

**REVISIT**  
**the Identity of Catholic Education**  
**in Thailand**



**Catholic Education Council of Thailand**



# **REVISIT**

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## **PREFACE**

We, at the Catholic Education Council of Thailand, received the questionnaire in preparation for the joint conference of the Office of Consecrated Life and the Office of Education and Faith Formation of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference at the end of February, 2018. Its arrival was quite timely. The Catholic Education Council of Thailand was, at that time, preparing to invite leading Catholic educators to a conference themed "Revisit the Identity of Catholic Education" The conference was held from 31 May to 2 June 2018. By that time the responses to the questionnaire were completed. We were able to refer to the questions and answers of the questionnaire as points of discernment. In the spirit of renewal and reconfirmation of our identity as Catholic schools in the spirituality of the '*New Evangelization*' and recent Papal documents, we are thankful for the opportunity to open ourselves to new challenges and be reminded of the need to renew ourselves. In faith and hope, we humbly pray for courage and determination to continue our mission for the love of the young generations who are the future of the world.

We would like to share the answers to the questionnaire in preparation for the joint conference themed "Catholic Schools in Asia: A Shared Mission among Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated People and Lay Faithful" in the light of recent Papal Documents on 24 - 28 September, 2018, at Redemptorist Centre, Pattaya, Thailand. The conclusions of the local conference, themed "Revisit the Identity of Catholic Education" are also recorded in this booklet.



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# **REVISIT**

## **the Identity of Catholic Education in Thailand**

During the conference themed “*Revisit the Identity of Catholic Education*” at Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Centre, Sampran, Nakhon Pathom, from 31 May to 2 June 2018, the Catholic Education Council of Thailand (“CECT”) invited education directors and consecrated people, totalling 32, from all dioceses to study, revisit and reflect on managing education according to *the identity of Catholic education*.

The participants in the conference jointly questioned and challenged each other about missions currently carried out by Catholic schools, i.e., activities, purpose, and whether such activities are a clear manifestation of the identity of Catholic schools. The ultimate goal is to search for guidelines so that the schools would make the identity of Catholic education clearly recognisable to the extent Catholic schools would be the top choice for schooling in Thai society.

Education directors began their “REVISIT” with a study and review of apostolic exhortations of the Church in relation to the educational role of Catholic schools, and of documents developed by CECT during the past eight years, in order to put the identity of Catholic education into realistic practice and to conduct self-evaluation to determine whether the activities done, and those currently carried out, would better position the identity of Catholic education, and the methods for doing so.

### **1. Social Challenges for Catholic Schools**

Prior to the revisit and clarification of goals and missions according to the identity of Catholic education, the education directors studied, and then concluded, the current social circumstances that directly affect educational management. The conference also honestly and frankly assessed the situations of Catholic schools in order to establish the basis by which they can steadily move forward.

#### **1.1 Social conditions**

Current social conditions of which education directors must be aware so as to manage education in response to society are delineated the following two ways.

- a) Crises of social values, particularly the prevalence of materialism, are exacerbated by the rise of social media, causing deficiencies in conscience and common good, life immunity, and in sufficiency. This often leads to the normalization of fraud, corruption, and over-consumption, without concern for nature and the environment.

- b) Parents lack skills, knowledge and time necessary to nurture and teach their children. They develop an inaptitude for the educational system and schools. Parents wish that their children be good, but seemingly only insofar as good grades and academic achievement. Parents also want their children to persevere, but do all things for them to make their lives easy. They want their children to be honest, but are inadvertently over protective and negative role models by, for example, sending them to cramming schools as added assurances for success.

## 1.2 Catholic schools

As a starting point and an important basis for steady progress, the education directors candidly evaluated overall status of the school. They concluded that the Catholic schools are losing dominance as the leader in education. Our reputation in providing good education, which used to be admired and trusted by the society, is obviously deteriorating. This is due to four critical causes, namely:

- a) Management of our educational programs similar to the nearly dysfunctional Thai educational system, drifts with the trends of the social value crises; as well as emphases on: academic competition over cultivating ethical and moral development; rote learning over critical and creative thinking and application of knowledge; and school image over the genuine development of each individual student.
- b) Substantial increase in the number of non-formal schools outside direct supervision of the Ministry of Education, especially international schools, and the emergence of public schools, including municipal schools, with better government funding, while the numbers of children and youth are declining.
- c) Inability to continuously develop due to a lack of continuity of valuable policies as the school development agendas change every 3 to 5 years, as do school directors; and lack of financial support and funding for educational projects and activities, such as wages to school personnel.
- d) Shortage of teachers with knowledge and skills to develop and promote the ethics and morals of students. Further, as teachers are unable to dedicate their entire time and effort to teaching and nurturing students, they feel obligated to spend an abundance of time on paper work, which is irrelevant to learning management. Further, these teachers often work off-hours to make ends meet. For these reasons, the number of teachers is declining.

## **2. Missions of Catholic Education according to the Decree of the Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Thailand**

Catholic schools are aware of their role and responsibilities to the Church. The education directors studied the Decree of the Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Thailand 2015 (the “Decree”) in the areas of children, youth and Catholic education in order to review, confirm and improve the goals and mission of the schools in alignment with the Church.

The Decree evaluates the challenges of the social conditions of Thai Catholic laity and established the following goals for the New Evangelisation of Catholic education:

### **2.1 Challenges of Social Conditions**

#### **a) Social Conditions**

The spread of materialism and technological development has had a negative impact on the life of every individual. The economy progresses, but values and the common good are regressing (Item 2), quickly drawing Thai Catholics *into secularized society*. (Item 3)

#### **b) Condition of Thai Catholic Laity**

Despite the faith that Thai Catholics received at baptism, *their understanding of the religious doctrine is often profoundly inadequate* and is characterized by traditional religious practices rather than by a personal relationship Jesus Christ and actual faith experience in the Church community. By and large, Thai Catholics *do not understand their calling and do not dedicate themselves* to the roles and responsibilities of true Disciples of Christ. (Item 4)

### **2.2 Goals of New Evangelisation**

Through baptism *every Christian becomes a missionary disciple, i.e., a disciple and a missionary with his or her entire life*, regardless of their status in the Church or the intellectual grasp of their faith. (Item 13)

Guiding children and young people to love God is the guarantee of the Church’s future in forming pastors and collaborators. (Item 38) From now on, so that young people will have an especially important role to pioneer new horizons for New Evangelisation, the Catholic education must:

- a) *stress the proclamation of the Good News to children and young people*, and mold them to become leaders and be more discerning in the midst of fast social changes that affect religion;

- b) *allow children and youth to participate fully in the life of the Church*, promote enthusiasm in those groups that provide various services, and especially allow young people to experience and take initiative in the missionary activities within the diocese or in other places; and
- c) provide continuous holistic formation for children and young people through the *close cooperation of home, parish, and school*, that emphasizes listening and understanding, and offers them opportunities and good examples (Item 21).

### 2.3 Mission of Catholic Education

Catholic educational institutions must be *an effective field and base for the New Evangelization*, and serve as the most appropriate field for cultivating lives in accordance with the values of the Gospel in order for all students to *know God and experience His love and mercy* (Items 25 and 38) through the following:

- a) emphasise the unique identity of Catholic education ;
- b) teach and administrate by people who strongly adhere to Gospel values and who are committed to implementing these values until all administrators, teachers and staff at all levels live exemplary lives;
- c) teach and cultivate all that is true, good, and beautiful, and integral to humanity;
- d) help students' families learn ways to present faith to their children (Item 25); and
- e) promote vocation by school staff and campus ministers by regularly teaching and communicating meaning to the students about vocations and regularly organising prayer for vocations (Item 38).

According to the horizon for renewal of the New Evangelisation, the three important areas Catholic schools must emphasise in managing education are:

- a) **Respect for human dignity** - *appreciate and collaborate in defending human rights*, acknowledge, value and respect the dignity of all human beings (Item 27);
- b) **Care for creation** - *assume the duty of respecting and being grateful to the Creator* by not trespassing or destroying the ecological system and the beauty of the world (Item 28); and
- c) **Promote media education** - enhance children and youth with an understanding and conscientiousness to effectively filter through aberrant social media content and help them acquire an ability to use social media for the New Evangelisation (Item 39).

