

The Levels of Catholicity of the Sixteen Catholic Secondary Schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales

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Abstract: This study was a response to the Diocese of Iba, Zambales' needs to look into the profile and levels of catholicity of the sixteen Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales and its implication to the Diocesan Campus Ministry Program and Education Plan that would foster effectiveness, relevance and responsiveness to the evangelizing mission of the Diocese.

The study utilized the survey instrument, "How Catholic Is Your School?" The instrument was designed to evaluate the catholicity of a school in terms of six criteria namely: Criterion 1: Sharing in the Mission of the Church, Criterion 2: Being Filled with the Holy Spirit, Criterion 3: Concern for Integral Formation, Criterion 4: Emphasis on the Role of Educator, Criterion 5: Collaboration with the Community, and Criterion 6: Practice and Living the Faith.

The Diocese of Iba, Zambales' level of Catholicity was a potential strength. However, the study also revealed uncertainty and discrepancies in some criteria and indicators as answered by the respondents: the students were not fully aware of the integration of Christ's teachings and values in academic subject, and the essence and the encouragement provided by the faculty in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist; the insufficient understanding about the Social Doctrines of the Church and other moral issues; and lack of occasions to concretize practice and living the faith.

Therefore, there is a need to re-consider the enhancement and management of Campus Ministry program; and to further realize that Religion is the core of the curriculum, with the function of binding together all the other disciplines, non-Religious Education Teachers should be equipped with adequate knowledge of the Catholic faith and Tradition grounded in Sacred Scriptures and Teachings of the Church to become communicators of the Gospel values in their subjects, leading their students to know, love and serve Jesus Christ and His People.

Key Words: levels of Catholicity, Campus Ministry

I. INTRODUCTION

This study was a response to the Diocese of Iba, Zambales' needs to look into the profile and levels of catholicity in the sixteen Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales and its implication to the Diocesan Campus Ministry Program and to the Diocesan Education Plan that would foster effectiveness, relevance and responsiveness of the diocesan education system to the evangelizing mission of the Diocese.

1.1 Related Literature

Church documents and related studies salient to the role and distinctive features of Catholic schools, catholicity, Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic School, and Campus Ministry were reviewed in this study.

The researcher started from the most authoritative Church document which embodies the goals of Catholic Education that is, the Declaration of Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis*). According to this document, the Church is duty

bound to provide education for the People of God. This duty belongs especially to her in view of its being a human society, capable of educating and because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men and assisting men to be able to come to the fullness of life (*Gravissimum Educationis*, Art. #8).

The Catholic schools and the saving mission of the Church are closely linked (Garrone, 1977, 4). In the light of her mission of salvation, the Church considers that the Catholic school provides a privileged environment for the more integrated formation of her members, and that it also provides a very important service to humankind. The Catholic school is committed thus to the development of the whole person, since in Christ, the perfect Man, all human values find their fulfillment and unity. Herein lies the specifically character of the school (Garrone, 1977, 16).

Accordingly, the Congregation for Catholic Education, during the preparation for the great jubilee of the year 2000 focused attention on the nature and distinctive characteristics of a school which would present itself as "Catholic." It further mentions that it is opportune to devote careful attention to certain fundamental characteristics of the Catholic school, which are of great importance if its educational activity is to be effectual in the Church and in society. The Catholic school is a place of integral education of human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation, its mission of education is a work of love, and its service to society and traits which should characterize the educating community (Laghi, 1997, p.1).

The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (Baum, 1982), Article Number 37 states that the work of a lay educator has an undeniably professional aspect; but it cannot be reduced to professionalism alone. Professionalism is marked by, and raised to, a supernatural Christian vocation. The life of a Catholic teacher must be marked by the exercise of a personal vocation in the Church, and not simply by the exercise of a profession. The *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* further emphasizes that it is important that lay Catholics who work in a Catholic school should actively

participate in the liturgical and sacramental life of the school.

The *Religious Dimension of Education* (RDE, 1988) in a Catholic School by the Congregation for Catholic Education emphasizes that if a school is excellent as an academic institution, but does not witness to authentic values, then both good pedagogy and a concern for pastoral care make it obvious that a renewal is called – not only in the content and methodology of the religious instruction, but in the overall school planning which governs the whole process of formation of the students.

In the Philippine setting, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines recognizes the Catholic schools as offering a systematic understanding of the link between faith and life the classroom providing opportunity for understanding the person through the prism of the various academic fields with faith as the integrating factor.

