

29th NACST Convention

The annual NACST Convention was held October 5-7, 2007 at the Fairmount Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA.

Forty-three union leaders from twelve locals served as convention delegates.

Convention delegates were addressed by keynote speaker Professor David Greory of St. John's University School of Law, union attorney Bruce Endy, NACST President Rita Schwartz, and the Scranton local President/NACST Executive Vice President Mike Milz.

The 30th NACST Convention is set for St. Louis in October 2008.

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from the President ...

STATE OF THE UNION 2007: CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

It was a very busy year for Catholic teacher unions affiliated with the National Association of Catholic School Teachers, and the present school year promises to be even busier and more challenging.

Strong contracts were negotiated by our high school unions in Pittsburgh, St. Louis and at Queen of Peace and by the elementary teachers in Youngstown.

In the Buffalo elementary union, negotiations are on-going with four done and three to go.

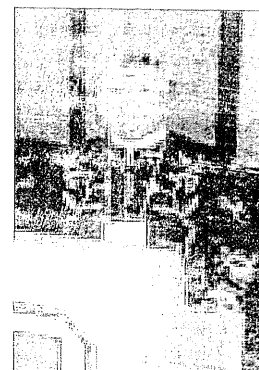
A number of NACST locals will be negotiating this year. In Pennsylvania: Greensburg, Philadelphia, Scranton and, possibly, Altoona. In Ohio: Columbus, St. Francis in Newark and Cleveland. In New Jersey: Holy Cross, St. Denis and St. Rose.

Two of our affiliates have new leaders: in Hartford, we welcome Paul Fitzpatrick, the new President of the Greater Hartford Catholic Education Association and Marc Berger succeeded Phyllis Barone as President of the Union County Catholic Education Association.

In July, 2007, the Association of Catholic Elementary Educators (ACEE), the St. Louis elementary group, ended its organizing effort. This was the latest six year effort, four with NACST involvement. The Church in St. Louis stonewalled and the teachers would not fight to knock down that wall.

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*NACST President
Rita Schwartz delivering the
State of the Union address.*



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29th NACST Convention

Keynote Address

**Some Reflections on Labor and Employment
Ramifications of Diocesan Bankruptcy Filings**

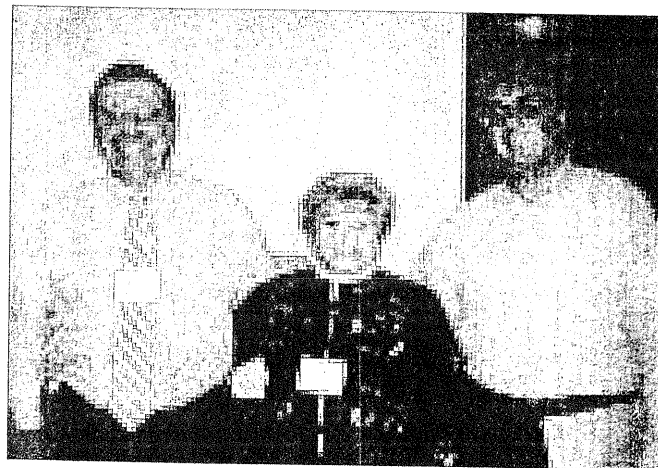
David Gregory, M.B.A., LL.M., J.S.D.

Professor of Law, St. John's University School of Law

Professor Gregory is in the process of developing a legal theory to determine if US dioceses' claims under federal bankruptcy law can be used to challenge diocesan employers' First Amendment arguments which exclude Catholic school teachers from national labor law rights and protections. Since the 1978 US Supreme Court's *Chicago Bishops* decision, Catholic school teachers have been denied access to worker rights provided by the National Labor Relations Act.

Local diocesan bishops have used the high court's decision to deny teacher rights to organize and bargain collectively, advocated in more than one hundred and ten years of Catholic social justice teaching.

Professor Gregory presented the position that dioceses, which rely on the anti-establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment, ought not to use that reliance to ignore labor law while at the same time disregarding those clauses to seek protection under federal bankruptcy laws to shield Church holdings from financial judgments arising out of claims filed by victims of the clergy sexual abuse scandals.



*from left: NACST Executive Vice President Mike Milz,
President Rita Schwartz,
and Professor David Gregory*

Since 1980, Professor Gregory has written extensively on Catholic labor law theory and practice. To obtain information about published articles and Catholic labor theory contact gregoryd@stjohns.edu.

from the President ...

