



Catholic School Teachers: Why Unionize?

keep good teachers in Catholic schools
by:

- putting the Church’s labor teaching into practice
- having a voice in working conditions, salaries, and benefits
- fairly resolving legitimate disputes
- treating teachers with respect & professionalism

Catholic School Teachers: How Can We Unionize?

- by talking to your colleagues at school
- by becoming informed of locals in your area
- by contacting NACST:

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from the President...

THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS: IT’S TIME FOR A WAKE-UP CALL

The spring issue of the Newsletter of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers is what we call our “organizing issue,” since it is usually distributed at the NCEA Convention. Thousands of non-unionized teachers pass by the NACST Exhibit Booth and a great many pick up a copy of Newsworthy along with brochures that explain how to establish a teacher association (Union) in their schools.

Lay teachers in Catholic schools throughout the United States comprise well over 90% of the total teaching force. Yet, close to 90% of the total teaching force have no real say over their salaries, benefits or working conditions. They have no effective due process; they have no job security. These vital facets of a teacher’s work life are, in a nutshell, what a teacher’s union is all about. A Union is an organized voice, a recognized representative that can sit as an equal partner at the bargaining table and speak for teachers. Sad to say, this is not what a number of diocesan officials (bishops included) want their teachers to have.

The last time the NCEA Convention was held in Boston, the Boston Archdiocesan Teachers Association was the recognized

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Why Unions?

People with the same concerns often get together to talk and look for answers. That's exactly what a union is all about.

American workers have been joining together in democratic unions since the end of the 18th century.

Collective bargaining remains a uniquely American success story.

The way that unions address the most direct needs of their membership is through labor-management negotiations, sitting at a bargaining table with the employer.

Contracts are bargained by democratically elected union representatives who come to the table as equals of their management counterparts.

Through the give and take of the bargaining process, they establish equitable wages, working conditions, job safety and job security, and a system for resolving disputes - a grievance procedure.

*from AFL-CIO publications # 164 &
P-189-0892-350*



Tom Mulloy (USCCB Office of Justice, Peace and Human Development) and NACST President Rita Schwartz at the Catholic Labor Network meeting.

Among the basic rights of the human person must be counted the right of freely founding labor unions.

These unions should be truly able to represent the workers and to contribute to the proper arrangement of economic life.

(#68, Gaudium et Spes, Vatican II)

from the President...

THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS: IT'S TIME FOR A WAKE-UP CALL

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collective bargaining representative of the Archdiocesan high school teachers. Today, 8 years later, the teachers in both the Archdiocesan elementary and high schools labor in the vineyards as employees-at-will. Needless to say, you will not find approval for “union busting” in Canon Law, papal encyclicals or U.S. Bishops’ Pastorals, but that is what became Archdiocesan policy in Boston.

It is hurtful, at times, to read the century of social justice writings that our popes and bishops have promulgated to the world about the rights of workers to form unions and to participate without risk of reprisal. This has to mean teachers in Catholic schools, too. How can bishops exhort that in matters of labor relations the Church should be exemplary while acting in direct opposition when Church employees want to be represented by a union?

It is time for accountability. Church leaders who fail to practice what they preach need a wake-up call. Justice and Dignity are not just catchwords. They must form the foundation of the Church’s labor relations policy just as they form the basis of the Church’s Social Teachings.

The National Association of Catholic School Teachers was created to work with and fight for teachers in Catholic schools so that they could achieve the rights long championed by the Church for all workers. Let NACST know what we can do to help you.



from the Editor...

