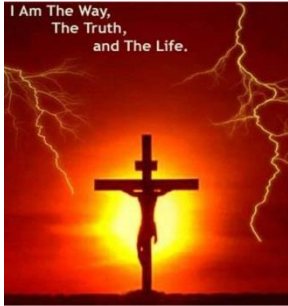


# A CATECHESIS ON THE VISION-MISSION OF HOLY CROSS OF DAVAO COLLEGE, INC.

## INTRODUCTION

No Catholic school can remain catholic without attention to its identity and to the principles that give it its distinctive character.



Without renewed insights into its reason for being, the school does not deserve to stay in existence. More so, it has to live by these principles to achieve the viability it claims to be so important (*Buetow, 1988*). An in-depth look into its vision-mission, i.e., into its *raison d'être*, is an imperative. With this in mind, this *Catechesis on the Vision-Mission of Holy Cross of Davao* is prepared and addressed to all the members of the school community.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CATECHESIS

This catechesis desires that all members of the school community shall:

- **gain a shared and deeper understanding of the terms, phrases and sentences used in the Vision-Mission statement;**
- **articulate and uphold the institution's core values explicit and discernible in the Vision-Mission statement; and**
- **live by and witness to the values meaningful to the members and also relevant to the public that the school serves.**

## BEGINNING AND SEAL OF THE SCHOOL

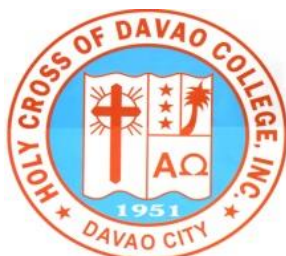
The beginning of Holy Cross of Davao College can be traced back in 1951 when the RVM Sisters opened it as annex to the Immaculate Conception College (now the University of the Immaculate Conception). By the school year 1955-1956, the school acquired its separate identity and was named Holy Cross Academy of Davao. In April of 1956, the RVM Congregation transferred the ownership of the school to the Roman Catholic Apostolic Administrator of Davao (now the Roman Catholic Bishop of Davao, Inc.). The Most Rev. Clovis Thibault, the Bishop of the local Church, requested the PME Fathers to take over the administration of the school. The Fathers renamed the school as Holy Cross of Davao School and turned it into an exclusive school for the boys until 1964.

The school was incorporated in 1957 as a non-stock, non-profit corporation whose primary purpose was “to operate as an educational institution that offers courses and programs such as but not limited to Day-Care Services, Play School, Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary, Intermediate, Secondary, Post Secondary, Tertiary, Graduate and Post Graduate courses of instructions and **integrates the evangelizing mission of the Roman Catholic Church in the entire curriculum**” (*Articles of Incorporation as amended on October 5, 2004*). As a non-stock, non-profit (NSNP) educational corporation, no part of its income is distributable to its members, trustees or officers and any profits earned by the corporation as an incident to its operation shall be used for the furtherance of the purposes for which it was incorporated (*Casa-Siervo, 2005*).

In May of 1970, the name of the school was changed to what is now the Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. (HCDC). It was in the seventies that the PME Fathers decided to transfer the ownership

of the whole institution to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Davao, Inc., a Corporation sole.

Last September 2011, the school celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (60<sup>th</sup> Foundation Anniversary) with the theme: *60 years of Evangelization with gratitude and hope*. All through the years, the Holy Cross of Davao College has faithfully participated in the essential mission of the Church to evangelize. Specifically, HCDC has been true to its motto and mission of accompanying the students as “they go through the passage...from ignorance to knowledge, from faith to Truth.”



EX FIDE AD VERITATEM

The Seal of the school consists of two circles within which the following are inscribed: On the top of the outer circle are the following words: Holy Cross of Davao College Inc.; at the bottom, the words Davao City. In the inner circle, there is the Coat of Arms with the following figures: On the left, there is the Cross and the Eucharist, on the top right, there is a Coconut Tree, and in between the coconut tree and the Cross are three Stars; at the bottom right, there are two Greek letters, the Alpha and Omega. The year 1951, the foundation year, is written above the coat of arms, and at the base is the motto *Ex Fide Ad Veritatem*. The background colors of red, white and blue, the school’s official colors, are “symbols of the heavenly” (*School Song, Refrain*). The sky blue background symbolizes Mary, the Mother of God; the red and white symbolize Christ’s suffering, triumph and glory on the

cross. All of these are shown by the impression above. (*Article VI of the October 2004 Amended By-Laws*).

