

# CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

Core Values  
Common  
Purpose  
&  
Goals



For Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Singapore

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# FOREWORD

This Core Values, Common Purpose & Goals paper for Catholic Schools has been the subject of consultations and revisions since the end of 2009. We sincerely hope and pray that all Management Committees, Principals & Teachers in our Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Singapore will view it as a most useful tool for keeping our Catholic Identity strong and resilient. While every school's particular mission and charism is fully acknowledged we are emphasizing what is essential and common to all schools.

Special thanks are due to all Sponsoring Authorities and Supervisors as well as SMC Members and Chairpersons who took part in the many consultation meetings and gave their excellent feedback.

We also want to acknowledge the input of Fr Norbert Menezes SJ who spent many weeks with us in 2010 and 2011 working with Principals and SMC personnel on the essence of Catholic Education.

The Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools is glad to present this document for use in all Catholic Primary and Secondary schools and our Junior College in Singapore. We hope it will be of help in our efforts to carry out the mission of Christ through Catholic Education.

ACCS

*April 2012*



# BACKGROUND

## **Our task.**

The Singapore Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) was set up subsequent to the Task Force (CETF) and the Catholic Education Council (CEC). The constitution of the ACCS points to the continuing central role played by the various Sponsoring authorities or religious orders who own and run their schools. However, today, there is also a clear call to operate as one system of Catholic schools and one body with a common vision and mission. In trying to achieve this we must bear in mind that each sponsoring authority has its own specific charism which distinguishes their schools. This charism is well established and is reflected in the orientation and induction programmes of the schools. Little experience in close collaboration up to now means that we will have to work very hard and converse very openly to build structures for communion and sharing.

We have 34 Catholic Schools, 1 Junior College, 19 Kindergartens and Child Care Centres. They are well respected as educational institutions but how is the purpose of Catholic Schools perceived by its stakeholders – the Sponsoring Authorities; the parents and parishioners; the government? We have no research to help us out here but some general remarks are possible.

**The Sponsoring authorities** realise the importance of schools to influence for the good the future of society and also to keep in touch with very important segments of society. They have put in personnel and supportive structures to give their schools a stronger sense of their mission and purpose.

**For Parents and Parishioners,** the erosion of Religious Education and the Catholic Ethos in the 80s in particular gave rise to the idea that Catholic schools are really not much different from their government counterparts. In fact the competitive spirit, the loss of religious education classes, the sharp drop in the number of Catholic teachers; the importance given to academic achievements at the expense of Civics and Moral Education programmes; the new policies governing admission to Primary One and Secondary One; all went towards strengthening the commonly held belief that our Catholic schools are owned and run by the Ministry of Education and we can't do much about that.

**Teachers** in Catholic schools are largely assigned to the school. They may not have a particular dedication to Catholic education. As they are now in the majority, the small number of Catholic teachers are over taxed as the religious education, Catholic Ethos and Catholic activities falls to them.

**The government and civil servants in many countries,** like the US have a situation where Catholic Education is not subsidised. Catholic Schools in the US are totally self-funded. The Singapore 'Grant-in-aid' Status of Catholic schools gives us almost full funding with the possibility of having religious activity as long as it is not during curriculum time and is not imposed. We have a very good situation and should work pro-actively to keep our Catholic identity and ethos strong in our changing environment.

Our Catholic Schools are facing many fresh challenges and new circumstances. We need to have a clear vision that gives us focus and direction.

# MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

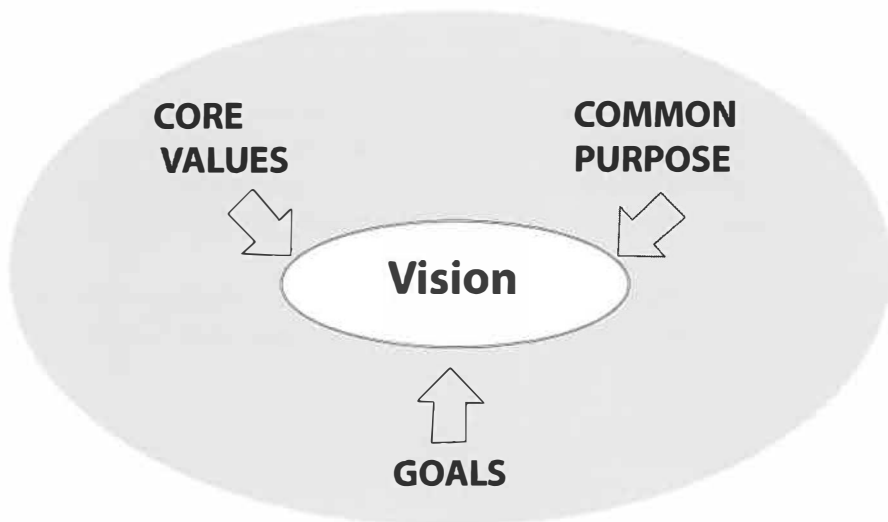
Catholic schools have continually adapted to changes in the education landscape and socio-economic realities, through the years there are certain core ideals that have remained unchanged and have provided guidance in the process of change and growth. These unchanging ideals form the vision of Catholic Education and are expressed in the mission statements of all our Schools.