The National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines 2007 (NNCDP, 2007) quoted that Catholic school provides the best opportunities for a continued and systematic catechesis. It further quoted Pope John Paul II stating that the special character of Catholic schools is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated in the education of the pupils (CT, Art. #69).

In the past, some people thought that to be a Religious Educator, it was sufficient to be a "good catholic." However, today, it is no longer possible for anyone who is simply a good catholic to go to the classroom and teach. One needs to be thoroughly trained in order to teach religion effectively. The same professional competence is badly needed in fashioning the school's religion program and creating adequate course materials. The department of religion/theology, therefore, should plan, staff, administer and evaluate the school's religion program; it must develop close relations with the counselling department, either by itself, or in collaboration with the Campus ministry and the school chaplain, plan to direct the school's religious activities (NNCDP, Art. #459).

The effectiveness of a Catholic school is therefore related to its influence on the personal growth and faith development of its students (Flynn, 1979). He went further to say that it is gauged by its impact in the bringing about in the lives of the students the integration of faith and life. It tries to

relate all human culture to the good news of salvation so that the light of faith will illumine everything that the students will gradually come to learn about the world, about life and about the human person.

In the Article, "What Makes a School Catholic?" (Groome, 1998), it was mentioned that to educate, to teach and to help keep a school are activities that reflect the noblest vocations in life. There is non-worthier than to be an educator. Tomas Groome further stated that it is imperative that we have some conceptual clarity about the qualifier, "catholic." That the distinctiveness of Catholic education is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself and these characteristics should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools. By curriculum, he meant content taught, the process of teaching and the environment.

Groome proposed five particular and distinguishing characteristics of Catholicism which he called theological characteristics namely (Groome, p. 108): (1) its positive anthropology of the person, (2) its sacramentality of life, (3) its communal emphasis regarding human and Christian existence, (4) its commitment to tradition as source of its story and vision and, (5) its appreciation of rationality and learning, epitomized in its commitment to education.

Groome added that beyond these theological characteristics, Catholicism has three other pervading commitments that are particularly relevant for Catholic education. These areas are as follows: Catholicism's commitment to people's personhood; Catholicism's commitment to "basic justice"; and Catholicism's commitment to "catholicity" (Groome, p. 109).

These concepts are likewise mentioned in the Catechism for Filipino Catholics that the liberating power of truth intensifies the universal need to seek the truth, and brings out sharply its intrinsic social dimension. The inescapable human need for justice is grounded on the dignity of every man and woman (CFC, 2005, 1230).

Traditionally, the Church's "catholicity" was external, visible universality as used in apologetics to distinguish the one true Church from all heretical and schismatic Christian sects and groups. "Catholic was a label identifying the Christian "denomination"

to which the believer belonged." Today, "catholicity" is also explained as the Church's interior capacity of exercising a universal ministry of reconciliation (CFC, Art. # 1403).

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CBCP, 2005) states that the Church is Catholic that is universal, insofar as Christ is present in her: "Where there is Jesus Christ, there is the Catholic Church" (St. Ignatius of Antioch). The Church proclaims the fullness and totality of faith; she bears and administers the fullness of the means of salvation; she is sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of human race (CCC, Art. #166).

Catechism for Filipino Catholics (CBCP, 2005) explains that the image of the Church as a sacrament directly relates the Church to non-Catholics. Without neglecting the necessity of the visible Church, it helps explain how the grace of Christ can be operative beyond the institutional Church. The Church as a sacrament is "used by Christ as an instrument for the redemption of all, and sent forth into the world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth" (*Lumen Gentium*, Art. #9), (CFC, Art. #1369).

Religious Education is concerned about the development of faith, situated in the life of the Church, and based on foundational beliefs (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 1997) which should be considered in the formulation of Campus Ministry programs considering its educating function.

In U.S., the Catholic Educational Commission of Victoria (CECV, 1997) emphasized that it was essential that any Religious Educator in a Catholic school should have an appropriate and adequate knowledge of the Catholic faith, Tradition and practice in order to establish competently the necessary framework for the education of faith. This is for them to be able to live up to the school community's expectation of them to be true witnesses of the Christian faith.

Msgr. Manny Gabriel (2001), the former Chairman of the Manila Archdiocesan Parochial Schools Association (MAPSA) Religious Education Commission emphasized in his talk during the CEAP Diamond Jubilee Convention and OIEC Asia Millennium Congress in Cebu City shared that in the MAPSA's experience, Religion as the core of the

curriculum has been understood in its two senses. First is that the Catholic school reflects and enhances the mission of integral evangelization in its own and total operation; and in the second sense, “religion as core” pertains to the acquisition of the knowledge regarding the Christian Catholic faith, where the Gospel values are integrated in the other courses or subjects, while upholding the value of academic freedom (CEAP & OIEC, p. 131).

