



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**Archdiocesan Commission for
Catholic Schools**

CONTENTS

3

Membership

4

Commencement of School Year (COSY)

5

Catholic Education Conference

7

Brisbane Study Trip

8

Teaching and Learning Exchange

9

Faith and Personal Formation

11

Operations and Administrative Managers of Catholic Schools Day of Reconciliation cum Learning Journey

13

Catholic Education Sunday: A Celebration of Many Gifts and One Mission

14

Catholic Preschools Get-Together with a Thanksgiving Mass at Agape Village

15

Chaplaincy Training

MEMBERSHIP

ACCS Commissioners

PRESIDENT AB William Goh	MAJOR SUPERIORS Sr Christina Yeo, FdCC Sr Susan Thomas, FMM Sr Joan Lopez, RGS Sr Maria Lau, IJ Bro Dominador Santiago, FMS Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh, FSG Bro Paul Ho, FSC
ARCHBISHOP'S DELEGATE Msgr Ambrose Vaz	
CHAIRMAN (WEF JAN 2019) & MEMBER Dr Koh Thiam Seng	
ACCS ED & MEMBER Fr Edward Seah	MEMBERS Prof Tan Cheng Han Mr Kenneth Tan Mrs Pauline Wong Fr Adrian Danker, SJ Prof Lily Kong Mr Gerard Lee

SMC Chairperson/s Co-Opted into ACCS

CHAIR/CBS Mr Mark Chin
CHAIR/SPS Mr Kenny Rebeira

COMMENCEMENT OF SCHOOL YEAR (COSY)



The Catholic education fraternity gathered at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd on Sun on 27 Jan to mark the Commencement of School Year 2019. After Archbishop William Goh celebrated Mass and gave his blessings to the schools, he commissioned the seven newly appointed principals. Ten retired Principals passed lighted candles to all our Catholic school leaders, as a symbol of passing on the **Light of Christ** and reminding them to be good stewards of His love as they enriched the Catholic ethos of their schools. The seven newly appointed principals were:

- **Ms Ow Yang Jing Yi**
Canossaville Preschool
- **Mrs Karen Tan**
CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace
- **Mdm Rachel Ang**
CHIJ Secondary
- **Ms Pauline Fun**
CHIJ St Joseph's Convent

- **Mdm Rebecca Ng**
Holy Innocents' High School
- **Mr Martin Tan**
St Gabriel's Primary School
- **Ms Loh Sing Hua**
St Stephen's School

Archbishop William Goh thanked Prof Tan Cheng Han for his many years of service as Chairman of Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) and welcomed the new Chairman, Dr Koh Thiam Seng. In his homily, Archbishop said that school leaders were called to form students with not just knowledge and skills, but also a heart for others. He emphasized that ACCS would continue to work with our Catholic schools to develop our young in truth and love, and to help all children realize their potential according to what the Lord had blessed them with.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Catholic Education Conference 2019, themed '*Living the Mission, Celebrating the Spirit*' served as a rallying call to celebrate the ethos and spirit of a Catholic school through the sharing of good practices among schools on how to build a stronger Catholic school culture. It provided a platform for schools to share and reflect on how to live out the mission of a Catholic school in everyday policies, processes, practices and mindsets. It brought together the 3Hs - head, heart and hands, which contributed towards making the mission and spirit of Catholic schools come alive.

The conference programme in the morning featured a keynote address by Brother Paul Rogers FSC for adult participants and a concurrent address by Father Adrian Danker SJ for student participants. Students reflected on their roles and mission and shared their ideas with students from other Catholic schools through interactive activities. Adult participants attended concurrent sessions featuring good practices by various schools on how they had lived the mission and celebrated the spirit. His Grace, Archbishop William Goh, graced the conference and gave his response to the morning's proceedings.



The afternoon programme saw School Teams coming together to consolidate the learning from the morning and plan for the year and beyond.

The conference which was attended by sponsoring authorities, school leaders, teachers, students, parents, alumni and school chaplaincy teams brought together diverse views and discussions. It was indeed a day of celebrating the spirit of a mission that was well lived.



