



**Light of Christ
Catholic Schools**

Bismarck, North Dakota

Director of Mission Advancement

Search Prospectus

July 2026



1,543
STUDENTS



17:1 STUDENT-TO-
FACULTY RATIO



102 FACULTY
MEMBERS



5 AP CLASSES
5 DUAL CREDIT



\$15.3 ANNUAL
OPERATING BUDGET



\$664K FINANCIAL AID
AWARDED



\$14.6M
ENDOWMENT



30% FACULTY W/
ADVANCED DEGREES



12,000+ ALUMNI
NETWORK



CLASS OF 2025: 98%
ATTENDING COLLEGE



15 CO-CURRICULARS
19 CLUBS



20+ CAMPUS
ACRES



Schools Overview

Bismarck was the first western pioneer city created due to the railroad connecting Fargo to Bismarck. Two years later, in 1875, St. Mary's Church was created.

In 1878, Fr. Chrysostom Foffa, OSB, built a school at Bismarck, Dakota Territory, and staffed it with Benedictine sisters from St. Joseph, Minnesota. The school was named the St. Mary's Academy and Boarding School. The Sisters' reputation for discipline and educational thoroughness tempered with religion was a welcome contrast to the rawness of frontier life on the Dakota prairie, and so pupils, many non-Catholic, flocked to the "Sister School," the first Catholic school in Bismarck.

From this Benedictine foundation, out of which St. Alexius Medical Center and the University of Mary have also been realized, Catholic education in the Bismarck Community has continuously provided families with quality educational options since 1878. The parishes of Bismarck have sought to provide schools that meet the needs of their students and families and have educated generations of community, state, and national leaders.

Beginning in 2012, the five Catholic parishes of Bismarck came together to form The Light of Christ Catholic Schools, an unprecedented venture reaffirming the strengths and successes of Catholic education in Bismarck. Today, Light of Christ Catholic Schools offers a modern educational program in which students learn language arts, mathematics, science, morality, fine arts, faith, and languages in small classes taught by caring teachers. The children at Light of Christ Catholic Schools have opportunities to discover themselves as scholars, leaders, stewards, thinkers, athletes, and artists.



Mission Statement

Encountering Christ in our Catholic faith through living, learning and serving.

Vision Statement

Inspire and prepare the heart, soul and mind of future generations to radiate the Light of Christ.

Core Beliefs

- Encountering Christ
- Cultivating Virtues
- Inspiring Christ-like Relationships
- Academic Excellence
- Safe Environment

St. Mary's Central High School

SMCHS evolved from the St. Mary's Academy and Boarding School. In 1916, the first high school classes were offered, and the spring of 1922 brought the first graduation at St. Mary's High School. The 1025 N 2nd Street campus was built in 1951, and the Music Department addition was built in 1989. The "new gym," aka Kelsch Gym, Library, Art Room, Kilzer Conference Room and Elevator wing was built in 1997, with a remodel of the Bishop Ryan Chapel. It was referred to as "The 75th Anniversary Campaign" when funds were being sought to defray the cost of the addition. The new SMCHS opened in August of 2019, at the current site located in north Bismarck, 5802 Ridgeland Drive. The state-of-the-art campus features four centers: St. Thomas Aquinas Academic Center, Athletic Center, Our Lady of Victory Chapel and the Myron Atkinson and T. Clem Casey Fine Arts Center.



St. Mary's Academy

Established in 2013, the St. Mary's Academy opened as a new middle school to meet the growth of students in our Catholic elementary schools. Our middle school is located at the 1025 N. 2nd Street campus, formerly St. Mary's Central High School. In 2017, the Academy expanded to educate grades 6-8.

The Academy is committed to Catholic values, educational excellence, and community service. Welcoming families of all faiths, the Academy seeks to create a safe and nurturing environment in which our students are challenged and encouraged to follow the example of Jesus Christ, achieve academic success, and reach their God-given potential. Together we create an environment filled with academic success, respect, integrity, and joy.