### **3. Guidance of Pope Francis**

Pope Francis urged Catholic schools to review their roles and responsibilities, and realise the importance of education in various apostolic exhortations. **Father Agustinus Sugiyo Pitoyo, SJ** presented the following important suggestions from Pope Francis which education directors should adopt as their guidance in setting out goals and missions of their schools:

#### **3.1 Evangelii Guadium**

Pope Francis pointed out that we should be aware of the real danger to today's world for believers as "consumerism leads to covetous hearts that are desolate, anguished and in pursuit of frivolous pleasures with a blunted conscience. God's voice fades." We are called to see the suffering of Christ in the poor and vulnerable, especially the homeless, addicted, stateless, indigenous, elderly, isolated, abandoned, and migrant populations.

#### **3.2 Laudato Si'**

Pope Francis reminded us of the current social and environmental crises with the question: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" At the root of this situation we find pollution, waste and the throwaway culture.

Thus, we must be **willing to change "lifestyle."** We must respect our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to our surroundings and live in full harmony with creation. Change is impossible without motivation and a process of education. All educational sectors are involved, primarily in school, in families, in the media, in catechesis. Further, the importance of environmental education cannot be overstated. It enables affective change in daily actions and habits, e.g., reduction of water consumption, the sorting of waste, and even "turning off unnecessary lights."

#### **3.3 Amoris Laetitia**

The Church can do more to help and support marriage and the family in their joys and sufferings with the "**Attitude of Accompaniment.**"

The need to accompany, discern and integrate weakness certainly calls pastors and those working in family apostolates to listen sensitively to anyone who feels wounded, and to help them experience God's unconditional love. Discernment is a constant effort to be open to the Word of God to illuminate the concrete reality of everyday life. Discernment leads us to be docile to the Spirit; it encourages each of us to act with all possible love in concrete situations.

Approach the weak with compassion, and not judgment, in order to "enter into the reality of other people's lives and to know the power of tenderness." Proclaim the Gospel of peace, and the Church becomes a peacemaker and witnesses a reconciled life.

### 3.4 Gaudete et Exultate

All we need to do is “live our lives in love” and bear witness to God in all we do. If you see your own life as a “mission,” then you can simply be loving and kind to move towards holiness. **The Beatitudes are a roadmap for holiness.**

### 3.5 Importance of Education

Pope Francis explained the importance of education and pointed out how and why we must undertake the mission of education.

**Why do we have to undertake the mission of education?**

- a) You must convert students to a good life and make sure they are the best they can be, whatever their religion might be.
- b) You must mold the young in order to help them grow to maturity as simple, competent and honest people, who know how to love with fidelity, know how to live a life as a response to God’s call, and to engage in their future professions as a service to society.

**How do we undertake the mission of education?**

- a) Teach not only content, but also the values and customs of life: how to love, how to understand which values and customs create harmony in society.
- b) Educate, not as a job, but as an attitude, a way of being. Be witness to your lives.
- c) Collaborate in a spirit of harmony in order that school becomes a place:
  - (1) of dialogue and peaceful encounters promoting attitudes of respect, listening, and friendship and a spirit of partnership.
  - (2) to learn compassion and magnanimity, to have a big heart, to have a great spirit, and to have great ideas.

## **4. Goals, Missions and Educational Standards According to the Identity of Catholic Education**

After studying, reviewing and evaluating current social conditions and the circumstances of Catholic schools and education, and listening to the guidelines from the Decree and those from Pope Francis, the education directors, after much deliberation, formulated goals, missions and education standards for Catholic schools to put into practice so that the identity of Catholic education will be clearly visible. It is anticipated that these goals, missions and standards will revitalize the good education of Catholic schools, as well as the trust and admiration of society.

### **4.1 Goals of Catholic Schools**

To be the primary choice for a unique and virtuous education in Thai society, Catholic schools must:

- a) Manage education in a Catholic way, emphasizing development of every individual student as a whole person, encouraging development of oneself towards their full, God-given potential in order to lead meaningful lives according to their vocations;
- b) Cultivate students to academically excel and be good, moral citizens to lead their lives with love, mercy, service, honesty, a mind of sufficiency with immunity from internal and external adversities, an ability to choose proper behaviour, and a willingness to do good deeds for a better world;
- c) Function as a centre that offers the light and love of Christ to everyone, especially the weak in the community; and
- d) Function as a centre for education that develops administrators, teachers and educational personnel who live exemplary lives for children and young people in dedication, life-long learning and self-development, and who lead virtuous lives to realize a world that is home to humankind.

### **4.2 Missions of Catholic Schools**

To achieve the above goals, the education directors set out the following six missions for Catholic schools:

#### **a) Mission in Determining Vision and Development Plan of the School**

- 1) Jointly study the guidelines in education management in relation to the identity of Catholic education from Apostolic Exhortations and other relevant sources in order to review and determine visions of the school and prepare development plans which will make the uniqueness and identity of Catholic education clearly recognisable

through all the activities that will be undertaken under the development plans by the clearly assigned and continuous responsible working groups.

- 2) Regularly review, question and challenge ourselves with the following questions: “what are we doing?”; “what is our purpose?” and “are our action making the identity of the schools clearly recognisable or are we just following societal trends?”; and “are we willing to adapt and change in order to return to the beam of the Catholic education identity?”

**b) Mission of Knowledge Management**

- 3) Motivate and support each individual teacher and collaborate in working teams to develop and improve curricula, prepare lesson plans, and present content by integrating educational subjects with interdisciplinary approaches;
- 4) Organise a learning process that stimulates thinking skills and enables students to apply knowledge in real life by using reflective learning processes;
- 5) Promote and inspire education directors and teachers, individually, or collectively as working groups, to study, develop and trial methodologies and techniques for developing and managing learning processes that are suitable for the present and the status of Catholic schools, and continue to improve until methodologies and techniques become dynamic forces in the learning and developing process so that they can be developed into the uniqueness of the schools; and as times change persist with development but within the context of Catholicism, according to fashionable, unsustainable trends.

**c) Mission of Pastoral Care**

- 6) Continuously prepare and develop curricula and teaching guidelines for catechism and Christianity subjects offered in schools to cultivate the minds and souls of the students; ensure that the content and learning processes of these catechisms and Christianity subjects are age appropriate and require moral development of students so as to enable them to apply knowledge to their daily lives for their entire lives; the schools must be prepared to amend and adjust their own curricula and teaching guidelines in line with central curricula and teaching guidelines when such central curricula and teaching guidelines are developed and implemented.
- 7) Support the recruitment of catechism teachers; arrange for a central handbook for catechism teachers for study and reference in order to improve their roles, responsibility, and operations process; and motivate and inspire teachers in the areas of operations by sharing knowledge and examples self-development.



**d) Mission in relation to Administrators, Teachers, Management and Administration**

- 8) Support, motivate and inspire education directors and teachers to continuously study, research and conduct spiritual and professional development, and create a learning community of teachers, particularly with respect to academics and skills in managing the learning processes integrated with educational subjects with an interdisciplinary approach.
- 9) Develop methods of thought and applications of knowledge, develop skills in promoting moral development that are age appropriate for students, and develop skills in nonviolent communication and positive psychology.
- 10) Support, motivate and propel teachers to establish an enthusiastic community of learning enabling them to share knowledge among themselves and grow together in a supportive environment by devoting time for their mutual development.
- 11) Support and allow teachers to work in harmony and in a friendly atmosphere to promote a profound understanding of the identity of Catholic education as a practice in school life.
- 12) Build a system that supports sustainable continuity of school policy, systems and knowledge among next generations, despite changes in school leadership.

**e) Mission of the Education Community**

- 13) Invite every sector to participate in developing quality management of education in all aspects, such as development of buildings and premises, fundraising campaigns, learning processes, and supplementary learning courses.
- 14) Educate and promote a positive attitude and understanding so as to realign behaviours of parents in nurturing their children and help their children set learning goals and acquire proper skills; support parents to appreciate their role and responsibility in promoting growth and development of their children.