## NAME AND MOTTO OF THE SCHOOL

The name of the school is more than just a name. It is not just a mere label; it is linked inseparably to its basic identity and mission. With its motto to live by and aspire for, the distinctive Catholic character of the school will always be maintained in name as well as in practice. What follows is a reflection based on the Scriptures and the Church's teaching.

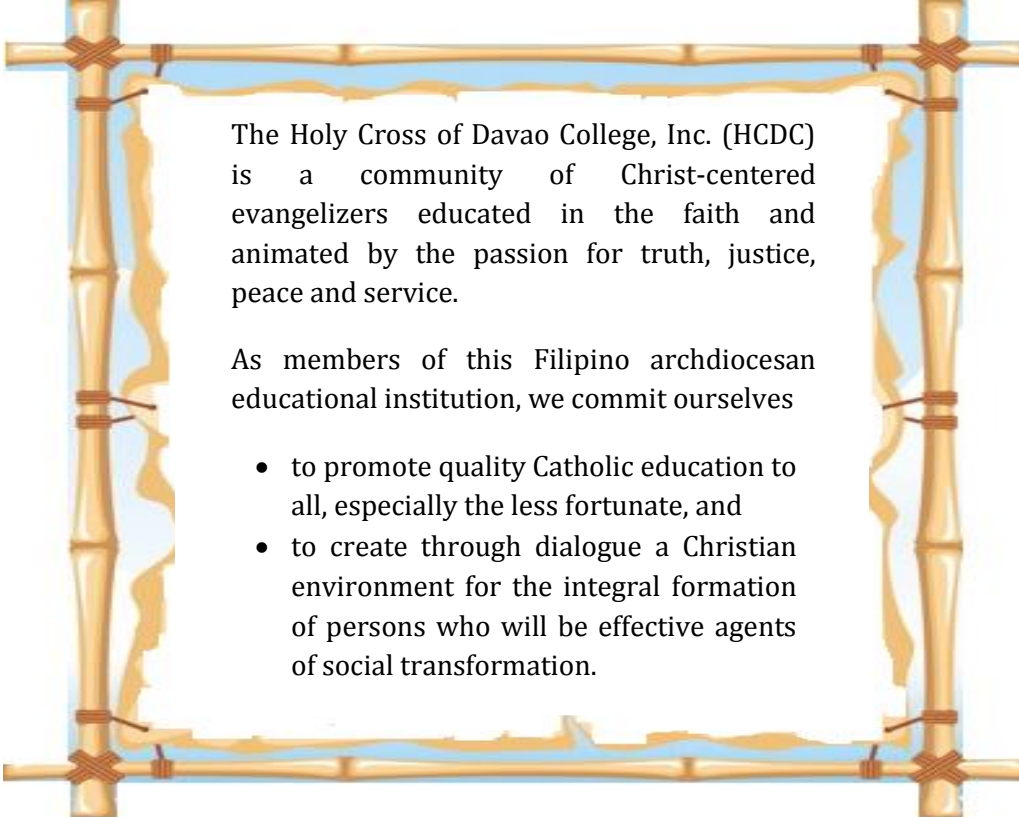
“The Son of man must be lifted up” (*John 3:16, New American Bible/NAB*). This text from the Gospel of St. John has two meanings: Jesus lifted up on the Cross and Jesus exalted in glory. From the Cross, we are reminded of the shame and weakness ending in death and also the glory of love ending in new life. The latter is greater than the former and thus the triumph of the Holy Cross.

In his book *Jesus of Nazareth*, Pope Benedict XVI (2011) teaches, “The Cross, for all ages, is and remains the sign of the ‘Son of Man.’ The proclamation of the Gospel will always be marked by the sign of the Cross – this is what each generation of Jesus’ disciples must learn anew.”

