FAITH PERMEATION.

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### ROLE OF THE LEADER:

An excellent Catholic leader is responsible for leading faith permeation by:

- Ensuring the religious dimension is inherent in all learning and the ethos of the school
- Cultivating a passion for truth; both natural and supernatural
- Committing to a moral and intellectual Catholic education
- Employing and developing teachers who display a clear understanding and commitment to Catholic Education
- Providing structured opportunities for staff to develop their abilities to infuse faith into curriculum and pedagogy
- Supervising teachers as they intentionally permeate faith in all subjects
- Encouraging critical thinking in the light of faith and values
- Supporting and promoting service projects that reflect Catholic teaching on social justice and charity.
- Advocating for a sacred perspective within a secular context

All of the learning outcomes in the Program of Studies contain a religious dimension. It is the right, responsibility and privilege of educators in Catholic schools to bring to consciousness the divine presence that resides in what is learned.

Permeation: Living Eucharist  
in the Learning Community



# Mark 4

**AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC LEADER IS CALLED TO BE A WITNESS AND AN AGENT OF HOPE, PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE TO ALL PEOPLE, EVERYWHERE AND AT ALL TIMES.**

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## ROLE OF THE LEADER:

An excellent Catholic leader, inspired by the love of God, witnesses to others a life lived in relationship with Jesus Christ by:

- Testifying, through words and actions to a life in Christ
- Modelling a lifestyle consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church
- Participating actively in the life of the Church
- Attending Mass each week
- Praying personally and leading others in prayer
- Demonstrating a knowledge of faith
- Committing to personal faith development
- Employing a leadership style that serves others
- Developing a vision for evangelization and ministry

“Witness” made not only with words but also with daily life” should go beyond Church on Sunday. Rather, it should extend throughout the entire week in our homes, offices, schools, in places of entertainment, in hospitals, in prisons, in homes for the elderly, in places crowded with immigrants, in the city’s peripheries.

Pope Francis



# Mark 5

**AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC LEADER ENSURES A COMMUNAL VISION; RECOGNIZING THAT GOD WILL BE FOUND WITH AND IN EACH OTHER.**

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## ROLE OF THE LEADER:

An excellent Catholic leader is responsible for creating and leading a community of faith both within and beyond the school and school district by:

- Seeking unity inspired by the Holy Trinity
- Making intentional decisions to develop and support an active faith community
- Creating a culture that sets clear expectations for staff to fully participate in a life of faith
- Embedding sacramental routines (prayer, mass, liturgies, scripture and worship) and reminders in the culture of the school and district
- Nurturing relationships between the school and district and our bishops, priests and faith leaders
- Fostering reconciliation when needed
- Celebrating and affirming the community
- Developing priorities and protocols to address the needs of the marginalized
- Honoring parents/guardians as primary partners in education

Educational leaders are called to form “persons-in-community” environments in which one person’s problem is everyone’s problem and one person’s victory is everyone’s victory.

National Conference of Catholic Bishops



# A CATHOLIC LEADER'S *Covenant*

To know God, to serve God, to love God

To answer the vocational call God has given

To lead so that others might be elevated

To act with integrity, justice, and compassion

To sacrifice in the service of all

To cherish those entrusted to us

To discern the will of God in all decisions and actions

To hope in tribulation and triumph

To model fidelity to truth and virtue

To unite with a spirituality of communion



Catholic leaders must bear witness to their vocation. In order to do so, they must lead lives of integrity and work as team builders, trusting, nurturing and recognizing the talents in others. They must be open to the newness of our age and be able to adapt to new directions. They must see the Gospel message as the root of their vocation, nourished by the sacraments to strengthen them for the leadership role.

Bishop Fred Colli

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Palestini, R. H. (2009). *Catholic School Administration: Theory, Practice, Leadership*. Lancaster, PA: ProActive Publications.

# Supplementary Resources

Growing Forward, Catholic Education Symposium ACSTA 2014

The Excellent Catholic Teacher, CCSSA 2015

Five Essential Marks of Catholic Schools- Archbishop Miller 2006

Professional Practice Standards for School Authority Leaders - Alberta Education 2015

Draft School Leader Standard - Alberta Education 2016







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