**f) Mission of Creating Educational Environment**

- 15) Maintain physical surroundings to reflect Catholic values so as to reinforce the spiritual motivation of students, faculty and administration.
- 16) Arrange and support children or students with initial activities that allow, promote and cultivate their spirituality, provide opportunities to learn about giving, developing character that reliably demonstrates charity, honesty and goodness.

### 4.3 Catholic Education Standards

In order for the Catholic schools to clearly demonstrate their identity and operate in harmony with the Church, according to the strategic plan to renew the New Evangelisation of the Catholic Church in Thailand under the Decree of the Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Thailand 2015, the Council of Catholic Education of Thailand proposes its approach to Catholic education standards and the following examples of vital Key Performance Indicators (“KPIs”) as preliminary guidelines for selection of KPIs that fit with the context of the schools:

**Standards 1 - Identity and Uniqueness of Catholic Education** means the presence of symbols that are obvious indications of Catholic schools, such as a Crucifix, a picture/statue of Our Lady/Patron Saints, availability of a chapel in the school, school atmosphere that is clean, modest, warm and pleasant; and welcoming hospitality **reflective of the spirit of the Gospel, organise common prayers** among students, teachers and educational personnel of the schools, all official activities of the schools begin with prayer, and regularly hold religious ceremonies.

#### Key Performance Indicators

- 1) Physical environment of the school that reflects Catholicism.
- 2) Common prayer in the school.
- 3) Number of religious ceremonies per year.

**Standards 2 - Christ’s model of leadership and management, and administrative process of education directors, teachers and educational personnel** means the spirituality of missionary disciples, education directors, teachers and educational personnel being regularly developed and renewed; qualification of Christ’s leadership model of living an exemplary life of service and giving to others; living the life of prayer and Gospel sharing in the Basic Ecclesial Community (“BEC”); prepare visions, missions and strategic plans for schools that identify with Catholic education; implement projects and activities that adhere to Gospel values; integrate Gospel values in every lesson, plan and activity of the school and based on the reflective learning process.

#### Key Performance Indicators

- 4) Participation and sense of ownership in the projects according to the mission.
- 5) Number of hours spent on self- and group development within one year.
- 6) Number of hours spent on spiritual retreats for education directors, teachers and educational personnel.
- 7) Lessons, plans, and learning activities that integrate Gospel values and reflective learning processes.

**Standards 3 - Quality of Learners** means student acquisition of knowledge, skills and capabilities needed to demonstrate their awareness of the value of becoming all things for all people; **students are acquainted with self-discovery and listening to God’s calling, and learn how to plan and set goals in every phase of their lives, and are eager to learn in order to help create a better world and a better society**; students gain experience in sharing, both inside and

outside the schools, by continuously and systematically as schools provide opportunities for students to share experiences with the poor, the aged, the sick, the disabled; students are able to reflect on their own experiences and build a prayer habit regularly; Catholic students cultivate the spirituality of a missionary disciple; students have respect for diversity of religions and cultures but uphold their own religion and culture.

**Key Performance Indicator**

- 8) Percent of students who successfully enrol in universities according to their own targets to the total number of students taking entrance examination.
- 9) Number/percent of students/Catholic students who adopt Jesus/Mary/Saints and positive role models in leading their lives.
- 10) Number of hours/number of activities for Catholic students/service activities/prayer.

**Standards 4 - Community and Environment** means the role of schools in **working with the community, including parents and alumni**, in order to elevate a sense of social responsibility, and the importance of love, mercy, honesty, justice, gratitude and sufficiency, including conservation of the world; students participate in taking care of the environment and gain knowledge and appreciation of the value of the environment, including the adoption of a lifestyle that is environmentally friendly.

**Key Performance Indicators**

- 11) Number of hours/activities in which the community participates.
- 12) Number of hours/activities for environmental conservation or social development.
- 13) Number of people in the community who participate in activities purported for education of the school.
- 14) Satisfaction of parents and community towards school.

*The proper function of the Catholic school is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith. So indeed the Catholic school, while it is open, as it must be, to the situation of the contemporary world, leads its students to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepares them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community.*

*(Gravissimum Educationis, 8)*

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**Catholic Schools in Asia**  
A Shared Mission among Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons  
and Lay Faithful in the light of recent Papal Documents

***Answers to Questionnaire***



## **Catholic Schools in Asia**

A Shared Mission among Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons  
and Lay Faithful in the light of recent Papal Documents

### ***Answers to Questionnaire***

#### **1. What do you consider most life-giving / energising / meaningful in your ministry in a Catholic education?**

##### Answers of Bishops

1. From the receiver's point of view:

1.1 In spiritual life as ministerial priests, Mass, prayers, pastoral work and performing other parish work as best one can each day.

1.2 In working life as administrative priests, it includes:

1.2.1 Working with collaborators, i.e., consecrated persons and lay faithful, male and female Catholics and those of other religions. With clear policies about educational management, a teamwork of collaborators, honour and respect for each other, we will eventually achieve our goals.

1.2.2 Working with stakeholders, including

- a) Students – Developing students in mind and spirit (a better person), and both intellectually (smart with skill sets necessary for life), and physically (growth, strong and healthy).
- b) Parents and Community - Priests leading the development in item a) to help foster faith of parents for trust and cooperation with the school. These are the most life-giving gifts in Catholic education.

1.3 In community life with priests, consecrated persons and bishops, caring, sharing, moral support, trust, positive thinking, giving opportunity to forgive and give, and working with the light of faith and the teaching of Jesus in mind.

2. From a giver's point of view:

Educating people in order to develop the entire person - both physically and intellectually, and in mind and soul - is considered genuine Catholic education so that students graduating from schools become good and smart people, who are the driving force of society and the country, and live their lives according to the Gospels' values.

## **Answers of Clergy**

Apart from the ministerial service of sacramental rituals provided to lay faithful and consecrated persons, the evangelical mission through education is the most life-giving and meaningful. It transforms people in a concrete way. The presence of clergy and consecrated persons project the image and present the way that students can move closer to the Lord, like planting the seed of the Word in their hearts, waiting to grow and bear fruit.

The goal of school management being “the field for pastoral care and evangelisation” is not managing an education business or only emphasizing academic development, as commonly adopted by mainstream schools, but rather is emphasizing - the education of students to appreciate the value of humans as God’s image, the dedication in offering various curriculum models that enable students to discover their own potential and value. As a result, the school becomes a field for pastoral care for the clergy, consecrated persons and lay faithful acting as good shepherds to students, parents, collaborators and community. Hence, this type of school management is true value management.

For the above reasons, it is essential to create schools with the atmosphere and spirituality of a family with Jesus dwelling among us always. The rendering of schools in the name of Jesus, the openness to “everyone,” especially having “child / pupil-centred with Jesus” are the critical foundation. “Let the little children come to Me.”

## **Answers of Consecrated Persons**

The most meaningful in the context of Catholic education as a ministerial service is the participation in the evangelisation of the Church, making the school a place for materialising the life and mission of Jesus Christ in school, developing students according to Catholic humanity ideology, developing students to be complete people both physically and spiritually under the Catholic education approach.

The centre of ministerial service is “Jesus.” Bonding ourselves with Jesus and passing-down God’s mission of love to students is the most meaningful in the role and responsibility in Catholic education because it is the heart of the passing on of inheritance of faith and righteousness as commanded by Jesus. So does the cultivation of students with faith in the reality of life, responsibility for the world and environment (Laudato Si’), and responsibility for society and family (Amoris Laetitia).

The provision of education together with pastoral work, especially pastoral care of the family, pastoral projects that take care of youth, promote the importance of the collaboration among families, school and students, set up policy to give attentive care to Catholic students, particularly regarding Christian life are the most meaningful in the context of Catholic education.