ORGANIZE

From the establishment of the first U.S. Catholic school system by Elizabeth Ann Seton and John Neumann, through the 1970's, Catholic school education had been a recognized priority of the institutional Church in the nation. The institutional Church was committed to preparing students to take their places in the life of the nation - dioceses took the responsibility to foster and promote Catholic schools. Beginning in the 1970's, as the number of members of religious communities in Catholic education dwindled, lay teachers filled the positions in Catholic schools - to continue the Catholic community's commitment to the future of the Church and the country. Lay teachers now make up 96% of the full-time staff of the nation's Catholic schools. For forty years, the work of lay teachers has sustained the mission of Catholic education in the nation. At the same time, dioceses have been withdrawing support for the schools. In the past decade, individual schools have been "spun-off" from the resources of the Catholic community in local dioceses. Left to their own devices, schools significantly increased tuitions while keeping salaries low, thus forcing parents and teachers to bear the burden of sustaining Catholic schools [contrary to the teaching of the U.S. Bishops' 1986 Economic Pastoral]. To stop the decline in the number of schools and students, dioceses must re-commit resources to the schools. The voices of Catholic school teachers must be heard in this process. Catholic school teacher unions, based in the social justice teaching of the Church, are the best method for insuring that teachers, with their invaluable experiences in the schools, have significant input to the continuation of the Church's educational mission. If the legacy of Seton and Neumann is to continue, it is essential for teachers to organize.

Affiliated Locals

Altoona Johnstown Catholic School Teachers Association

(Diocese of Altoona Johnstown PA)
Michele Kirk

Association of Catholic Teachers

(Archdiocese of Philadelphia PA)
www.act1776.com
Rita Schwartz

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)
Thomasine Rose

The 2012 NACST Presidents' Roundtable

reflections by Barbara McVicker, President Youngstown Diocesan Confederation of Teachers

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that our lives are frittered away by details. For those of us who wear many hats on a daily basis (including leading our respective unions, fulfilling our responsibilities as educators and attending to our personal obligations), Emerson's statement resoundingly tolls true; however, sometimes we are blessed with the opportunity to escape, albeit briefly, that of which we are so ever mindful.

Such was the case when my fellow union colleagues (from far and near) and I were invited to participate in the NACST Presidents' Roundtable, 17-20 February 2012.

As the day for departure approached, I was, to say the least, somewhat apprehensive. This would be my first experience with the Roundtable cruise, and an uncertainty enveloped me as to whether, or not, I could afford the time and the effort to participate in, let alone survive, the voyage!

Even though several of my colleagues attempted to assuage my fears before our embarkation, I found myself on Friday afternoon, on the eleventh deck of the ship as it departed Miami.

As I soaked in the vastness of the sea and the warmth of the sun, I was still surrounded by an uneasiness as I tried to discern exactly why I was there, and just exactly what it was that I would be accomplishing during the weekend?

But, as we all gathered later on for the Roundtable, I could sense that my apprehension was beginning to fade away. My colleagues were most welcoming, and as friendships were renewed, I soon began to forget my worries and concentrate on assimilating everything I could from this opportunity.

Although we were allotted personal time to spend enjoying our nautical environment, our evenings focused on actively listening to our guest speaker, former NACST Executive Vice-President Mr. Michael Milz.

Mike's inspiring and enlightening presentations over the three evenings, were filled with extremely beneficial information regarding: the importance of our respective unions; the challenges that unions collectively are facing; the opposition to, as well as the support of, unions and collective bargaining; the importance of not only maintaining our current memberships, but nurturing growth as well; and the resources, tools, techniques available which could be utilized to address our various union-related concerns.

At the conclusion of each session (and often in the midst), the commitment and the diligence of the attendees to protect and serve their membership was manifested on many occasions via a lively dialogue, interspersed with comments and queries that usually continued into the dinner hour! It was during one of these multitudinous (and simultaneous) dinner discourses that one of our colleagues (who shall remain nameless), decided to rock the

2012 NACST Presidents' Roundtable



Affiliated Locals

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

**Queen of Peace H.S.
Lay Teachers Association**
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Lynn McGill

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)
Sean McDonald
Bonnie Scherr

**Scranton Diocese
Association of
Catholic Teachers**
(Diocese of Scranton PA)

**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 McVicker

*At the 2012
NACST
Presidents'
Roundtable ...*



(Front Row) Barbara McVicker (Youngstown), Irene Tori (Philadelphia), Rita Schwartz, Kathleen Mahoney (Columbus)

(Back Row) Russ DelVecchio (Pittsburgh), George Rudolph (Pittsburgh), Chris Rusin (Buffalo), Michele Kirk (Altoona), Mike Milz (Roundtable Presenter), Diane Bokone (Altoona), Bill Blumenstein (Camden), Patricia Spellman (St. Louis)



Michele Kirk, Irene Tori, Diane Bokone



Patricia Spellman, Barbara McVicker and
Kathleen Mahoney



Chris Rusin, Bill Blumenstein, George Rudolph

McVicker *(from p. 4)*

boat, by interjecting that the accompanying dinner music being played was the theme from, Titanic! It was, of course, a verity of which we had all been aware, but had been ignoring! So, after a very jovial chastisement was rendered, we continued our conversations undaunted and in a spirited, full steam ahead!