St. Mary's Elementary School | Pre-Kindergarten to 5th Grade

St. Mary's Elementary School provides education for families with children from Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade. Its highly qualified teaching staff maintains advanced modern classrooms serving the spiritual, physical, and educational needs of all students who attend. St. Mary's employs an exceptional staff of a school nurse, office assistants, custodians, cooks, and instructional aides who are integral in creating a positive and receptive school culture. We also boast top-notch facilities that include a library, a language lab, a fine arts center and mobile computer lab. Financial assistance, summer childcare and after-school care are also available at each elementary school.



Cathedral Elementary School | Pre-Kindergarten to 5th Grade

Cathedral Elementary School provides education for families with children from Pre-kindergarten through 5th grade. Its highly qualified teaching staff maintains advanced modern classrooms serving the spiritual, physical, and educational needs of all students who attend. Cathedral employs an exceptional staff of office assistants, custodians, cooks, and instructional aides who are integral in creating a positive and receptive school culture. We also boast top-notch facilities that include a library, a computer lab, a band room, a mobile computer lab, and a science lab.



Saint Anne Elementary School | Pre-Kindergarten to 5th Grade

Saint Anne Elementary School provides education for families with children from Pre-kindergarten through 5th grade. Its highly qualified teaching staff maintains advanced modern classrooms serving the spiritual, physical, and educational needs of all students who attend. Saint Anne's employs an exceptional staff of office assistants, custodians, cooks, and instructional aides who are integral in creating a positive and receptive school culture. We also boast top-notch facilities that include a library, a mobile computer lab and a music room.





Position Overview

Reports to: President

Responsible for the effective management of the Light of Christ Catholic Schools (LOC) Mission Advancement functions and staff, successful engagement of donors, and assuring adequate fundraising to meet or exceed annual and capital campaign goals, while ensuring commitment to the mission, Catholic identity, and vitality of the school system.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

- Directs mission advancement for LOC; provides leadership, direction, and guidance in fundraising strategies.
- Manages assigned mission advancement staff/work groups.
- Works with VP of Operations and Finance and President to help set strategic fundraising vision.
- Implements strategies and manages projects that align with the strategic fundraising vision.
 - Coordinates development of staff skills, training plans, and cross-training of staff.
 - Assists in developing priorities and assigning tasks and projects.
 - Oversees performance, productivity, and continuous improvement of staff work products.

- Meets or exceeds fundraising goals established by the organization.
- Increases donor base and generates giving by electronic messaging, phone calls, in-person interviews, hosting and attending special events and school sponsored events, and any other reasonable avenues.
- Identifies and cultivates prospects for increased Annual Fund and Capital Campaign giving.
- Schedules appointments and creates leads to increase fundraising.
- Promotes good will and positive relationships with donors.
- Assists with development and promotion of events that encourages alumni and community involvement.
- Uses reports, queries, and mailing lists, and updates and maintains records as necessary.
- Works with Enrollment Coordinator to aid in increasing enrollment.
- Aids in planning and implementation of raffles, carnivals, donor events, charitable gaming, and other related cultivation and stewardship event activities.
- Maintains effective communication with all stakeholders and supports the relationship between LOC leadership, LOC staff, Board of Directors and the general public.
- Maintains confidentiality of work-related issues, donors, records, and other LOC information.
- Other duties as apparent or assigned.