The schools are open to everyone, without condition, by providing education that puts emphasis on the following:

- 1) Develop students in all aspects, cultivate life values, emphasise virtues and ethics along with academic development.
- 2) Foster ethical values, and the respect, dignity and uniqueness of each person; provide equal opportunity for growth and learning to everyone; and respect the opinions of others and the ability to interact and co-operate.
- 3) Provide students with the opportunity to develop so that they can grow and nurture their own talents. Schools pay attention to students in all respects, such as intellect, emotion, social skills, professional orientation, ethics and spirituality, develop talents of students in the spirit of collaboration and solidarity.
- 4) Create activities to provide the diversity of students with the awareness that education is not only knowledge, but also experiences and skills, i.e., learn how to do/work.
- 5) Follow up, supervise, assist and encourage students and collaborators who work closely, and with the spirit of family, in building an educational community that has a special environment full of Christ's spirituality, charity and collaboration.
- 6) Cultivate students to have a sense of responsibility, diligence and steadfastness, and cultivate students to appreciate the Gospel values and develop themselves in all respects.
- 7) Allow the poor and the underprivileged to enrol in schools as appropriate.

### **Answers of Lay Faithful**

1. **Accept that every child is a Godsend**, which is the most meaningful ministerial service. We are responsible to take good care of each other as best we can, regardless of his or her religion. Most importantly, we must help others develop their personal values and appreciate the teaching and tradition of their own religion so that they have the sense and conscience to refrain from wrong doing.

The provision of education is the development of man in the areas of morality and competencies. Hence, the school emphasises religion, namely, teaching morality to students according to the religion of their families. Also the school organizes activities that promote moral values in accordance with both Catholicism and Buddhism. When we are open-minded and accept other religions, it is an indirect evangelism as well.

Schools must give priority to developing teachers who can be role models for students by organising a continuous moral renewal to build awareness and lift the spirit so that teachers can be role models for their students.

2. **Work to fulfil God's Will** - The gift of charity from God helps in carrying out our mission according to the Word of God, and having faith in Jesus. We are also helped to manage all affairs according to God's will.

School is rooted in Christian tradition with Our Holy Mother Mary as Patroness of the school, being our model for love mercy, forgiveness and collaboration which will bring happiness, success in learning, working and leading lives in the society, having moral values as a life-principle, applying knowledge into good deeds, contributing to society and country for peace and prosperity, having the love of Jesus as a principle in educational management of the school and building a loving family among administrators, teachers, students, parents and stakeholders in the school.

3. **Truly acknowledge and appreciate the goals of Catholic education** by studying various sources and books, listening to scholars and dialogue with various people, follow examples of real-life practice of leading educators in the Catholic education circle, and apply such knowledge in our school life. When our mission is clear, we can appreciate the value of our work and are can work persistently with happiness in carrying out the Catholic educational mission,

4. **Give priority to spiritual life** - Our spiritual power is acquired through prayer, sharing Gospel readings, meditation, attending Mass regularly, studying Scriptures and religious readings, paying attention to the Pope's teachings, participating in religious organisations, dedication in building the identity of Catholic education at our own school, reading Apostolic Letters on Catholic education, and being able to work with people of the same ideology, joining moral uplifting and edification retreats together, joining hands in building a learning community among colleague, parents and alumni collaborating in school development. The most life-giving and energising thing is in seeing students grow up under the grace of God through our collaboration.

5. The most meaningful aspect of my life as a Catholic educator is **the opportunity to facilitate life-long formation of the staff and students**. Working with children, it is sometimes difficult to see the result of the hard work that is put in because successes with children do not come until they are adults. There are moments that I enjoy being with students on a daily basis. But, sometimes the hard work is a distraction from enjoying the moment. My hope is that what I am doing at the school will make an impact on students' lives in the future. It is like planting a seed and taking care of it so that it grows and become fruitful in the future. At this point, the school is teaching students in academic subjects and moral values so that they grow up to be good citizens of the world.

**2. What have you concretely done in your education ministry that you think has made the greatest positive impact on the stakeholders (students, families of students and the community at large)?**

**Answers of Bishops**

1. Lead life as a role model of love, compassion and generosity for students, family and community as a whole and living life as a witness to Jesus Christ.
2. Integrate Gospel values into lesson plans so that the teaching of academic knowledge for each subject and each learning session is not only for the purpose of intellectual development, but also for the cultivation of moral values and ethics.
3. Develop schools into genuine Catholic schools by adopting values of the four Gospels, including love mercy, honesty, and gratitude. Inspire administrators, teachers, educational staff and students to adopt at least one of these four Gospels values in their daily lives. (Doing good deeds until it becomes our way of life.)
4. Provide educational opportunities to families by granting scholarships of approximately 10 million baht a year to students in Catholic schools.
5. Attend meetings, seminars for school administrators and teachers in the school system; attend the annual seminar of the Catholic Education Council of Thailand, which is an outstanding national collaboration effort; attend monthly meetings of the executive committee of schools at the diocese level and coordinate the national educational committee.

**Answers of Clergy**

1. Be faithful and persistent in educating according to the Catholic Education Identity with Jesus at the centre, especially by emphasising the teaching of Gospel values (moral and ethics) together with academic excellence. The obvious goal is to develop citizens who are service minded, and are dedicated to, and responsible for, society and are honest.
2. Preserve strengths in dedication and attention to students impartially and help students establish security in their lives, as well as be free of drugs and all vices, take care of underprivileged students in terms of economics, academia, intelligence and behaviour.
3. Provide education that focuses on moral and ethical development according to Christian morality and moral principles of the religions of students in all respects - formation, rituals, ceremonies, activities in daily life of the school according to Catholic teachings; emphasising pastoral care and evangelisation in the form of 'sowing seeds' of the Word which God will make grow; supervise and assist in the work of collaborators (teachers and educational staff) with respect to their dignity, with fair remuneration, as well as taking managerial and administrative

roles in supporting the community to reach its potential, and the ability of the school so as to experience the meaning of being a Catholic school.

4. Cultivate good conscience and practice of living life according to Gospel spirituality and the ideology that Catholic schools must observe and practice in everyday life and at school. Proclaim the Good News of Jesus through learning activities and ensure the environment is permeated with faith, belief and rituals which explain the words “Being the foundation for the evangelisation of Goods News of God’s love.”

5. Dedicate in arranging the academic curriculum with a variety of activities, to give opportunity for students to discover their own potential and values.

6. Give priority to the development of students in all respects (physical, intelligence, emotional and social development) in accordance with their potential and desire, such as develop learning skills of students, provide a variety of lesson plans/activities, good nutrition programs, etc.

7. Give priority to the development of discipline, punctuality, fairness, sincerity, kindness and responsibility among students, teachers and educational staff.

#### **Answers of Consecrated Persons**

1. Arrange Catechism and Christian subjects convey moral principles of Catholicism to all students; promote and support Catholic teachers and students to live as witnesses to Christ; behave as role models for people of other religions such as attending Mass every week (organised by school). Teachers should have Gospel sharing every two weeks, etc.

2. Promote the development of Catechism teachers and all teachers to embrace self-development in academics and morality according to the Catholic educational approach in order to develop students and be a role model of the students for solidarity and unity.

3. Organize the celebration of various holy days through Mass/Gospel reading ceremonies and charity work for the poor and the underprivileged, such as celebrating the feasts of Our Holy Mother, Christmas, etc. All students take turn in joining the ceremony and learning about Christian ritual and tradition.

4. Train students to be leaders and followers under the “Home of Morality” project that emphasises unity in working, contributing to the common good within the school and reaching out to society with the patron saints of the houses as role models for morality and ethics. Also, build new leaders to contribute to the school and society.