***Living the Mission,
Celebrating the Spirit***

BRISBANE STUDY TRIP



How can we enrich the experience of our staff and students in our Catholic schools through the teachings of our Catholic values? With questions like these, nine committed educators from five Singapore Catholic schools embarked on a study trip to Brisbane from the 3rd to 7th August 2019. The aim was to understand how the Catholic faith was taught in a diverse school setting and to gather ideas on how to make faith inspiring and meaningful for Singapore students in Catholic schools.

A message reiterated by the school leaders in Brisbane Catholic schools which resonated with the Singapore participants was this: “The Catholic schools do not seek to convert students into accepting our faith but rather we seek to make them a better human, or a better person in the faith that they have chosen to be in.”

One significant observation for the Singapore educators was how the Catholic faith was expressed in visual representations in the Brisbane Catholic schools. For example, all schools had sacred spaces with artefacts to represent the bible lessons learnt that week. In reflecting on the bible stories, the students produced meditative drawings, art and craft work, and paintings as they engaged in communal reflection on the meaning of the sacred text.

Inspired, the Singapore educators explored ways to enhance the Catholic ethos in their schools. One implementable idea was to provide opportunities for greater student participation in the school assemblies and in the preparation of para-liturgical services.



TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCHANGE

The annual Teaching and Learning Exchange was an ongoing collaboration between the Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) and Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE).

Senior staff and teachers from Brisbane Catholic schools visited seven Catholic schools in August. These included CHIJ Kellock, Holy Innocents Primary School, Nativity Church Kindergarten, Canossaville Preschool, Maris Stella High, Catholic Kindergarten and SJJ.

During the four-day visits, they observed lessons and exchanged views on Catholic education with their counterparts in Singapore schools.



”

*The Church needs men and women who are intent on teaching **by word and example.***

Pope St. John Paul II

FAITH AND PERSONAL FORMATION

Finding Holiness in the Ordinary and Everyday Weeds; you would never notice them unless you look for them. And often, in the most unlikely places. But when you finally see them, their beauty will be revealed.

It's the same with God. The more you look for God in the people around you and in the environment – a chalice of grace and a sacrament, the more you will find Him, and the more others see Him in you, the more you are living the life of holiness.



With powerful messages and meaningful quotes, a team of senior staff from the Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) office and Marists Australia, provided new insight on the deeper meaning of holiness at a Faith Formation workshop on 16 and 17 August for

Singaporean Catholic schools teachers and leaders.

Held at the Catholic Junior College, the annual programme was in its seventh year and drew about 90 teachers and principals.

*The more others see Him in
you, the more you are living
the life of holiness.*



God is found in the ordinary, like sharing a meal, greeting a person, or in the least expected moments and in the people around you.

For teachers, the challenge was to connect God with personal experiences. One main focus this year was how to be fully conscious and find new joy in the moment, in God's creation. During the craft activity, a main medium in the annual workshops, teachers pondered on the wonder of the human hand. Its ability to touch, hold and create; to feed, bathe and nurse; hands reflect what a person has been through as well as the great potential to embody love.

With those hands, they then created their own blueprint art, using weeds, humble yet tenacious and resilient, just like when they were facing the everyday challenges, and their most difficult moments, and students.

Behind every score was a student, vulnerable yet with the capacity to surprise. Teachers could help by fostering silence and stillness in their students, teaching them how to be truly attentive and to express themselves through art and music. With that would come grace and holiness.



OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGERS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS DAY OF RECOLLECTION CUM LEARNING JOURNEY

Administration Managers (AMs) and Operation Managers (OMs) provide important support and service in our schools. As part of our effort to acknowledge their work and contribution, the yearly workshops cum learning journeys have been organized to give our AMs and OMs an opportunity to recharge and renew themselves. We believe that wellness is important and that we need to take care of ourselves so that we can then take better care of others.





Gathering together in this way also provides a platform for our AMs and OMs to connect with their fellow counterparts in other Catholic schools, to enjoy fellowship with one another and to have an informal exchange of ideas. This year, the one-day workshop was held on 6 September 2019 at Agape Village and was attended by 21 AMs and OMs. The morning began with a session on Mental Wellness. Participants were given an insight into stress and the impact of stress. They were then taken through some techniques to manage stress and to make a personal self-care plan.