STATE OF THE UNION 2007: CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

The Archbishop of St. Louis made a mockery of the Church's social justice teaching and the Church did nothing. The Vatican suit filed by ACEE was found to have "no merit." To add insult to injury, Archbishop Burke was named a member of the Apostolic Signatura, the Church's Supreme Court, while the teachers' case was being decided by this same court.

That brings us to the other Bishops and their annual Labor Day Statement, a statement that exhorts all employers to treat their employees well and not thwart unions.

Once again, the Church, our employer, has promulgated its teaching on work and workers' rights, which the Church says "are at the center of Catholic social tradition." This tradition "has defended the right of workers to join together to secure decent work, wages and a voice in economic life."

For so many of us involved in the Catholic teacher union movement, the tradition of the employer Church that we know best is "do as I say, not as I do."

As we meet here in Boston, we think of our colleagues in BATA who had worked under a negotiated contract for almost 30 years until the Archbishop stripped them of their voice. He refused to recognize their Union and he made them sign a document that made them employees at will, both actions in direct contradiction to the teachings of the Church. The Union even had to take the Archdiocese to court to force the honoring of the severance provision of the then existing labor agreement.

Four years later, the Scranton Diocese Association of Catholic Teachers had to file 12 grievances and may, eventually, need to take legal action to force the Diocese of Scranton-Wilkes Barre to honor the severance provision of their contract.

In Buffalo, a number of years ago, the diocese broke up the high school system so that the contract and

its protections needed to be negotiated school by school. Now, we see from Doug Bowers' Local Report that the future of these individual schools looks bleak as they are being "reorganized" by the diocese. The boards running the schools for the diocese are "reluctant to discuss any contracts which extend beyond June of 2009."

Altoona-Johnstown's three high schools are walking down a similar path of privatization. The Union needed to push the diocese to get information. Scarily, there isn't a lot of information to get and the new governance model starts in July of 2008.

Other NACST locals are hearing rumblings from their dioceses about reorganizations and spin-offs. Change may well be in all of our futures.

The Bishops' Labor Day Statement concludes by telling us that Labor Day 2007 is "a time to look back, look around and look ahead." Well, let us all do that.

Look back at what made Catholic school teachers organize in the first place and what we have been able to accomplish for our teachers.

Look around at who is in this room today - and even more telling - who is not here today because their Union no longer exists.

Look ahead - who will or will not be here next year? And, where will you, your teachers and your Catholic teacher union be?

All of us in the National Association of Catholic School Teachers need to keep our locals strong - we need to bring new teachers into the Union. If we do not grow, we will not survive. If we do not become more proactive, the Church, our employer, will continue to pick us off one by one.

Stay strong, everyone, and let your colleagues in NACST know what we can do to help each other.



Affiliated Locals

Altoona Johnstown Catholic School Teachers Association
(Diocese of Altoona Johnstown PA)

Richard Hatch

Association of Catholic Teachers
(Archdiocese of Philadelphia PA)

www.act1776.com

Rita Schwartz

Association of Catholic Teachers

(Diocese of Syracuse NY)

Bernadette Kapps

Catholic Teachers Union - NJ

(Diocese of Camden NJ)

www.ctunj.com

Bill Blumenstein

Central Ohio Association of Catholic Educators

(Diocese of Columbus OH)

www.coace.com

Kathleen Mahoney

Cleveland High School and Academy Lay Teachers Association

(Diocese of Cleveland OH)

Michael DeSantis

DELTA

(Diocese of Worcester MA)

Jonathan Meagher

Diocesan Elementary Teachers Association

(Diocese of Buffalo NY)

Sue Manzella

Federation of Pittsburgh Diocesan Teachers

(Diocese of Pittsburgh PA)

Russ DelVecchio

Greater Hartford Catholic Education Association

(Archdiocese of Hartford CT)

Paul Fitzpatrick

Greensburg Diocesan Teachers Association

(Diocese of Greensburg PA)

Kreg Mendus

The John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship

The National Association of Catholic School Teachers established the John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship to help defray the cost of a college education for outstanding children of NACST members. During their senior year of high school, \$4,000 awards are made to three students, \$1,000 in each of their four years of college study.

All sons, daughters and stepchildren of active NACST members are eligible to participate in this scholarship provided they are in good standing in their senior year of high school. Application forms will be available after the first of the year from each member's local NACST affiliate or from the National Office.