Alas, all too soon, the NACST Presidents' Roundtable came to a close. And even though Emerson also once stated that traveling was a fool's paradise, one could say that the esteemed author missed the proverbial "boat"!

For not only did this wonderful respite assist us all with the dispelling of the weariness that sometimes accompanies these dreary, cold, winter months, but it also encouraged us all to continue our firm resolve to protect and serve our membership.

To be able to share in and embrace such a professional and familial experience with our union colleagues, was an unforgettable event—one that will be forever cherished.

To our very seaworthy, and incredibly unflappable, indefatigable, and genuine anchor, President Rita C. Schwartz, to Michael Milz, and to all of the NACST Executive Board members, I extend heartfelt gratitude for the enrichment acquired. Metaphorically speaking, in the realm of lesson plans, the instructional time during the Roundtable was most valuable!

Hopefully, when the next Roundtable is offered, all of us responsible for union leadership, will again be able to accept the invitation to join our union colleagues and heed the call, "all aboard"! It will, indeed, be another memorable voyage that will keep us afloat, long after we have disembarked and the ship has left port!

NACST at The Catholic Labor Network



Rita Schwartz and Irene Tori with Father Sinclair Oubre at the Catholic Labor Network's Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., February 11, 2012.

The Association of Catholic Teachers (Philadelphia) was invited to participate in a panel entitled Catholic Labor Relations in Difficult Economic Times.

The presentation centered around the recent strike by high school teachers in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's 17 high schools.

2011-2012 Lay Teachers' Salaries											
diocese	Basic Scale with BA/BS			Basic Scale with MA/ equivalent		Top Salary			Tuition Charged		comment
	starting	maximum	#steps to reach max	starting	maximum	beyond MA	# credits or degree	# steps to reach	elementary	secondary	
Hartford CT	30215-34840	57258-58471	18	30648-37070	62934-68616	74010	MA+30	17	n/a	8,600-13,500	5
Worcester MA	33990	60660	19	36490	64160	-	-	19	n/a	7,359-8,400	1
St. Louis MO	27495	43367	24	28794	60507	61481	MA+30	24	n/a	6,797-9,450	1
Camden NJ	33446	70739	37	35689	72982	75223	2MA/PhD	37	n/a	7,750	1
Trenton NJ	31364	50737	24-25	32364	51737	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,140	n/a	1
St. Denis elementary	37700	72277	50	38150	73049	73990	MA+30 or PhD	50	n/a	7,500	1
Holy Cross High School	28404	63782	35	30073	65631	67478	PhD	35	n/a	10,000	1
Trenton NJ	25200	57931	28	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5400-5800	n/a	1
St. Rose parish elementary	20860-26250	24475-35103	20	21585-26850	25075-36103	44462	MA+30	20	2,200-3,000	n/a	5
Buffalo NY	29150	48150	36	31442	60592	62784	PhD	36	n/a	6,500-9,000	1
Cleveland OH	32756	50506	30	40460	63927	72057	Ph D	30	2,787-5,050	7,450-8,390	1
Columbus OH	16800-24000	48360	30	18144-25680	36288-50040	52200	MA+30	30	1,600-3,600	n/a	5
diocesan elem & secondary, Franklin County	30086	48563	30	32745	54593	57083	MA+30	30	n/a	5,500-6,500	1
Youngstown OH parish elementary	22500-23000	n/a	n/a	23000-24000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,400	5
Youngstown OH diocesan secondary	37050	71240	37	37550	72040	72680	PhD	37	n/a	5,600	1
Altoona/Johnstown PA private secondary											
Philadelphia PA diocesan secondary											

1. There is one salary scale that is standard for the school(s) being reported.
5. Salaries vary from school to school; therefore, numbers reflect the lowest school and the highest school being reported - all other schools fall between these numbers.

Nonaffiliated school survey results are available at www.nacst.com.