5. Organize volunteers for the rural development camp so as to stimulate and provide opportunity to parents to participate in the cultivation of young people; the camp format enhances the opportunity to reach out to young people and discover clearer potential and gifts in each young person.
6. Give opportunity to students to participate in expressing opinions and joining school development activities; give advice and guidance to students.
7. Organize an immersion programme to help alleviate the difficulties of those in need; each class attends the charity programme, visits the underprivileged (the aged, disabled children, orphans, the poor, etc.) within the parish community and outside community; visits inmates and arranges for Confession and Mass for Catholic inmates with the support from teachers, students and alumni.
8. Teach teachers and students how to think, conduct problem-solving through the philosophy of Sufficiency Economics (taught by King Rama IX) as the basis for thinking and practicing together how to use Reflective (Ignatian) Pedagogy in preparing lesson activities.
9. Set missions in the area of running a dormitory which provide an opportunity to train and cultivate youth to be good citizens. Many alumni are impressed with the training that they received turning out to be good contributors to society. They applied their education to their lives and taught their own children to be disciplined; saying bedtime prayers even though they are Buddhists.
10. Organize parent meetings to discuss ways to help students grow. Allow parents and the community to participate in various school activities so that the parents are aware of their role and responsibility as a primary and irreplaceable teacher of their children. This helps cultivate social life at the family level that is generous and understanding. It helps in preparation for the contribution to a broader society. As members of society, each is required to participate in the development of the society to which they belong.
11. Collaborate among home, church/temple/mosque and school in attending activities in Buddhist, Christian and Muslim ceremonies; promote interreligious activities; encourage teachers and students to assist in volunteer work for both the church and the temple.
12. Work as a team among teachers and educational staff to improve efficiency in providing education, instead of working alone; support teachers to participate in an evangelisation missions and teach students to do collaborative work.
13. Grant boarding school scholarships to poor students by offering them free education until completing the highest class at school, as well as granting day school scholarships to students regardless of their religions.

## Answers of Lay Faithful

1. Provide pastoral care to students with love and mercy; give advice and guidance to students and their families so that the students have the opportunity to improve their behaviour and create good understanding within their families (in case the student has family problems).
2. Integrate Gospel values into various activities of the school, arrange catechism courses and incorporate Christian parables into moral education courses; teach teachers and students about the lives of Saints as role models in leading their lives.
3. Build an environment of love and kindness for communion in school, leading to collaboration, taking care of others and helping each other within the school. The school receives support from the government and private enterprise in various areas so that it is accepted by the community and parents in the province. The school also provides service and support to society according to the ministerial spirit of Catholic education.
4. Promote activities and projects in the area of “volunteer spirit” so as to provide students and teachers with direct experience and involvement with aid programmes, visit underprivileged, etc. The experience makes everyone participating in the projects feel warm at heart from giving.

Promote the spirit of sharing and caring, the school emphasis on the giving through charity and the providing of service to society, community, parents and students with love and sincerity within the school and outside the school, i.e., with organisations or agencies of the public and private sectors. For example, representatives of teachers and students pay a visit and provide meals at Bethany Home for Aged in Ban Pong, Ratchaburi Province on the Mother’s Day every year; donations to Baan Sithida, a development centre for the disabled; donations and health checks to about 3,000 students in 15 sister schools run by the Border Patrol Police Force.

5. Give priority to harmoniously develop the potential of students in all aspects, i.e., physically, morally and intellectually, by developing each individual student. A teacher knows every “individual student” and passes on the information of each student to the responsible teacher in the next year’s level until the student graduates from the school.

Promote the physical development and health of each individual student through sports and exercise, promote necessary life skills, such as swimming, art, music and aesthetics. Cultivate morality and ethics through various and continuous activities that are carefully designed. From such activities, students absorb ways of thinking, rationale, logic, and discerning facts. They learn from role models and best practices. They learn to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Students learn continuously until their morality is explicitly elevated.

Activities of this nature are modified every year so as to be relevant to problems faced and in light of the chosen campaign administrators and teachers. Implementation of the projects is school-wide. They are not carried out by an exclusive group.

6. Give priority to religious activities, i.e., daily prayer 3 times a day (in the morning, before afternoon session and before school is over), invite priests to give sermons on a weekly basis, organise religious rituals, i.e., Mass at school at the beginning and the end of academic year (twice a year); take students to the parish church every first Friday of the month, send Catholic students to annual catechism camp; have catechism classes at school to prepare students for holy sacraments (Confession, Eucharist and Confirmation).

7. Organise activities on feast days, such as

(a) *Christmas* is an annual celebration of the school with the support of the public and private sectors; not only for entertainment and recreation but for love and sharing. School personnel and students take special care of one another. It is a time to give to the underprivileged in various places.

(b) *Lent* is an occasion when the school personnel and students do penance and make sacrifices. They also take collections for Catholic charity organisations. All school personnel and students wholeheartedly participate in the program because each one knows that all money goes to the underprivileged.

(c) *Easter* - savings in piggy banks during Lent from all students are donated to the poor.

8. Set out school policy that all teachers adopt "Reflective Pedagogy" which is adapted from the "Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm." Reflective pedagogy helps build the habit of reflection for all.

9. Arrange for everyone in the school to participate in the learning about the environment and in activities which reflect "Care for Environment begins from School" campaign.

10. Organise days of retreat/renewal for teachers and students, regularly. Special training for newly recruited teachers is given to familiarise them with the Catholic school environment and our way of implementing Catholic education. Tremendous time and effort are put in by teachers to create a Catholic school environment until changes are noticed in student attitude and behaviour. A survey of parents indicates that the behaviour of the students at home dramatically changed. Parents have confidence and trust in Catholic education.

11. Organise family retreats as one of activity of the Catholic parent network. The Catholic parent network also organizes trips to visit churches outside of Bangkok on an annual basis. Each year about 30-50 families join the program.

**3. What do you recognize as the 3-5 best practices of your education ministry that you wish to continue and strengthen for the good of the Catholic Church?**

**Answers of Bishops**

1. Develop all clergy responsible for the education ministry in the area of Gospel values and Jesus's leadership style. This helps us to be good pastors and good administrators in Catholic educational institutes. It ultimately leads to the development of the Catholic Educational Institute into a genuine field and foundation for re-evangelization.
2. Revisit the philosophy, mission and strategic plan of Catholic education and review the role and responsibility of Catholic educational institutes. This is to make certain that they are growing in Catholic Education Identity.
3. Develop teachers, students and educational staff with respect to diversity, but help them to be able to adopt Gospel values in their daily lives.
4. Build a network and initiate collaboration among stakeholders, such as students, families, community, church, government offices, etc. All stakeholders take ownership of the Catholic educational institutes and work together to instil the sustainable growth of the Catholic educational institutes.
5. Build a network of, and collaborate with other, Catholic educational institutes in Thailand and those overseas for sharing and exchanges of knowledge and practices in order to achieve sustainable growth.

**Answers of Clergy**

1. Manage the school by focusing on making it a field for pastoral care and evangelisation. Create an environment of peaceful coexistence amid differences in faiths, cultures, traditions, ways of life, which is the environment of a community that is God centred.
2. Have firm faith that "the Catholic School is not a business entity." Schools must treat teachers and educational staff fairly according to relevant rules and regulations and treats students with fairness and kindness. The school takes care of the underprivileged in financial need.
3. Integrate the learning process under the school curriculum, student formation and school activities with Christian moral principles with Jesus Christ at its foundation. Build a conscience of righteousness to use freedom in properly making a decisions; manage learning processes using the Reflective Pedagogy Paradigm so that students can learn to correctly use their freedom in leading their lives.



4. Cultivate students with moral values and ethics to be leaders in moral and ethical areas with an education that emphasises life skills together with academic skills.
5. Develop education personnel as collaborators in Catholic education. Teachers, especially Catholic teachers, earnestly and continuously project the image of Catholic teachers by explicitly living their lives as role models and cooperate with administrators in developing students to achieve the goals Catholic education.
6. Support the development of educational personnel, priests and consecrated persons to be ready to participate in educational administration of the school, and with respect and listening to the opinions of colleagues and recipients of educational services.
7. Nourish life with the spirit of Jesus through participating in the Eucharistic Celebration, reading the Bible, reading the teachings of the Church about Catholic schools, and through prayer. One should also participate in the basic Christian community, have dialogue with intellectuals, attend seminars and complete academic studies. One should also do research work and take guidelines from variety of experiences.
8. Lead others by example, live the community life, having a content and happy life, behave appropriately. Priests who participate in school life are true witnesses.
9. Build a network of collaborators among parish schools and schools of religious orders to share knowledge and experiences.