**Faith leads to Jesus on the Cross.** From the Cross, He conquers the world (*1 John 5:1-5, Book Version*). The Holy Father, in *Jesus of Nazareth* writes, “Ultimately, in the battle against lies and violence, truth and love have no other weapon than the witness of suffering.” (The Booklet, *Our Journey...from faith to Truth*, elaborates further on the meaning and implication of *Ex Fide Ad Veritatem*).

# HCDC AS A FAITH AND AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

## *Vision and Mission of the School*



The Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. (HCDC) is a community of Christ-centered evangelizers educated in the faith and animated by the passion for truth, justice, peace and service.

As members of this Filipino archdiocesan educational institution, we commit ourselves

- to promote quality Catholic education to all, especially the less fortunate, and
- to create through dialogue a Christian environment for the integral formation of persons who will be effective agents of social transformation.

The school's vision-mission is rooted in our Christian vision of the human person. Our vision of the human person is a vision of faith. It is "an integrated vision grounded in the person of Jesus Christ" (*Second Plenary Council of the Philippines/PCP II no.624*). In the light of our Christian faith, we recognize that every human being has an eternal destiny as well as an earthly life. We believe that true education is meant to prepare the whole person for the life here and hereafter. It aims at the formation of the person in pursuit of his/her ultimate destiny and of the good of the society of

which he/she is a member, and in whose obligation, as an adult he/she will have to share (*Declaration on Christian Education, Gravissimum Educationis 1*).

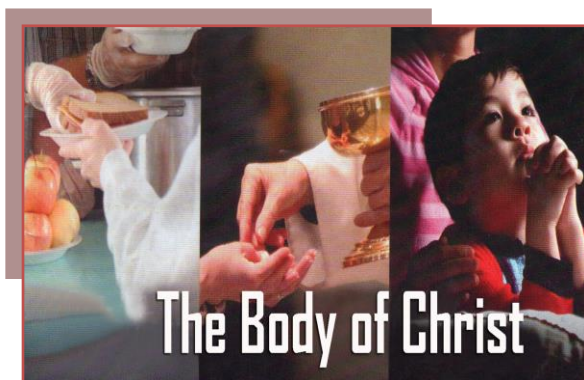
At the heart of our Catholic pedagogical system stands the person of Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6, NAB). We present Christ to our students and to all in our school community as life-model because he is the embodiment of human perfection. We believe that only in the light of Christ, the perfect man, is the human person able to reach his/her full potential and grasp the meaning and grandeur of his/her vocation and ultimate destiny. It is our conviction that the dynamism and happiness of every person's life consists in attaining, according to God's purpose, what he/she is called to become fully: **an image and likeness of God in Jesus Christ.**

If our pedagogy were to lose sight of this foundational truth, it would miss the heart and soul of all true formation. For us, integral formation could never be a merely human education that neglects the formation of faith and religious values. Ours is "an education offered in a faith-context that forms men and women capable of rational and critical judgment and conscious of the transcendent dignity of the human person" (*John Paul II's Ex Corde Ecclesiae/From the Heart of the Church no. 49*). HCDC adheres to this truth; it upholds what Blessed John Paul II taught about the goals of education: "The goals of Catholic higher education go beyond education for production, professional competence, technological and scientific competence; they aim at the ultimate destiny of the human person, at the full justice and holiness born of truth" (*John Paul II's The Catholic Community of Evangelization no. 5*).

It is in this light and perspective that we understand the phrase in our vision statement "educated in the faith." To be educated in the faith is to first seek the surpassing worth of

knowing Christ Jesus [for] from this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire [the passion] to teach Christ and to evangelize (*Catechism of the Catholic Church/CCC nos. 428-429*). **Briefly and basically, it means to have met the Lord!**

Growth into a Christ-like person and to live a fully Christian life is not an easy task. It is humanly and exceedingly difficult. It would only be possible by the grace of God and in the way God made us to live: not in isolation but in relationship, in communion with Himself and other people. It would always be in the context and life of a faith-community hence, **our vision of a community of Christ-centered evangelizers** giving a living institutional witness to Christ and his message.



