



Presidents' Roundtable 2008

Presidents from 13 NACST affiliated locals met February 15-18 for the tri-ennial Presidents' Roundtable.

Labor attorney Bruce Endy addressed the seminar participants on two topics "Handing on the Baton" and "Principled Negotiations."

Endy questioned presidents about their motivations for doing union work and what steps they were taking to develop the next generation of Catholic teacher union leaders.

Endy suggested ways to make the union message known in the communities teachers serve [p. 2].

Endy also presented his interpretation of the negotiations book "Getting to Yes," by Roger Fisher and William Ury [p. 2].

The negotiations strategies have led to successful use of "Win/Win" and other collaborative models for NACST affiliates during the past two decades.

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SDACT Recognition Withdrawn

On January 24, 2008 the Scranton Diocese announced that it would no longer recognize the Scranton Diocese Association of Catholic Teachers as the bargaining agent representing teachers in Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese.

The announcement was made in the diocesan newspaper, then subsequently communicated to SDACT President Mike Milz. SDACT has represented teachers in the Scranton schools since 1978. Following a two-year school reorganization process, schools opened the current school year under the auspices of boards of trustees nominally "independent" from diocesan oversight.

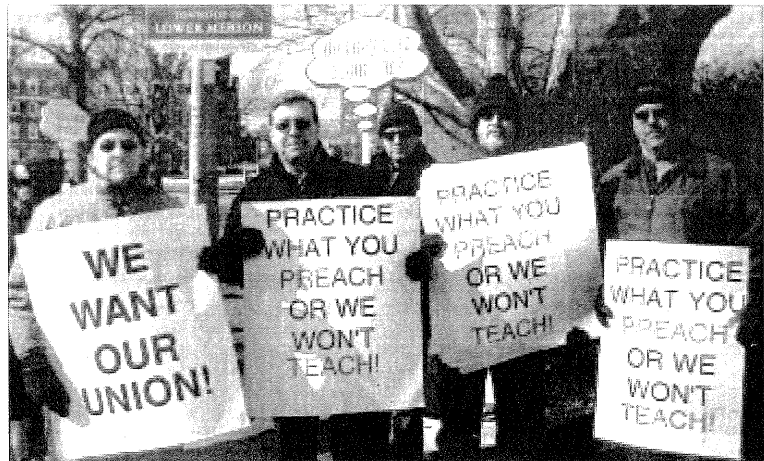
When the current school year opened, teachers at the reorganized schools overwhelmingly chose SDACT as their representative for collective bargaining and representation.

SDACT communicated throughout the fall with the diocese and boards of trustees to gain recognition.

The January announcement from the diocese set up employee committees to address labor issues traditionally dealt with by the union.

In effect, the move established a "company union," ignoring the teachers' vote and withdrawing recognition from SDACT.

SDACT members are currently developing plans of action to encourage the Bishop to reverse his decision.



SDACT Officers at the NACST Philadelphia Rally February 10

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Presidents' Roundtable 2008 Negotiation Strategies

Bruce Endy informed Roundtable participants that, according to Fisher & Ury, negotiated settlements can be achieved with the use of four principles, even if the process includes "hard bargaining."

The first principle is to separate issues from personalities. Negotiators need to focus on problems in neutral terms, dealing with both sides' interests, rather than presumed intentions.

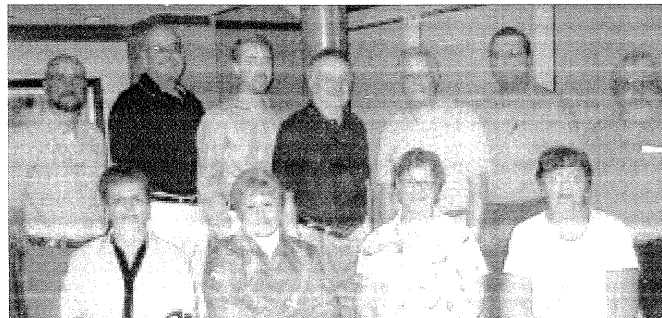
Secondly, negotiators can arrive at agreement when they deal with interests specific to negotiations instead of focusing on generalized bargaining positions. It is often the case that both sides can reach agreement when specific interests are addressed rather than posturing from positions.

The third principle for negotiations is to generate options. Negotiators may fall into the trap of making premature judgments about the other side's positions during the process. Instead, negotiators ought to be brainstorming, to find common ground for settlement.

The final negotiation principle to be applied for successful collaboration is to use objective criteria to measure negotiated provisions. The purpose of negotiations is to reach an agreement which will promote the educational and employment objectives of the schools. It is not to come out "winners" or "losers."

The application of these principles have served well for collaborative negotiations during the past two decades.