#### **Answers of Consecrated Persons**

1. Respect the dignity of each person, show the gestures of respect (“wai”), and speak with respectful language.
2. Cultivate “love, service and forgiveness” as a prominent identity of the school. Make it a practice of all. Manage the school with participatory management and involve every party; promote teachers to understand their roles and responsibilities as collaborators of the school by being role models to students in terms of moral values and ethics. Christian moral values are practiced in classrooms.
3. Promote an understanding of Gospel values and make them relevant to the technological age. Priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful practice Gospel values in real life. “Education that does not lead humans to their life destiny is not a true education.”
4. Teach catechism to Catholic students and teach Christian moral principles to all students as part of the curriculum. Use learning processes that are meaningful and help students to develop leadership skills and become active citizens.

5. Build a Catholic environment in the school, in which everyone unites to do good deeds and help each other. Everyone is willing to contribute to the common good, to be an example to the community, to work with the poor. There is no gratuity for school enrolment and give priority enrolment to Catholic students; grant boarding school scholarships day school scholarship to the poor; and engage in charity work for the underprivileged.
  
6. Promote and support Catholic teachers and students to be witnesses of Christ; live lives as role models for people of other religions; attend Mass every week (arranged by the school); participate in Gospel readings and sharing once every two weeks.
  
7. Arrange and promote Bible week and other Catholic activities, such as Gospel readings. Organize the Liturgy of the Word on special occasions; pray together on every possible occasion.
  
8. Co-operate and build good relationships among clergy, consecrated persons and lay faithful in undertaking various missions to promote faith and understanding, and build a good attitude with all religions; conduct inter-religious activities; build collaboration between home, church and school; join hands in religious activities between Buddhists, Christians and Muslims; attend activities of all three religions; encourage teachers and students to participate in volunteer work at Buddhist temples and Christian churches.
  
9. Build a physical environment in school for everyone to sense the prominence of Catholic education. When entering the school, everyone should recognize the environment of Christ-like love, warm, kindness and generosity. For example, hanging Gospel placards in landmark spots in school, organising feast day celebrations for Our Lady, having Christmas decorations and having events to convey thoughtful soul-searching messages.

### **Answers of Lay Faithful**

1. Collectively develop and support schools to be a source of service for mind and body. Build collaboration between schools of dioceses, religious orders and lay faithful owners to help each other. Participate in activities that help students to grow. Promote collaboration to strengthen and develop Catholic education and the Church.
  
2. Build a network of Catholic education administrators to support one another in the area of school development, help school administrators solve problems, build service spirit among administrators, knowledge sharing, have a principal centre or prototype in Catholic education management.
  
3. Engage in school management that is consistent, continuous and proactive. The implementation of the policies and strategic plans is done continuously and efficiently. This can lead the school to success in spite of obstacles and severe competition. School administrators must seek proper management strategies that focus on quality. The school is able to carry on

and is accepted by parents and community. Teachers and educational staff work as one. They are ready to change/adapt for creative development.

4. Cultivate moral values among students through concept of “Head-Heart-Hand,” i.e., present knowledge and create experiences for students to practice moral values until they agree, accept and implant them in their hearts and practice them in their lives. Yet it is appropriate to regularly change the format of the activities to suit current circumstances and also to ensure they are age-appropriate for students.

5. Promote reflective pedagogy paradigm as an essential tool for cultivating moral development of students. It enables teachers and students to pause to think about what has been done, how it feels, what the benefits are, and whether or not it should be continued.

6. Include Christian Ethics and Catholic Religion in the school educational program so that all of students have the opportunity to learn about Christianity in class. The class is conducted by catechism teachers. Catechism teachers must be well prepared by the Saengtham Seminary College and Bangkok Catechism Training Centre.

7. Give the opportunity to every teacher to participate in the designing of activities to develop students within the environment of love and freedom and with purpose to develop students. This ensures teachers take ownership and strive to produce good educational activities.

8. Promote knowledge, understanding and good spirit among educational personnel, especially “teachers.” Take special care of Catholic teachers, educational staff and students; provide training and encourage their participation in Catholic activities so that they can be proud to present themselves as Catholics; prominently build the image of Catholic teachers in the school by being role models to others and cooperating with school administrators in developing students to attain the goals of Catholic education.

9. Visit Catholic families to cultivate and enhance Christian faith among Catholic teachers and students. The visit involves prayer and gospel sharing which is life-energising for Christians.

10. Cooperate with Catholic parents, on the basis of invitation, to give advice and share ideas; connect with Church leaders at all levels and relay their message to Catholic families, teach catechism to Catholic students with a curriculum and teaching process that are meaningful to lives and help the students to be active members of the Church.

11. Apply the guidance of the Church in various documents, such as Apostolic Letters on Catholic education, various Apostolic Exhortations, Decrees of The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Thailand, declarations from annual meetings of the Catholic Education Council of Thailand, etc., into concrete practices in school. Currently, the school mainly arranges for the study and explanation on such documents, but there is no concrete guidance on the implementation supervision, follow-up and evaluation.

**4. What are the five top values that are practiced in your Catholic school? Describe these briefly.**

**Answers of Bishops**

1. **Love mercy** is the fundamental value. We must have love mercy for everything, namely love God, love our neighbour, love our job, love our nation, love our religion, love our King, love life with discipline, love nature and the environment as we love ourselves.

Love-mercy is expressed when students, teachers and administrators respect the dignity of one another; have brotherly love, act with love to our environment, friends and relatives. The right attitude is seen in behaviour. They are able to take criticism with an open mind, forgive others, and express a positive attitude towards others when observing their success. Students, teachers and administrators are service-minded, have a peaceful mind, can forgive with the attitude and behaviour of sharing with the poor, and help others without expecting anything in return, help the weak, refrain from anger and annoyance.

2. **Honesty** is an important value that makes people live together in the society with happiness, trust and interact with one another with sincerity. With this moral value comes self-discipline. "He who is faithful in very little is faithful also in much." (Luke 16:10)

This value can be expressed when students, teachers and administrators are honest. They always tell the truth, work with responsibility until the assigned tasks are complete. They accept their own shortcomings, and this leads to improvement of ones' own self. They do not desire other people's properties.

3. **Sufficiency** is important because people with a mind for sufficiency do not exploit others; they do not exploit nature, not cheat nor engage in corruption, and they do not make trouble for themselves.

This value can be expressed when students, teachers and administrators live simple lives. They do not spend money beyond their means. They are satisfied with what they have. They save and economise. They are reasonable in making plans and solving problems.

4. **Gratitude** is of the greatest values of the people in the East. There is an ancient saying that goes: "Those who do not have the virtue of gratitude cannot have other virtues." We have to show gratitude for everything: gratitude for God, for parents, for our nation and religion. We show gratitude to the King, to the environment, etc.

5. **Forgiveness** is another dimension of love-mercy. If we cannot forgive, we cannot be a disciple of Jesus. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)

Catholic schools must transform these Gospel values into explicit action (through collaboration among all teachers and students) so as to bring these values into practice until they become our way of life.

### Answers of Clergy

1. **Love** - Catholic schools are outstanding in living the life of brotherly love. If a school cannot practice the teaching of love, it will lose its Catholic identity.

2. **Forgiveness** - Teaching students to apologize and forgive one another sincerely enables students to build a kingdom of peace. They live as sons of God. Even though our human instincts drives our feeling, or our desires, and propel us to retaliate or exact revenge, the divine teaching demands us Catholics to "Always forgive"; i.e., "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times" or "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

3. **Sharing** - The atmosphere of sharing in Catholic schools is so admirable. Our world will not starve if people share adequately. Our properties are granted to us by God, we are obliged to share them. These properties are not for us alone, they are properties of the poor as much as they belong to us.

4. **Honesty** - "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." Hence, children must cultivate the value of honesty when they are very young so that in the future they can be assigned to take responsibility in great missions, such as tending their family or governing the country which requires great responsibility and honesty.

5. **Prayer** - Children should cultivate the habit of prayer which is the expression of the desire for the world to have prosperity, peace, solidarity and most importantly have God in one's own heart always.

6. **Moral courage** - It is not sufficient to just have the attitude or awareness of social justice or peace-making or harmony among mankind. We must have the courage to proclaim and be steadfast with the right faith and attitude. We must take the risk to perform good deeds, even though it may contradict public opinion.

