

Miss Westphal



After graduating from California State University, Stanislaus, I began teaching in Sacramento within the public schools as a substitute teacher, which really taught me to think on my feet. After two years in the public system, I came to work in the Diocese of Monterey at St. John the Baptist School in King City.

I moved to Hollister in the 80's and began my career at Sacred Heart Parish School. I was asked to be moderator of the Student Council my first year at Sacred Heart Parish School and have enjoyed working with the students and student government since that time. My son, Phillip, is an alumnus of Sacred Heart Parish School. As my son was ending his high school years, I began working on my masters, and earned a Masters of Religious Education through Loyola University New Orleans in 2002. I also volunteer in our Parish Religious Education program in the confirmation program as a facilitator.

When I first began my teaching career, I did not believe I would ever teach anywhere except in the public sector. Well, the Holy Spirit had other ideas. My teaching philosophy involves not simply "teaching," but religious education. Religious education is educating a child holistically, so that they may become a well-rounded aware person, able to care, coexist, and function fully within the human family. It is through religious education that the student will gain the building blocks to construct and develop their own personal faith life and religious formation. It is through *Christian* religious education that the story of God's saving action through Jesus is brought into my teaching philosophy. Religious education, however, is far more than what can be incorporated into a few sentences. Religious education is that which has become my life's effort to live. It has become my teaching ministry.

My teaching ministry is to challenge my students to become as fully aware of life as they can. I endeavor to be responsive to the diversities within my classroom, and open my students' eyes to be aware of and accept the diversities within the classroom. I use these diversities to challenge my students to a fuller awareness of the actual world around them. My challenge, also, is to make religion and faith come alive in my students. I want my students to realize that *Christ is truly alive* at Sacred Heart Parish School, so that they will desire to build their faith life. I strive to find ways in which to keep faith alive and strong so that my students may become the well-rounded aware persons, able to care, coexist, and function fully within the human family. I share my hopes with my students. It is my hope that my students take all that they have absorbed from me and their other teachers and choose their own responses, develop their own hopes, and acquire their own visions. My goal is to provide for them an atmosphere where they are *comfortable* to be free to become truly religiously educated and work towards building their faith lives, where they fully realize that *Christ is Alive* at Sacred Heart Parish School.