As a faith-community, we are nourished by the Word of God, by the teachings of the Church, by personal and communal prayer, and by the sacraments, especially the Eucharist as the most perfect act of community worship. The Gospel values of

truth, justice, peace and service enliven and animate it (*animated* comes from the Latin *anima* meaning soul or life). Moved with an impulse from “within the soul” (with passion), its constituents uphold and witness to these values which, in the context of our rapidly changing times, are especially necessary.

“Engaged in instilling the gospel message of Christ in souls and cultures” (*John Paul II’s Ex Corde Ecclesiae no. 10*), the HCDC community participates in and makes an important contribution to the Church’s work of evangelization.

The Holy Cross of Davao College is an academic community. Like other Catholic institutions of higher education, **our basic mission and commitment** is “the ardent search for truth and the transmission of knowledge for the good of [our Filipino] society and for a better service of humanity” (*John Paul II’s Ex Corde Ecclesiae nos. 30 & 2*). “In rigorous and critical fashion, [we] assist in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of [Filipino and Christian] cultural heritage through research, teaching and various [extension] services” (*John Paul II’s Ex Corde Ecclesiae no. 12*). In various school subjects and educational activities, we endeavour to present not “only knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered.” (*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium no. 14*). Being archdiocesan and of the Church, we carry our mission and live out our commitment in the light of our Christian faith.

Committed to genuine development of the whole person, we promote quality Catholic education to all, giving special attention to those who are weakest and less fortunate. We challenge ourselves to always search for the truth and for meaning in our lives. More specifically, we seek the best for our students and graduates in terms of their *spiritual, intellectual, emotional, moral, cultural, social and physical* formation. For them and with them, **we impart integral formation**. This includes the abovementioned areas of formation. A brief description of our main objective/s follows:

- ***Spiritual formation***. We are “to cultivate the human spirit” and nourish it in such a way that there results a growth in its ability to wonder, to contemplate and to interiorize the school’s motto From Faith to Truth and so deepen a Christian way of life that is authentic. *Our journey...from faith to truth* booklet may be used to expound on this.



- ***Intellectual formation.*** Very vital in the integral development of the person is the proper formation and functioning of the mind. We facilitate this formation by pursuing with our students the acquisition of useful knowledge and skills needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With utmost care and prudence, we make use of new approaches and modern instructional tools offered by technology to make learning more interactive and effective.

We expect our students and graduates to develop and use their mental powers to read thoughtfully, to think critically and creatively, to reason logically, to express balanced judgments, to communicate clearly and to relate well interpersonally as they live and prepare to work in a world that is technologically and globally connected. To gain global perspectives and to be globally recognized are goals relevant to our modern day schooling.

- ***Character formation.***

The education of the intellect must be complemented by character formation. We support the development of the cognitive and the affective aspects of our students' personality. Emotional formation and well-being, as we know, is even more necessary today than ever. This implies, first of all, *the*



*formation of the will.* The will is directed towards its object, i.e., the good. Forming the will is to exercise it in wanting

the good, in seeking what is good earnestly, effectively and constantly. We challenge ourselves and our students to make every human activity an occasion to form and strengthen our will.

Character formation is intimately tied to *conscience formation*. “Conscience is a judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act” (CCC no. 1796). It is the voice of God “present at the heart of the person enjoining him/her at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil” (CCC no. 1777). A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart (CCC nos. 1783-1784). It is our hope and concerted effort with students to form them not only to be academically well qualified, but also to be able to live by objective ethical/moral standards and principles; to follow right reason and not personal whim.

*Character formation necessarily includes preparation for social responsibility.* A human being is essentially a social being. Integral development would not likely to happen if a person is focused only on himself/herself and his/her own improvement. We educate our students so that they may learn to invest in the well-being of others and in the future of our planet. They need to see that their actions and choices today create the kind of society or world as it is or as it will be. Through our Community Extension Services (CES), we make our students aware of social realities, provide them opportunities to concretize their “fundamental call as stewards of resources, time, life, people...and of God’s beautiful creation” (*Catechesis on Stewardship*). Early on, we wish to awaken in them a sense of social responsibility.