### Answers of Consecrated Persons

1. **Love** - Everyone in school lives the Gospel values. Each person practices charity, including love for their country, love their religion, love the King and love their neighbours. Everyone is able to forgive the wrong-doing of others, congratulate the success of others, share his/her properties with others and accept the criticism and blame with a peaceful heart.

2. **Service** - Everyone in school has characteristics according to the Gospel values of service, respect for human dignity, service, sharing, generosity, and spirit of volunteerism. Each person volunteers to help without expecting anything in return.
3. **Sufficiency** - Everyone in school has characteristics according to the Gospel value of sufficiency; be a person of simplicity and sufficiency. They are satisfied with what they have. They save and economise. They make plans, solve problems with rationality.
4. **Honesty** is the fundamental value of a good society. It is essential that education personnel can be role models for honesty and cultivate students to be honest in every aspect; to behave well in both word and action. They observe truth and righteousness as life principles.
5. **Prayer** - Awareness of ourselves, awareness of God's dwelling in ourselves and constantly seeking God through prayers which is the best protective system for us.
6. **Joy** which reflects in the optimistic attitude, being grateful to God for granting us gifts, having hope and trust in God always, developing people to their full potential.
7. **Justice** is a sense of respect for our rights and those of others; having a righteous conscience; no prejudice; behaving correctly; being rationale; having right conscience in distinguishing right from wrong; knowing what is wrong, what is right, what is evil, what is moral; acting with impartiality.
8. **Peace** is joy in the heart, being composed and being able to resolve conflicts in a peaceful way.
9. **Respect to the dignity of others** - Build a fundamental faith in the equality, dignity and rights of mankind. It is essential to respect everybody of any status; no encroachment, no disparagement, no violation of the rights of one another.

#### **Answers of Lay Faithful**

1. **Love** - Jesus teaches us to love others as ourselves, be grateful to elders, love our study, love our jobs, love nature, which is against a social mainstream that shapes us to think only for ourselves.
2. **Love-Service** - Jesus died on the Cross because He loves us. No other actions have more meaning than this. The school must tangibly proclaim the love of Jesus and set out guidance to act with love towards one another; give love and help to others; have a spirit of volunteerism, to give service with pleasure and always give a broad smile, living life according to the teachings of Jesus. Jesus set an example by washing the disciples' feet; and serving other people rather than having other people serve us.

3. **Respect for the dignity of others** - Build a fundamental faith in equality, dignity and rights of mankind. It is essential to respect everybody of any status; no encroachment, no disparagement, no violation of the rights of each other.

4. **Honesty** is the fundamental value of a good society. It is essential that education personnel be role model for honesty. It depends on how we treat each other with sincerity and faith, which leads to trust each other.

5. **Prayer and awareness** - realise that God dwells in us and always seek Him through prayer, which is the best preventive system for everyone.

6. **Unity** - Put oneself in others' shoes; build unity and harmony; create a better society; build a culture of peace among people who are different; have respect and give honour to people of other religions. Through the sharing of faith, better understanding is created.

**5. Please write a short description of your school milieu - in particular the relationship among the bishop, the clergy, the Consecrated Life, and the Lay Faithful. Mention the challenges you have encountered and your recommendations for improvements.**

**Answers of Bishops**

We are at a turning point in the running of schools. The number of children is rapidly decreasing. Government schools have developed so much. The government school teachers are better paid. Good students prefer the government schools. Ours are secondary. Our schools serve as a source of income for the diocese, but in the future it will not be the same. We may have to close many schools if we do not improve ourselves.

We should set our priority more and more on the mission of following the mandate of Jesus and the teaching of the Church. We have to be more courageous in proclaiming the good news on whatever occasions in our school. Catholic students should be given full formation in our school. Interreligious dialogue has to be emphasised more.

**Relationships** - Priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful meet regularly every month to report on current development regarding the structure of the diocese; assign clear responsibilities, set rules and orders for managing schools systematically and efficiently; managing schools with a participatory management approach and teamwork, emphasising the participation of priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful.

**Challenge** - Fiercer competition in providing an educational service by government schools, the national economic situation, expansion of the industrial sector, changes in social values of the lay faithful, migration of population are all challenges. Labour mobility affects the pastoral care ministry. Changes are needed. A proactive approach is adopted through the planning of meetings among administrators within the school. Attend meetings to set out school policies for teachers. Dioceses in the north have plenty of youth who desire education and plenty of callings, but financial resources are limited. Meanwhile, dioceses in the Central area have plenty of financial resources, but the youth are not interested in becoming catechists and the number of candidates for priesthood and religious life is declining.

**Answers of Clergy**

As administrators of the schools:

1. **Relationships with bishop** - The Bishop holds school licenses and appoints priests to take care of schools by acting as his representatives or acting as managers. The Bishop sets out policies for the diocesan schools. Priests are responsible for carrying out the policies. Normally, there are no conflicts or challenges to relations between the bishop and priests responsible for the schools.



2. **Relationships with peer priests** - Since there are many schools in the diocese, many priests are assigned by the bishop to take care of the schools. Generally, the priests who take care of a school work together and make decisions together. We share resources among schools and are ready to share knowledge. The challenge is how large schools with a good deal of resources can help smaller schools which are yet to run at full strength.

Yet, if there are several priests in one school, the leading priest must manage with a participatory approach through the division of labour and the assignment of roles and responsibilities to every priest to take part in managing the school. Any problem encountered by the school is discussed among all the priests. Several times, problems have occurred among priests in the same school because the leading priest did not clearly assign tasks. On the contrary, even if there was a clear assignment, some priests did not take responsibility. They did not go into the details of the assigned task. This is the challenge for every priest to improve himself. If not, this will cause problems, and it will not be possible for the school to be a field and a foundation for evangelisation.

3. **Relationships with consecrated persons** - Consecrated females who participate in school management are appointed by the superior general of the Congregation in Thailand. One consecrated person assumes the role of the school director while other consecrated persons take other roles such as the supervisor of canteen or kitchen.

In practice, the school is managed by a priest who acts as representative of the school license holder/manager. He is considered the primary responsible person for the school in the name of the diocese (Bishop). However, sometimes the priest may assign almost all responsibilities to the school director, who is a consecrated female. The priest supervises from a distance. If it is fortunate to have a school director with Jesus-style management skills, i.e., put emphasis on participatory management, teamwork with good human relations, and I collaborators with positive morale, the school will operate smoothly. The priest, as a representative of the school license holder/manager, is not required to solve the problems of the school. On the contrary, if the priest needs to solve the problems of the school, sometimes conflicts blow up from small to large issues. This is a challenge.

How to handle such challenge in practice? The answer is that prior to the assignment of the priests or consecrated persons to manage a school, it is necessary for the diocese and the religious orders to send the assigned personnel to take a Catholic school management course that cultivates them with the spirit of Gospel values and Christ-like leadership style. If not, the assigned personnel may cause problems at the school until it is impossible for the school to be a field and foundation for evangelisation.

4. **Relationships with lay faithful** - A priest must work with lay faithful who participate in school management (as deputy directors in various areas) and lay faithful who are teachers and educational staff.

**4.1 Relationships with lay faithful** who participate in school management (as deputy directors in various areas) - A simple technique is that the priest must adopt and set out policies that put an emphasis on a participatory management approach. He must allow the co-administrators to have freedom to think and present good things in the school administrative meeting, being aware that "Many heads are better than one." He must honour, appreciate and value everyone, which will result in obtaining various creative ideas that can be summed up and set out as guidelines for undertaking the tasks by each department. The priest must consider lay faithful as collaborators. They must receive trust, faith and moral support, similar to when Jesus assigned the mission to his disciples with trust, faith and moral support. In particular, when encountered with difficulties and weariness, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and rest a while." (Mark 6:31) The work will be successful. This is the preventive approach. The challenge is the adoption of the authoritarian culture. Many times, priests and consecrated persons view lay faithful as their servants or slaves who can be used and abused in any way. This is often an outcome.