Each eligible student must submit his/her SAT or ACT scores and the NACST application by March 1 of his/her senior year in high school to his/her parents local NACST affiliate. The number of candidates submitted from each local is dependent upon the number of members in the local: one candidate from each affiliate with fewer than 100 members; two from each affiliate with 100-500 members; and three from each affiliate over 500 members. All candidates will be chosen by a Local Selection Committee appointed by the affiliate's Executive Board. The applications of all local winners will then be forwarded to the National Office for consideration in the national competition.

The primary emphasis in the selection process will be on academic performance.

All factors will be given appropriate consideration as follows:

Class rank, grades and curriculum ... maximum points: 40

SAT, ACT scores ... maximum points: 30

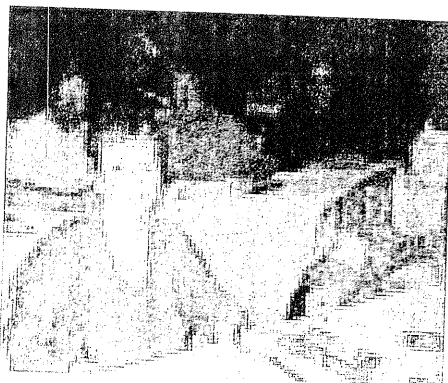
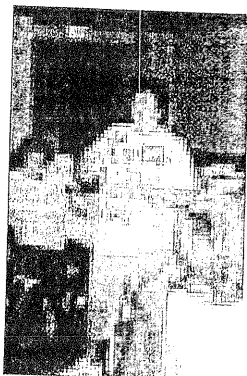
Extracurricular and community activities ... maximum points: 30



DELTA President Jonathan Meagher welcoming delegates to the 29th NACST Convention

29th NACST Convention

Affiliated Locals



NACST @ St. John Vianney
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)
Judith Cumbia

Queen of Peace H.S. Lay Teachers Association
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Kathy Kiszka

St. Denis Teachers Association
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)
Janne Darata

St. Joseph's Teachers Association
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Darlene Fisher

St. Louis Archdiocesan Teachers Association
(Archdiocese of St. Louis MO)
Patricia Spellman

St. Rose Teachers Association
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)
Shelia Langon
Jane Magovern

St. Teresa Educators Association
(Diocese of Harrisburg PA)
Deborah Foote

Scranton Diocese Association of Catholic Teachers
(Diocese of Scranton PA)
www.sdact.com
Michael Milz

Secondary Lay Teachers Association
(Diocese of Buffalo NY)
Doug Bowers

Union County Catholic Education Association
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Marc Berger

Youngstown Confederation of Diocesan Teachers
(Diocese of Youngstown OH)
Barbara Demesko

29th NACST Convention

Reorganization in the Scranton Diocese

Attorney Bruce Endy and NACST VP Mike Milz addressed convention delegates on legal options for Catholic school teacher unions as dioceses reorganize schools. In the Scranton diocese all the schools have been [at least nominally] separated from direct diocesan control. The local bishop closed, regionalized, and privatized schools in the Scranton diocese over the past two years. During the process, the Scranton Diocesan Association of Catholic Teachers [SDACT] challenged diocesan actions which violated provisions of the negotiated contracts. At the beginning of the current school year, all Catholic schools in the diocese began operating under boards of trustees as legal entities separate from direct diocesan administration. The union has been forced to seek recognition from each local school entity. At the same time, union membership has increased significantly, with the addition of many teachers who had previously worked at schools not covered by SDACT contracts. As of the October NACST Convention, the union was awaiting decisions on grievances filed with the American Arbitration Association for breach of contract. Endy and Milz worked closely throughout the reorganization process to protect employees' rights. With labor issues unresolved, their presentation focused on the reorganization process in the Scranton diocese as a warning to other union leaders of the need for union vigilance and action when the process occurs in other dioceses.



Queen of Peace convention delegates
Janet Fusco and President Lynn McGill



from left: Attorney Bruce Endy, SDACT
Executive Board Member Bill Milz, YDCT
President Barb Demesko

Newsworthy is published four times throughout the school year by the National Association of Catholic School Teachers, Suite 903, 1700 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103 phone (215) 665-0993 or (800) 99 - NACST fax (215) 568-8270 email nacst.nacst@verizon.net. Direct comments, inquiries to Chris Ehrmann, Editor.