- **Cultural formation.** Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture, that is, by cultivating natural gifts and values (*Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes no. 53*). With this personal dimension of ‘self-cultivation’, Blessed John Paul II, at the same time, had always taught that “culture belongs to a people: it is the particular way a people cultivates its relationship with nature, with others and with God” (*Christifideles Laici 1988, no. 44*).

Our cultural formation is meant to facilitate a fruitful dialogue (a synthesis) of culture, faith and life. Every Catholic learning institution, by its very nature, is one primary and privileged place for this cultural dialogue. This, we believe, is true to Holy Cross.



We give special attention to the understanding of the ‘cultures’ of the young, a generation shaped by the borderless world of the internet, social networking and e-mail. Particularly, we make appropriate studies on the impact of the modern technology, especially of the mass media on persons, the family and institutions. With our students, we discern what is positive and negative, humanizing and dehumanizing in our ‘modern cultures’ assimilating those values which are positive and humanizing and forgoing those which are useless and even injurious to human growth.

We are guided by the “following criteria that characterize the values of a culture: the meaning of the human person,

his or her liberty, dignity, sense of responsibility, and openness to the transcendent. To a respect for persons is joined the pre-eminent value of the family, the primary unit of every human culture” (*John Paul II’s Ex Corde Ecclesiae no. 45*).

- **Physical formation.** Following the old maxim “a healthy mind in a healthy body,” we firmly encourage physical education through sports, contact with nature and other physical exercises and manual work that contribute to sound physical hygiene. The physical formation also includes the avoidance of negative influences like cigarette, alcohol, illegal drugs and other harmful substances. Appropriate physical exercises, besides restoring the physical condition we need to carry on our normal and routine tasks, also promote the values of discipline, self-control, determination, fairness, sportsmanship and teamwork among others. “Sports can help to preserve emotional balance...and to establish fraternal relations” (*Gaudium et Spes no. 61*).

Overall, HCDC’s educational goal has something to do with education for total wellness. Belonging to this educative community, we commit to the development of the person from within, freeing him/her from any condition that prevents him/her from becoming a fully-integrated human being. The aforementioned

considerations already explain what we mean by quality Catholic education. At this point, we direct our attention and reflection on our clientele, **“especially the less fortunate.”**



“In its ecclesial dimension, a Catholic school...is a school for all, with special attention to those who are weakest. In the past, the establishment of the majority of Catholic educational institutions has responded to the needs of the socially and economically disadvantaged. It is no novelty to affirm that Catholic schools have their origin in a deep concern for the education of children and young people left to their own devices and deprived of any form of schooling” (*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium no. 15*).

For the last 60 years, the Holy Cross of Davao College has not lost sight of this purpose. It has faithfully kept this vision and mission alive. Until now, because of material poverty, many children and youth are still prevented from having access to formal education and adequate human and Christian formation. With our affordable fees and, considering our available but limited resources, with our offer of scholarships, we provide them the opportunity of schooling.

Our deep concern for the less fortunate embraces not only the materially poor but also those who are experiencing “**new forms of poverty**,” those who are living in situations of moral and spiritual poverty. These are the children and the young people to whom no values are proposed and who do not know the beauty of faith; who are suffering from human disconnections in our technology-wired society and are merely content in relating with virtual and fictional realities; who are seeking for truth and meaning in life. To these poor in our midst, HCDC turns in spirit of love and compassion. As members of this Catholic school, we cannot be less concerned than Jesus whose “goodness embraced all, especially the poor and lowly” (*Matthew 5:3; 25:40, NAB*).



Our final consideration, i.e., **our commitment to create through dialogue a Christian environment** in school and society, is a gospel imperative. We find it “helpful to bear in mind, in harmony with the Second Vatican Council (*Gravissimum Educationis* no. 8), that the community dimension in the Catholic

school is not merely a sociological category; it has a theological foundation as well. The educating community, taken as a whole, is called to further the objective of a school as a place of complete formation through interpersonal relations” (*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* no. 18). Rightly, we give attention and importance to the relations of all who make up our educative community, including the parents of our students to whom the primary and natural responsibility for their children’s education belongs. Parents’ active involvement is so desired and is “especially critical nowadays because of the progressive breakdown and relativization of values and standards of behaviour” (*Maciel, 1996*).