On the study of the Shape of Campus Ministry in the Philippines (ACUP, 1981), it was recognized that Campus Ministry is an essential and officially recognized component of the mission of the Catholic Church. It aimed at spreading Christ’s word to the community, especially to students, faculty, administrators, staff and others served by the Catholic school.

The functions of the Campus Ministry can be summarized into six (6) namely Liturgical, Pastoral, Counseling, Educational, Prophetic, and Organizational (ACUP, p.41). These six (6) functions are utilized in the formulation of Campus Ministry Program as an output of this study.

The Directory for Catholic Youth Ministry (DCYMP, 2004) stated that another setting so full of potential for youth ministry is the academe. Faith should be experienced as an integrating factor in their pursuit for knowledge while providing the young skills and knowledge in the various fields of science. Furthermore, the school should also be capable of introducing the youth the Christian ideals, attitudes, and principles necessary towards an integral human formation, linking faith and life, and a call for a mission to serve the Church and nation. Moreover, the school ought to be a picture of a Church community mirroring Christ who not only brought the good news from the Father but also shed light to the issues and concerns of the society in his times through its liturgical, pastoral, counseling, educational, and organizational functions (DCYMP, p. 97).

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study was a response to the Diocese of Iba’s needs to look into the profile and levels of catholicity in the sixteen Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales. Knowledge of the clientele is a pre-requisite to any effective action

program. Without adequate information about the profile, interests and attitudes of the people whom we are serving, even the best program can fail.

More likely, it was hoped that the findings and recommendations of the study would help contribute to the creation of a more Catholic environment in the school. PCP II’s declaration on what makes the Catholic school distinctive is its religious dimension; that is to be found in the school climate; the total formation of the youth; the relationship established between culture and the Gospel; and the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith. Providing students with school culture that is truly rooted in the very ideals of Jesus and the perspective of the Church, it is hoped that the Catholic School will produce graduates who would be evangelizers within the changing global reality

Furthermore, the results of the data analyzed are to be used as frame of reference for a more effective management of Campus Ministry programs in the secondary level. As the priorities in the different schools are identified, the functions and organizational structure of the Campus Ministry will be more contextualized.

Most importantly, the Catholic Educational System of the Diocese of Iba (CESDI) can further develop a plan that would foster effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and responsiveness of the diocesan education system to the evangelizing mission of the Diocese.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The researcher focused on understanding the trends and patterns of fidelity of the 16 Catholic Secondary Schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales towards Catholic Identity or Catholicity using surveyed data from the four groups of respondents: students, faculty and staff, administrators, and parents using the six criteria derived from the validated instrument developed by the team of Sr. Irene of Assumption Antipolo, Inc.: Sharing in the Mission of the Church; Being Filled with the Spirit of Christ; Concern for Integral Formation; Emphasis on the Role of educators; Collaboration with the Community; and Practicing and Living the Faith.

Basing from the results of the questionnaires and analysis of the data, the

researcher had looked into the implications of the results to the management of the Campus Ministry programs in the Catholic secondary school level in the following areas: functions, programs, activities, and organizational structure.

Suggestions and recommendations are to be given for the Catholic Educational System of the Diocese of Iba (CESDI) to reflect on and consider for its Diocesan Educational Plan.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive quantitative and qualitative survey research that utilized the survey instrument, "How Catholic Is Your School?" The instrument was designed to evaluate the catholicity of a school in terms of six criteria namely: Criterion 1: Sharing in the Mission of the Church, Criterion 2: Being Filled with the Holy Spirit, Criterion 3: Concern for Integral Formation, Criterion 4: Emphasis on the Role of Educator, Criterion 5: Collaboration with the Community, and Criterion 6: Practice and Living the Faith.

The respondents of the study were from the sixteen (16) secondary schools under the Diocese of Iba, Zambales. They consisted of four (4) sectors per Diocesan school namely: Students, Faculty and Staff, Administrators, and Parents.

Trends and patterns were expressed in frequency, mean averages and standard deviations.