Key Objectives for the next Director of Mission Advancement

- Advance a comprehensive, mission-aligned advancement strategy that integrates philanthropy, communications, enrollment messaging, and community engagement in service of Catholic identity and long-term sustainability
- Build upon strong enrollment growth by developing a forward-looking advancement model that supports expanding school communities and future system needs
- Leverage the momentum of recent capital success to deepen philanthropic support for operations, academic programs, and scholarships
- Expand access and affordability through increased scholarship funding, strategic financial aid alignment, and intentional endowment growth
- Maximize North Dakota's favorable tax incentives to inspire transformational giving and long-term investment in the mission
- Design and execute a diversified fundraising program including annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, grants, and special initiatives, supported by clear performance metrics and dashboards
- Develop a compelling, unified annual appeal and case for support that clearly articulates mission impact, priorities, and outcomes across PreK-12
- Strengthen donor engagement and stewardship practices by building meaningful relationships, enhancing recognition efforts, and communicating measurable impact
- Elevate mission-centered storytelling and communications through cohesive, system-wide messaging that inspires philanthropic investment and reinforces Catholic identity
- Engage an already generous and supportive community—including parents, alumni, and friends—through thoughtful programming, volunteer opportunities, and personalized outreach

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- Foster strong alignment among school and system leadership to support a unified, comprehensive fundraising approach tied to institutional priorities
 - Partner with experienced diocesan and school leaders to advance a shared strategic vision for growth, sustainability, and mission impact
 - Lead and develop a high-performing Mission Advancement team with clearly defined roles, goals, and accountability measures that maximize individual and collective strengths
 - Strengthen internal systems and data practices to support informed decision-making, track engagement and giving trends, and drive continuous improvement
 - Design and evaluate mission-centered events and engagement platforms that deepen relationships and generate measurable philanthropic outcomes
 - Navigate a dynamic philanthropic landscape—including regional giving patterns and external campaigns such as the University of Mary—to position Light of Christ Catholic Schools for continued success and differentiation
 - Cultivate a culture of collaboration, communication, and shared ownership across stakeholders to ensure an integrated and mission-driven advancement effort





Professional & Personal Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Business, Marketing, Communications, or related field
- Minimum of two years related Mission Advancement or Development experience, preferably in an educational environment; OR an equivalent combination of education, training and experience.
- Strong computer skills.
- Strong human relations skills. Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Maintain ethical behavior in all interactions.
- Able to develop effective working relationships with others.
- Able to perform basic mathematical operations.
- Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out instructions.
- Ability to multi-task and read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals.
- Ability to deal with problems involving several variables.
- Willing to grow in the position.
- Capability to work remotely.
- Overnight stays and multi-day out of town business trips may be required.



About the Area

Located along the Missouri River in the center of North Dakota, Bismarck offers a welcoming community with the accessibility and livability of a smaller city. As the state capital, Bismarck serves as a regional center for government, healthcare, and education. The city is known for its safe neighborhoods, strong schools, and family-oriented quality of life. Residents enjoy abundant outdoor recreation throughout the year, including miles of walking and biking trails, parks along the Missouri River, hunting and fishing, and winter activities across the surrounding plains.

Bismarck is also home to a vibrant Catholic community. The city serves as the seat of the Diocese of Bismarck, which ministers to Catholics across western North Dakota. Parishes are active centers of worship, formation, and community life, and Catholic schools have long played an important role in educating generations of families in the region. Many families maintain deep connections to their parishes and schools, and participation in parish life, sacramental preparation, and service initiatives is a visible part of the local culture.

Catholic institutions are present across many aspects of community life. Parish elementary schools, St. Mary's Academy, and St. Mary's Central High School serve families throughout the Bismarck–Mandan area. University of Mary provides undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs grounded in the Benedictine tradition and contributes significantly to the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural life of the region. Clergy and religious are active in parish and school communities, and Catholic healthcare and charitable ministries contribute to the broader mission of service throughout the region.

For Catholic educators and leaders, Bismarck offers the opportunity to live and work in a community where parish life, Catholic schools, and family life are closely intertwined. The local Church is known for strong participation in the sacraments, support for vocations, and a shared commitment to passing on the faith to the next generation.

Application Procedure

To apply, please submit the following four documents as separate PDF attachments.

- Cover letter that aligns your experiences and skill sets with the current needs of the school as you understand them.
- Current resume with all appropriate dates included.
- Statement of Catholic educational leadership philosophy.
- List of five references to include names, relationships, phone numbers, and email addresses (No references will be contacted without your knowledge and approval.)



APPLY NOW



Interested in this opportunity? Contact:

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