Endy encouraged Roundtable participants to evaluate the principles and use them as the model for local settlements.



Seminar Presenter Bruce Endy [standing, 3rd from right] with some local presidents at the 2008 Presidents' Roundtable

Passing on the Baton

Endy also addressed union presidents on the need to develop new leaders in the local unions.

The presidents expressed their belief in both the justice of the union work and the desire to promote the cause of teachers in the schools.

Endy encouraged presidents to identify motivated younger members and make personal appeals to get them involved in union activities.

In addition, presidents need to view the local as an institution working in the school system. Unions need to publicize their roles not only in negotiating contracts and advocacy for teachers, but in supporting students with scholarships and working with the schools to provide quality education.

The development of new union leadership at the local level will ensure the continuation of the valuable contributions unions make to our schools.

from the President ...

SUPPORT SCRANTON CATHOLIC TEACHERS

statement made at the February 10, 2008 rally outside St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia

Thank you all for being here today to show your support for the Scranton teachers as they battle a Bishop who is trampling on the teachings of our Church. Those of us in Catholic teacher unions in Philadelphia and Camden see this attack on our colleagues as a cancer that is moving ever closer and it must be stopped now.

What the teachers in the elementary and high schools of the Diocese of Scranton have experienced is just the latest attempt by the employer Church to strip its own employees of rights it champions for all other workers. It's not about justice. It's not about dignity. No, it's all about power.

Joseph F. Martino, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, Ordinary of the Diocese of Scranton, shame on you!

How dare you try to justify your anti-Catholic social teaching actions by hinting that the presence of a Catholic teachers union will somehow lessen the schools' Catholic identity.

The union, Scranton Diocese Association of Catholic Teachers, and its members have diligently guarded the Catholic identity of the schools, have faithfully upheld the mission of the Catholic schools for some 30 years.

These men and women are following the teachings of their Bishops who exhort us all to "TEACH AS JESUS DID." Bishop Martino, you ask these teachers to TEACH AS JESUS DID but you do not treat them as Jesus would.

The Church champions the right of workers to be represented by the union they freely choose. The Church and its leaders cannot preach one gospel and practice another. There's a word for someone who does that.

We, the members of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers, and I speak for the teachers in Philadelphia's Association of Catholic Teachers, we stand with our brothers and sisters in Scranton. Your cause is just. Your fight is ours. Let the motto of our national union be our cry -

JUSTICE AND DIGNITY FOR CATHOLIC TEACHERS.

Rita

*NACST President Rita Schwartz with
SDACT President Mike Milz at the
Philadelphia Rally*



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

NACST Philadelphia Rally in Support of SDACT

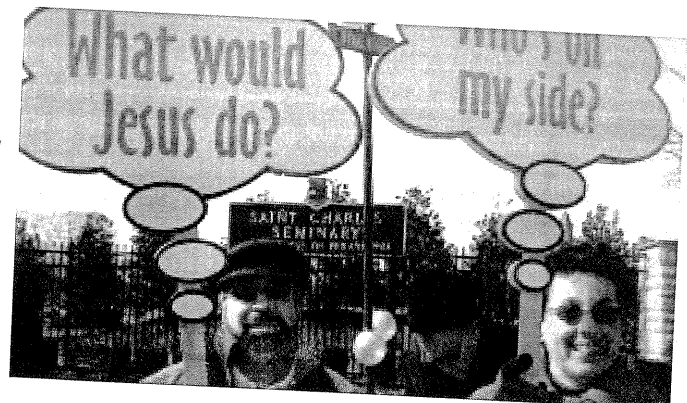
February 10, 2008

Seventy-five supporters of SDACT appeared outside St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia to call attention to the plight of the Scranton teachers union. Members from NACST affiliated locals in Scranton, Philadelphia and Camden were joined by local labor union officials at the rally. Scranton and Wilkes Barre media [as well as outlets from Philadelphia] covered the event.

Union supporters were addressed by NACST President Rita Schwartz, SDACT President Mike Milz, and CTU President Bill Blumenstein. The speakers decried the actions of Bishop Martino from Scranton, urging him to reverse the anti-union position taken by the diocese and to put into practice the Church's social justice teaching.