“Too much attention to the content of teaching without realizing that the teaching relationship is the most important factor in the ministry of teaching” tilts the balance of good schooling (*Nouwen, 1971*). Mutual respect, sincere dialogue and respect for the rights of others are values we necessarily need to learn in school, at home, as we work and live in a community and as we find our place in the society.

Respectful dialogue is our Catholic way of welcoming and dealing with differences of people. We are mindful that in our school campus, some of our students and personnel belong to other faiths. With us, they appreciate and share the school's qualified educational project. For as long as they are with Holy Cross, we require our non-Catholic members to respect the Catholic character of the school and the school in turn respects their religious liberty.

The fostering of respectful interactions and harmonious relationships among our members provides for our students and learners an environment that favors their integral formation and, at the same time, it also contributes to nurturing a culture of dialogue and peace in our society. By forming and offering the Church and society integrally formed graduates and leaders with genuine Christian and human values, we hope to **contribute to the transformation of our society** into a more just, more humane, more peace-loving, more Christian place to work and live in. Our overriding intention in preparing our students for leadership is for them to effectively serve the Church and society in all its various spheres. The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (*PCP II*) affirms: "We should aim at producing citizens and leaders who will imbue the world with Christian values. Our graduates should not only be better technicians, professionals and money-earners, but also better persons who live not for themselves but, like Christ, for others" (*no. 636*).

### *Core values of the school*

Enumerated and explained in the succeeding paragraphs are the fundamental meanings of the core values explicit in the school's vision-mission statement. With other discernible and closely related values, these institutional values express the school's reason for being. As shared values, these serve to unite the school community.

Moreover, these are special values in need of emphasis today because of the “crisis of values which... assumes the form, often exalted by the media, of subjectivism, moral relativism and nihilism” (*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium 1*)

## TRUTH

*I am Holy Cross: I achieve*



Truth and freedom go together. The human person would not be “God’s image and likeness” (*Genesis 1: 27, NAB*) if he/she was not able to choose. “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (*John 8:32, NAB*). An honest relationship with regard to the truth, revealed or reached through research, [is] a condition for authentic freedom.

Every freedom that fails to enter into the whole truth about nature, man and God, is illusory freedom. Once [this] truth is denied to human beings, it is pure illusion to try to set them free. As rational beings, **our greatest achievement** is the discovery of truth and of the Person who sets us free and to whom we entrust ourselves.

Today, even after two thousand years, we see Christ as the one who brings man freedom based on truth (*John Paul II, Redemptor Hominis 1979; John Paul II, Fides et Ratio no. 90*). The freedom that Christ taught and exemplified in his life is not the liberty to do anything whatsoever. It is the freedom to do good.



## JUSTICE

*I am Holy Cross: I care*

Justice is fidelity to right relationships. It is a way of living and loving “in harmony with God, with one another and with creation” (CCC nos. 374-376). The promotion of justice is not an option; it is an integral part of the practice of our faith. It is inseparable from charity. As a concrete expression of charity, justice is lived within the confines of truth and the common good. “To desire for the common good and to strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity (*Caritas in Veritate* no. 7).

In being just and in promoting justice, we live our **fundamental vocation to stewardship and to care with compassion**. We carry out Christ’s command: Love God and one another. In reverence, we give what is rightfully due to God, to others and to our world (environment) for the sake of others.

## PEACE

*I am Holy Cross: I inspire*

Peace, along with reconciliation, is a fruit of justice. It is God’s gracious gift to our fallen world, won for us by the blood of the Cross. “Only when the injustice of sin against God had been requited could there be an affirmation of true peace” (*Sheen, 1977*).

In our day, peace and justice are great themes shared in ecumenical and religious dialogue. In this context, peace is understood as the fruitful reconciliation of persons who seek harmony to live in diversity of cultures and religions. With hope and respect, we engage in this dialogue to create relationships which are healthy and healing. With our brethren of other faiths

and cultures, we also express our radical choice and commitment for nonviolence (*Haring & Salvoldi, 1995*).