The mission statements of our schools generally reflect the following three components:

1. **Core values** to which they are firmly committed
2. **Common purpose** of the school
3. **Visionary goals** the school wishes to pursue to fulfil its mission

The school's core values and purpose have remained relatively constant. They are independent of changes in policy or curriculum or personnel.

The three components of the vision for Catholic Education can be portrayed as follows:



## A SUMMARY

# CORE VALUES, COMMON PURPOSE & GOALS

*We believe in God's abiding love for human kind...*

Since we believe:

- that each person /child created in the image and likeness of God is a precious gift and sacred responsibility, we will:
  - give our students a sense of God
  - uphold a view of the Human Person as made in the image and likeness of God;
- that Catholic education includes spiritual growth and fulfilment of potential, we will:
  - provide young people with a view of life that is positive - based on faith, hope & love expressed in selfless service;
  - provide a holistic education which integrates the spiritual.
  - Set the benchmark for good education.
- in building Christ-centred communities for service to one another, we will:
  - bring the Gospel to life and bring Christ to a needy world.
- parents have a primary role in Catholic education which is a shared responsibility, we will:
  - work with parents to build up citizens for society who embody compassion, justice and joy.
  - provide a Catholic education for Catholic students

## Goals

Therefore our schools will:

- be places of encounter with Christ;
- be known for its good teaching and thirst for truth;
- place emphasis on inter-religious learning, and appreciation of cultures.
- train leaders who are steeped in a collaborative style of leadership.
- emphasise a community atmosphere.
- form one system of Catholic Education forging a unity in diversity.
- work closely with all stakeholders especially parents, alumni and parishes.
- be places of learning and reflection on the deeper meaning of things, the ultimate purpose of life and acknowledgement of God as the source of life.



# CORE VALUES

## *We believe:*

- that each person /child created in the image and likeness of God is a precious gift and sacred responsibility
- that good Catholic education includes spiritual growth and fulfilment of potential
- in building Christ-centred communities for service to one another
- parents have a primary role in Catholic education which is a shared responsibility.

# COMMON PURPOSE

## *Why do Catholic Schools exist?*

What do we believe about our common purpose?

***We believe in God's abiding love for human kind...***

## *Through our schools we want:*

- to give our students a sense of God;
- to uphold a view of the Human Person as made in the image and likeness of God;
- to provide young people with a view of life that is positive - based on faith, hope & love expressed in selfless service;
- to provide a holistic education which integrates the spiritual;
- to work with parents to build up citizens for society who embody compassion, justice and joy;
- to set the benchmark for good education;
- to bring the Gospel to life and bring Christ to a needy world;
- to provide a Catholic education for Catholic students;



# GOALS

## *Our schools will:*

- Be a place of encounter with Christ;
- Be known for its good teaching and thirst for truth;
- Place emphasis on inter-religious learning, appreciation of cultures and diversity;
- Train leaders for national and local arenas who are steeped in a collaborative style of leadership;
- Emphasise a community atmosphere;
- Form one system of Catholic Education forging a unity in diversity;
- Work closely with all stakeholders especially parents, alumni and parishes to provide a strong foundation in the truth;
- Be places of learning and reflection on the deeper meaning of things, the ultimate purpose of life and acknowledgement of God as the source of life;



# THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE

- A man or woman with a sense of God;
- Able to dialogue with people of various cultures and faiths;
- Listen with the heart to the voices of the weak and most vulnerable in our societies;
- A leader who is facilitating and enabling and who acknowledges the dignity of every human person;
- A person who understands that he or she is called to transform society;
- A person who values family life and marriage as sacred;
- Ready to serve in public life;
- A person who values life.

## ***A Catholic coming out of our Catholic Schools will also be:***

- A young person who actively works to integrate faith and culture;
- A person who knows the Person of Jesus and has access to a relationship with Christ;
- A person who celebrates his or her faith with the wider community;
- A person who appreciates the guidance given by the Catholic Church on matters concerning human life, the environment and the economy;
- A person with a strong sense of Christian mission, social responsibility and compassion finding its source in his or her love of God in Jesus Christ.





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