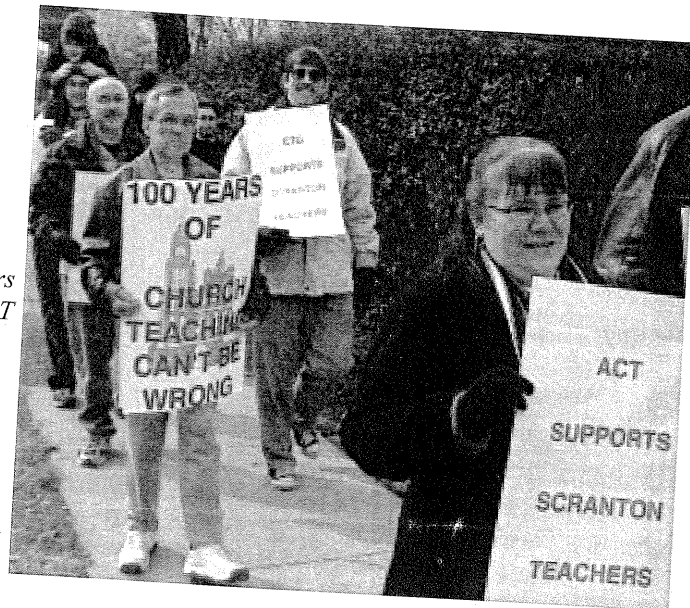


SDACT President Mike Milz addressing rally participants



ACT members supporting SDACT at the Philadelphia rally

ACT and CTU supporters at the NACST rally for SDACT



Unions Lost in Catholic Schools

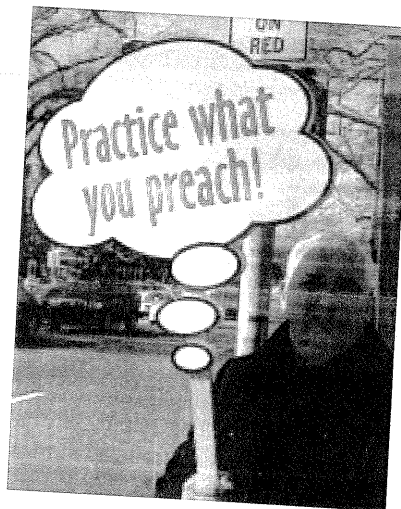
Two notable incidents of union-busting in Catholic schools have occurred in the past sixteen years. On May 27, 1992 the Ordinary of the Fort Wayne South Bend Diocese informed CATCH [the local high school teachers union] that it would no longer be recognized as the bargaining representative for the teachers.

CATCH members were working without a contract in the 1991-1992 school year while negotiations were ongoing.

When negotiations reached an impasse, the Bishop withdrew recognition, leaving the teachers without the union which had successfully negotiated and represented the teachers for more than a decade.

In September 2004, following a school reorganization process similar to the one in Scranton, the Archdiocese of Boston informed BATA [the local high school teachers union] that it would no longer be recognized by the new school boards as the teachers' bargaining representative.

In both cases, teachers formerly represented by unions did not respond with action, and union representation was lost.



at the Philadelphia rally

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

from the editor...

SUPPORT SDACT

Bishop Martino's withdrawal of SDACT recognition is, in moral terminology, scandalous.

As a principle of morality, scandal is the term applied to actions which reasonably lead to confusion regarding Church teaching and its implementation in the lives of Christians.

The Scranton Ordinary placed an open letter advertisement in the Scranton and Wilkes Barre daily papers that ran for a full week.

In a very public way the bishop has flouted the Church's one hundred eighteen year social justice teaching, wrongly characterizing not only Church teaching but the thirty year history of SDACT in the Scranton schools.

The bishop's open letter misrepresents the union's goals and activities during its history and, further, maligns the intentions of the union leadership.

The open letter reads like an anti-union tome from Southern textile ownership rather than an instruction from a Roman Catholic bishop.

Parents of students in the Scranton Catholic schools have vociferously supported the teachers throughout the school year.

With this latest round of public airing of disputes, SDACT is in need of support from not only the local populace, but from all persons interested in the implementation of the Church's social justice teaching.

To that end, NACST held a rally at St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia, the weekly retreat of the Scranton Bishop.

SDACT officers have developed a program of action to be taken by teachers in the Scranton schools.

While acknowledging the overwhelming show of support from diocesan school parents and alumni, the leadership is also seeking the support of others interested in the promotion of social justice in the Church.

To that end, NACST is calling on its members to write to the Scranton Ordinary to urge him to reverse his anti-union stance and to copy the letter to the Papal Nuncio in Washington.

Ultimately, the Scranton teachers' actions will determine their fate.

With a strong show of support from NACST members, SDACT members need not think they are in this struggle alone.

Write to:

Most Reverend Joseph F. Martino, DD.
Bishop of Scranton
300 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503

His Excellency, Archbishop Pietro Sambi
Apostolic Nuncio to the United States
3339 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008

SDACT Information

SDACT has set up a portal page on its website to provide information about local media coverage of the issues and actions connected to its recognition. NACST members may access this information at

www.sdact.com/blog

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
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