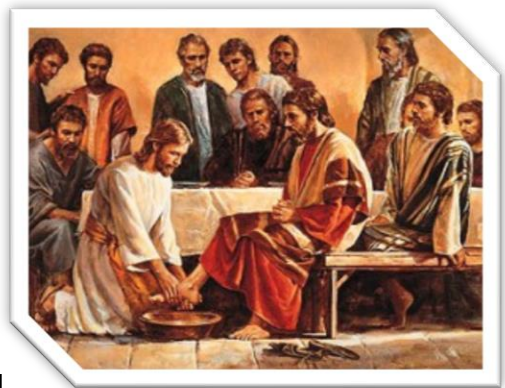
As Christians, we are **inspired by the non-violent and tolerant ways of Jesus**. We are interested in his “shalom” i.e., in the peace of the Risen Lord with his unconditional gift of forgiveness and compassion (*John 20:19-23, NAB*). Peace for us is not only something or a theme but a Person. It is the Lord! “Christ is our peace” (*Ephesians 2:14, NAB*).

## SERVICE

*I am Holy Cross: I serve*

Service is an integral part of faith. It is basic to fulfil the demands of the Gospel. It is a value we learn from Jesus “who came not to be served but to serve and give his life for others” (*Mark 10:45, NAB*).

All his life until his death on the Cross, everything that Jesus said and did was a lesson of selfless service. **Servant-leadership** is one important lesson/value that he taught. After having washed the feet of his Apostles on the night before he died (during the last Supper), he commanded: As I have done for you, so you should also do (*John 13:14-15, NAB*). Rightly so, we acclaim Jesus as our servant-leader. He served out of love for people.



Our life of service and leadership as Christians is and ought to be our personal response in joy and gratitude to Christ's love for

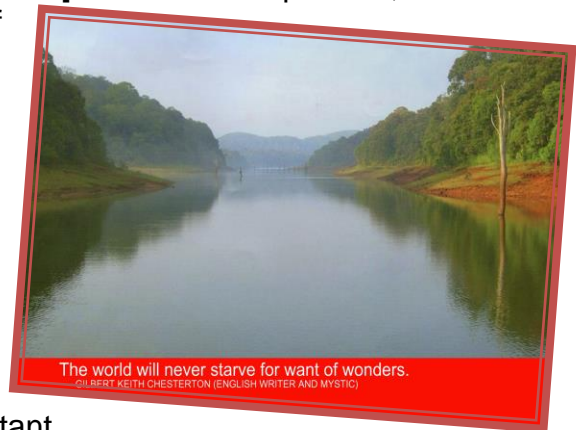
us. Only in the light of Jesus' example that we would be able to understand the meaning of Christian service and leadership in whatever form we live it out, whether in the practice of our discipleship, social responsibility or in the exercise of our professional life.

Service and leadership-related values needed and sought for today in every sphere, in professional and political circles and in the corporate world are integrity, trustworthiness and dedication. In business, these are considered the most important values/qualities when hiring and promoting people. The more sought-after person is he or she who possesses the servant-leadership quality and who has the passion for service.

## WISDOM

*I am Holy Cross: I commit*

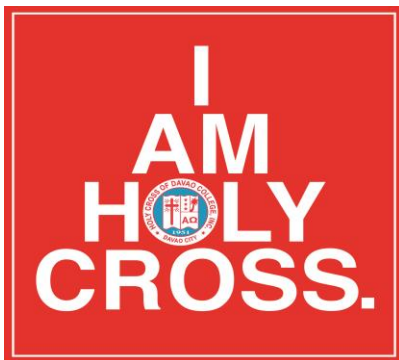
Wisdom is a special insight into life's meaning, in knowing how to act and live in an upright way. It is more than factual knowledge, or human/technical skills, or any intellectual achievement. "For [the value of] wisdom to be present, there must be a high refinement of human intelligence and a commitment to virtuous living in terms of insights reached by such intelligence. "The intellectual nature of man finds at last its perfection, as it should, in wisdom" (*Gaudium et Spes* no. 15). Wisdom is living in terms of what is truly important.