**4.2 Relationships with lay faithful who are teachers and educational staff at the operational level** - A simple technique is to see them as family members who need to be honoured, loved, cared for and shared. Basically, lay faithful respect the priests. Hence, the priests need not threaten or use power against teachers or educational staff. They are prepared to cooperate. It is the priests or consecrated persons who are authoritarians. They get used to giving orders instead of asking for opinions, discussing or making conclusions together to achieve the guidelines for working together. The challenge is how to build a family atmosphere in schools so that everyone feels that he/she is among the owners of the school and is keen to give dedication and contribute efforts in bringing sustainable growth to the school.

Challenges encountered by Catholic schools are as follows:

1. How can our Catholic schools survive? Although the management of the school does not lack quality and good moral values, the economic situation is one of the critical factors affecting the school. Most parents choose schools with lower tuition fees than our schools. They find the quality of government schools the same as ours. The challenge is how to ensure that our schools survive in these circumstances. We must structure our schools to be morally outstanding. Our society nowadays and in the future is increasingly dominated by incorrect social values. Hence, our Catholic schools must be a place to cultivate lives of the children and the youth with good conscience. Then, we will survive.

2. The promotion of knowledge and understanding about policy on Catholic education management leads to the implementation of a plan for pastoral care and evangelisation that can be regularly evaluated and the progress can be reported on. The plan puts emphasis on making a Catholic school a field and foundation for evangelisation, the revitalisation of the values of being bishops, clergy, consecrated persons, as well as lay faithful so as to build the community that has God at the centre.

3. Catholic schools view that it is necessary to collaborate and coordinate among various institutes in the area of religious teaching in school, especially the preparation of a core curriculum at the diocese level and in the teaching of catechism in school. This results in concrete collaboration and builds good relationships among bishops, priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful.

4. Being a Catholic school in the context of a non-Catholic society and having a majority of school members being non-Catholic, are the most challenging factors in building the Catholic Education Identity while respecting other religions. It requires the participation of non-Catholic personnel. The schools have decided that it is not appropriate to force non-Catholic personnel to attend Mass. However, it is appropriate invite them to join on special occasions. All teachers and students are always pleased to cooperate. They even sing the hymns during Mass.

5. The teaching of catechism to Catholic students until they fully live Christian lives is becoming more and more challenging every day. In a society in which technology and money are answers to all questions, it is essential to revitalise and improve the curriculum and process for teaching catechism so as to reach out to the hearts and souls of the students.

#### **Answers of Consecrated Persons**

The school has coordinated and cooperated with the parish church, which is the centre of the community. Also it has arranged for students to go to church to practice religious rites. A priest comes to school to celebrate Mass every first Friday of the month, on holy days of obligation and for confession and other sacraments. The school arranges moral uplift and retreats for teachers, educational staff and students; it organises meetings with Catholic parents so as to discuss and agree upon the method to educate their children using the Catholic approach. The school also develops students within a religious mind set to cultivate morality, ethics and the desired characteristics within the students.

The school is managed according to the spirituality of the religious order and the teachings of the Church while promoting respect for cultural diversity. The school manages the education program in response to the demand of the service recipients. Overall, the religious order has a good relationship with the local church, including bishops, priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful. It obeys the teaching of leaders of the Church; is ready to help and cooperate; consults and discusses ways to work together. Caring and sharing is practiced according to the policy of the local church. Clergy, consecrated persons and lay faithful are prominently witnesses to God's love-mercy and unity.

Challenges encountered by Catholic schools are as follows:

1. Most of the students in school are non-Catholics. They are Buddhists and Muslims. With only few Catholic students, it is challenging to build the Catholic Education Identity, ensure respect for other religions, and require participation from all non-Catholics personnel.

The school invites all non-Catholic members to join the Liturgy of the Words. Such non-Catholics have been pleased to do so.

2. The challenge is in teaching catechism to non-Thai Catholic students and teachers who have converted. Faith is not deep-rooted. They need time to develop in order to be strong religious leaders.

3. The current challenge with respect to education is to find a way to prepare students for encountering the new form of culture that puts emphasis on being self-centred as well as the influx of relativism, materialism, etc., all of which are contradictory to the teachings of Christ and the Church.

4. Put more emphasis on updating the development and policies of the Church at the diocese level, such as the issues of documents and circulations, operational direction, etc.; and cooperate with organisations of the Church in various missions.

5. "Relationships with Catholic parents" are not at a satisfactory level; there is a lack of coordination and organization though there were some pastoral activities, i.e. in preparing students for sacraments.

### **Answers of Lay Faithful**

The school I work with is a diocesan school. The school is managed by consecrated persons according to the Memorandum of Understanding ("MoU") between the diocese and the religious order. The MoU clearly designates the responsibilities of each party. When there is a common responsibility, there is consultation and discussion to find the best approach for the school to cooperate with the local church in organising Catholic activities in the school and assigning its personnel to participate in all activities and all relevant missions.

Schools which are owned by lay faithful often have no contact with bishops, clergy or consecrated persons, except on special occasions when the bishop, priests or consecrated persons attend a ceremony at the school. In addition, the school may invite a priest or a religious leader to give lectures or training at the school. School representatives are invited to join the seminars or meetings from time-to-time.

Schools of Catholic lay faithful organise activities and invite priest to preside over ceremonies, such as the celebration of the beginning of the academic year, celebration on feast days of the Patron Saints; Christmas fairs (apart from Christmas decoration, the day is set as one for reconciliation and forgiveness), and then Thanksgiving at the close of the academic year. Other activities in the school include Gospel readings as guidance for education personnel in their operations during activities on Mother's Day, Father's Day and Graduation Day. We have daily prayer before and after meals to give thanks to the Lord for everything given to us by teachers and students of all religions.

Our school has few Catholic teachers and students. Most Catholic teachers do not have training to prepare them to teach catechism, but the school arranges for catechism sessions in the morning twice a week. On holy days of obligation, the school invites a priest to give a talk to all students. One of the lay faithful schools has no Catholic teachers, only four Catholic administrators. There are no priests or consecrated persons in the school. In a year, there is only one Mass celebrated on the feast of the Virgin Immaculate Mother, Patron of the school. In addition, the school arranges for 3-4 Buddhist activities in one year. If there are Catholic students, the school will advise parents to enrol them in a summer catechism course in their parish church so as to prepare them for sacraments.

Challenges encountered by Catholic schools are as follows:

1. Being a Catholic school in the context of a non-Catholic society and having non-Catholics comprising a majority of the school's members are the most challenging factors in building a Catholic Education Identity, while ensuring respect for other religions. How much participation should be required from non-Catholic personnel? The schools have decided that it is not appropriate to force non-Catholic personnel to attend Mass. However, it is appropriate invite them to join on special occasions. All teachers and students are always pleased to cooperate. They even sing the hymns during Mass.
2. There are no problems for consecrated persons and lay faithful to work together in school if everyone respects one another. Everyone wants to work together, listen to each other, learn together and succeed in mastering curriculum development while maintaining the Catholic Education Identity; support rules and regulations that promote collaboration and participation in school development; changing as is necessary and working within proper processes, and refrain from authoritarian decision against the system. The school always is always open to engage in consultation and to observe appropriate working processes.
3. The challenges have not been apparent as we are not heavily influenced by the Catholic Church. However, I have thought about asking the local priest to come in maybe once a month to teach our children about Catholic religion. Currently, we have a Buddhist monk who comes in every week to teach 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades. It would be nice also if this could be done with a Catholic priest so students learn more about our religion.
4. The challenges faced in the relationships with the bishop, clergy, the consecrated life, and the lay faithful are probably that the ultimate goal in each one's ministry is different. It is quite difficult for a private Catholic school owned by a lay person, where most of the students and teachers are Buddhist, to have the same ministry as a Catholic school owned by the diocese. Another difference is that we operate our school as a profit making entity, so the ministry to serve all might not be appropriate for us. This difference does cause some misunderstanding when we discuss ways to improve Catholic schools. The ultimate goal that I have is that we all understand our different goals and are given an opportunity to learn from our differences.

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***“Let your light so shine before men, that  
they may see your good works, and  
glorify your Father which is in heaven.”  
Matthew 5:16***



**Catholic Education Council of Thailand**