



Hello Education Majors —

The timing of this message purposely coincides with **Catholic Schools Week**. Each year the *National Catholic Education Association* and the *U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops* designate one week to celebrate our nation's Catholic schools. This year, as the logo above indicates, the focus is on *celebrating service*, one of the fundamental principles of our mission at Marquette.

The history of the Catholic Church has been marked by a rich tradition of direct service to those in need, including efforts to end social injustices like racism, poverty, and oppression. In keeping with this tradition, Catholic schools incorporate service projects into the curriculum, teaching students the value of helping others as an expression of faith and good citizenship.

Last year, *students in K-12 Catholic schools provided over 2.2 million hours of community service*, and the tradition extends into our Catholic colleges and universities as well. You probably know that *Marquette enjoys a national reputation for the civic engagement of our undergraduate students*.

And, for this reason, my favorite campus event every year is the student service awards in April. Without fail, I am overwhelmed by the extraordinary community outreach performed by our students, many of whom are Education majors. No kidding, nothing makes me more proud to be a dean here than honoring these *men and women for others*.

This orientation to service strikes me as setting a Catholic education apart. It is a foundation, a core value, and often a genuine calling. In fact, it was the commitment to social justice in the Education majors I met when interviewing here five years ago that made Marquette irresistible to me. In hindsight, I

shouldn't have been surprised, because social justice clearly has its roots in *Catholic Social Teaching*.

My reason for referencing Catholic Schools Week and our university's well earned service reputation, though, centers on *the hope that some of you might one day consider working in a Catholic elementary or secondary school*.

Catholic schools need outstanding teachers like we prepare in the College of Education now more than ever to maintain academic excellence and nurture faith formation. If you see yourself as an advocate for social justice, then there has never been a better time to think about working in an urban Catholic school where a new demographic of students need and deserve the professional skill, dedication, and love you can provide for them.

And so, as our own Marquette University **Mission Week** approaches, Dr. Cepelka, myself, and other faculty members who hold Catholic education especially dear want to help those students thinking that they might one day be called to service in Catholic schools. Just stop by the Office of Teacher Education and express your interest to Melissa at the reception desk, and we'll take it from there.

Having focused this message on Catholic education, please know that I will personally be delighted if you become a true master teacher *anywhere* - whether it's in a public urban, suburban, or rural school district or in a charter, choice, private, or faith-based school - parochial or not. All children are entitled to the best possible education. I just think it's important, and perhaps even fitting, for Catholic colleges and universities to encourage their pre-service teachers to entertain the possibility of working in the national treasure that is Catholic education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William A. Henk".

Dr. Bill Henk, Dean
College of Education
Marquette University