In everyday life, wisdom is present in good judgment or prudence, the practical ability to evaluate a particular situation and to decide on the best way of dealing with that situation. In a school/classroom setting where knowledge and information are easily made available by computer and internet, wisdom guides educators to judge critically what information and knowledge are useful for the growth of the students and to forgo useless and injurious knowledge. This type of wisdom is sometimes described as common sense, a practical “know how” that guides in handling life’s situations.

In view of life’s deep meaning and its ultimate goal, true wisdom discerns and directs our quest toward eternal life, **the only goal worth striving for and committing to**. Wisdom is nothing less than a proper relationship with God. This is available to everyone. The full meaning of wisdom can be gleaned in the light of Jesus Christ crucified who is divine Wisdom personified (*1 Corinthians 1: 18-25, NAB*).

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS: I AM HOLY CROSS!



What unique contributions has Holy Cross of Davao College made to individuals and to our society for the last 60 years? How can it contribute even more? What priority of goals should Holy Cross need to achieve?

“The Holy Cross of Davao College has contributed to the Davao community for the past 60 years in terms of quality Catholic education at an affordable cost....Despite being rocked by external social and economic situations through the years, HCDC has retained its vision of being an institution that caters primarily to the

“less fortunate” through its socialized school fees and offerings of various scholarships” (*Holy Cross of Davao College at 60: Reflections of the Davao Community*, 2011, p.109; see also *Research on the 5-year operation of HCDC-Babak*, October 2012). (*Castigon et al., 2011; see also Carillo et al., 2012*)

As a way of looking into the future, these studies conclude that three areas hold promising possibilities for the institution and its leaders...**Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, and Affordability**... To make the school increasingly more Catholic in flavor, excellent in academics and affordable for the greater members of the Davao community are the challenges that the school leaders are confronted with. They need to address two goals simultaneously. The first goal focuses on making the school affordable to the greatest number of families; the second, pushes for a continuous offering of high quality educational programs. To meet these challenges requires inventive leadership and good stewardship. All leaders are responsible for taking an active role in promoting stewardship as a way of life (*HCDC @ 60: Chapter 5, pp.110-115*).

“Planning for the long-term viability...is the most significant decision-making that will be done by the school leaders in the next decade. The institution will become strong or diminish based on its capacity **to move toward total viability**” (*HCDC @ 60: Chapter 5, p. 116*).

## THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: MODEL IN FAITH AND CHARITY

As its participation in the Church’s mission of new evangelization, the Holy Cross of Davao College will continue to provide a Catholic education of excellent quality to all, especially to the less fortunate. With Mary, **Seat of Wisdom**, the members of the school community will always strive to “advance in wisdom, age, and favor before God and man” (*Luke 2:52, NAB*).

We turn our gaze to Mary and implore her motherly intercession to lead us patiently and lovingly in our own journey of faith and in our evangelizing mission. **Mary was the first to be evangelized.** In her, we have a sure guide.

The *Second Vatican Council* calls Mary “an outstanding model in faith and charity” (*Lumen Gentium no. 53*). By faith, Mary welcomed the Good News announced to her by the Angel Gabriel. She inquired into its meaning. Through faith, she conceived the Son of God in her heart and by the power of the Holy Spirit conceived him in her womb. From that moment when she said her definite yes to the Lord, she submitted her whole self to God trustingly and continued to walk in her pilgrimage of faith.



Mary was not only the first to be evangelized; she was not only the first to receive the Good News. **She was also the first evangelizer.** After the annunciation, she carried Jesus in her heart and womb. At the visitation, she brought Jesus, the Good News, to her cousin Elizabeth and brought joy to her and to the child in her womb, John, who leapt for joy. Elizabeth’s greeting resounds until today:

***“Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled” (Luke 1:45, NAB).***

All her life until her last ordeal when “she stood at the foot of the cross” (*John 19:26, NAB*), Mary was always a giver of Jesus to people. It is for this faith that all generations have called Mary blessed.

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**REV. MSGR. JULIUS C. RODULFA**  
**President**