In the afternoon, the participants were introduced to the concept of *Servant Leadership* (serving with a heart), an alternative way of serving in schools. They were then taken through 2 aspects of Catholic Social Teaching – *Human Dignity and Common Good* – and to reflect on how these two teachings could guide them when working with their colleagues and students in school.

The afternoon ended with an interactive dialogue with Mr Gerald Khong from the Archdiocesan Catholic Council for Interreligious. They dialogue was about inter-religious respect and understanding in schools.



CATHOLIC EDUCATION SUNDAY: A CELEBRATION OF MANY GIFTS AND ONE MISSION



The Catholic Church here in Singapore commemorated Catholic Education Sunday on the weekend of September 14 & 15 this year. A total of 31 schools participated at 50 masses in some 26 churches. It was an opportunity for a tripartite expression of communion between school, parish and home which saw students, school staff and parent volunteers participating at masses and co-served as lectors, wardens, or as part of the choir. Schools leaders and teachers were also present to interact with parishioners.

This year, His Grace, the Archbishop of Singapore has also written a pastoral message in the Catholic News [Sept 8, 2019] entitled '*Finding Alignment in Catholic Education*' where he reminded Catholic Educators of the connection between Catholic education and the vision and mission of the Archdiocese, which is to build a vibrant, evangelizing and missionary Church. Next, he drew our attention to the challenges of the values of



the world that are leading to the loss of faith and despair about the meaning of life and the future of humanity. Alerting us to the critical need of a proper foundation in Catholic education, the Archbishop expressed his wish to lead the way forward first by appealing to us that we align ourselves with the vision of Catholic education in our Church. This will be done through open, sincere and regular dialogue and shared discernment by all so as to seek ways to protect and promote the Catholic ethos of our schools.

Apart from the Archbishop's pastoral message for the occasion, a special prayer of blessing for educators was imparted at all masses as well as the distribution of 61,000 cards in 31 churches detailing the vision and mission of Catholic Education in Singapore.



CATHOLIC PRESCHOOLS GET-TOGETHER WITH A THANKSGIVING MASS AT AGAPE VILLAGE

On 26st December 2019, some 40 Preschool educators; teachers and principals attended the annual Get Together where different preschool staff got to mingle and spend time and activities with one another. The morning featured an exhilarating Zumba Dance workout and dance routine encouraging collaborative team work. The educators were enthusiastic with the



possibility that they could adapt the dance activities for their classroom sessions, to create an environment where children could learn by interacting in an enjoyable way. It was followed by a self-care activity conducted by psychologist, Rebecca Oh from CLARITY. This was an interactive session with inputs and self-reflection. After lunch, they were guided through reflection of the current school year and goal setting for the following year by ACCS staff, Merilyn Dasson. The program ended with a Thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Fr Edward Seah, the interim Executive Director of ACCS.



CHAPLAINCY TRAINING

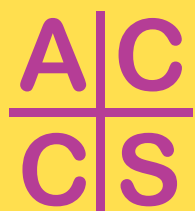
The Chaplaincy training was conducted at Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) for Religious Education (RE) coordinators and parent volunteers who were teaching the RE program in our Catholic schools.

In the first two modules, Fr Ignatius Yeo, parish priest, spoke about the importance of preparing for masses with children. He shared that there is a dynamic relationship between liturgy and catechesis. Although the ministries of Catholic school and religious education provide learning about mass for children from

the perspective of them being students and thus learners, we must always uphold the Christian identity of children and develop them as believers.

For Module 3, Bro. Dominic Yeo-Koh, Supervisor of Schools (Montfort Brothers of St Gabriel) spoke about the role of the school Chaplaincy Team in our Catholic Schools – which is to support schools in nurturing the Catholic character of Catholic schools. The Chaplaincy Team also enhances the school's efforts to provide quality Catholic education, especially in the area of religious education.





Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools

2 Highland Road, CAEC #02-01

Singapore 549102

Tel: 6858 7080



DESIGN BY



EXTENTCOMMUNICATIONS