The levels of catholicity in each Catholic school were based on the mean scores and standard deviations following the evaluation ratings in Table 1:

Table 1. Interpretation Matrix for Means and Standard Deviation of Criterion Indicator Rating

Means	Standard Deviations				
	1.0	.7 to .94	.4 to .64	.1 to .34	0 to .05
4.6 -5.0	4	4	5	5	5
3.6 - 4.5	3	3	4	4	4
2.5 - 3.5	2	2	3	3	3
1.6 - 2.5	2	2	2	2	2
1.0 -1.5	1	1	1	1	1

The numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 in the cells above corresponding to a specific range of mean and standard deviation reflect overall evaluation ratings for a specific indicator. These evaluation ratings are follows (HCIYS, 2006, p.21):

- 5 Clear Strength
- 4 Potential Strength
- 3 Uncertain, therefore may need to reflect and re-assess
- 2 Potential Weakness
- 1 Clear Weakness

Thus, the highest rating of 5 would occur with a high mean between 4.6 to 5.0 and a standard deviation of .64 and below is clear strength. An acceptable rating that also reflects potential strength is the mean between 3.6 to 4.5 with a standard deviation of .64 and below.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Over-All Profile of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales

The over-all profile of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales in terms of religion and number of years of service can be gleaned from tables 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 2. Over-all Profile of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales in Terms of Religion

SCHOOL	CATHOLIC		NON-CATHOLIC		TOTAL	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.1 Sta. Cruz Academy	379	94.28	23	5.72	402	100
1.2 St. Vincent Academy	140	95.24	7	4.76	147	100
1.3 San Andres School of Masinloc	155	88.57	20	11.43	175	100
1.4 Mt. Carmel Academy	183	91.50	17	8.50	200	100
1.5 Sta. Monica Parochial School	100	90.09	11	9.90	111	100
1.6 Immaculate Conception Academy	172	73.50	62	26.50	234	100
1.7 St. Columban Montessori School	186	92.82	15	7.18	201	100
1.8 Magsaysay Memorial College	284	82.56	60	17.44	344	100
1.9 T.R.Yangco Educational Institute	138	80.23	34	19.77	172	100
1.10 St. William's School	204	92.73	16	7.27	220	100
1.11 St. Nicholas Academy	219	100	0	0.00	219	100
1.12 St. Anthony's School	149	91.41	14	8.59	163	100
1.13 Christ the King Catholic School	71	95.95	3	5.05	74	100
1.14 Columban College	771	95.42	37	4.58	808	100
TOTAL	3,150	90.83	319	9.17	3,469	100

Table 2 is a presentation of the over-all profile of the respondents of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales in terms of religion. It is revealed that an overwhelming majority of the respondents, 3,150 (90.83%) out of 3,469 respondents from the 14 Diocesan Catholic schools were Catholics and only 319 (9.17%) a minority were non-Catholics. Although the overall percentage of non-Catholics was very small, it is worth noting that the percentage of non-

Catholics in San Andres School of Masinloc (11.43%), Immaculate Conception Academy (26.50%), Magsaysay Memorial College (17.44), and T.R.Yangco Catholic Educational Institute (19.77%) was significant since a number of non-Catholic students enrolled to their respective institutions.

Table 3. Over-all Profile of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales in Terms of No. of Years in School

No. of Years in School	Faculty (Percentage)	Staff (Percentage)	Total (Percentage)
1-5	38.43	13.27	51.70
6-10	20.58	4.91	25.49
11-15	6.61	2.14	8.75
16-20	4.01	1.58	5.59
21-25	4.39	0.38	4.77
26-30	2.10	.90	3.00
31-35	.68	0.00	.68
TOTAL	76.80	23.18	100

The over-all profile of the faculty and staff of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales in terms of number of years in the school is shown in Table 3. Many of the faculty and staff respondents were new since they had served the Diocesan Catholic Schools for 1-5 years with 51.70 percent. This was followed by 25.49 percent for bracket 6-10 years, and decreasing percentage for the succeeding year service brackets until year bracket 31-35.

3.2 The Over-all Levels of Catholicity of The Diocese of Iba, Zambales

The Diocese of Iba, Zambales' level of Catholicity was a potential strength. However, the study also revealed uncertainty and discrepancies in some criteria and indicators as answered by the respondents. The Students were not fully aware of the integration of Christ's teachings and values in academic subjects (Social Studies, Science, English/Language, Filipino, and Math) except in Christian Living subject. There was insufficient understanding about the Social Doctrines of the Church including issues on pre-marital sex, family planning, divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and homosexuality by both students and faculty. Students were likely not fully aware of the essence of

the Eucharistic celebration and the encouragement provided by the faculty in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the school and in the parish. Parents had a minimal awareness of the school's concern, awareness about problems, challenges and solutions to the problems of the youth, families, local community, and the society. Students' responses expressed lack of occasions to concretize practice and living the faith in the Catholic school community.

4. CONCLUSIONS

With the findings of the study, the Administrators need to re-consider the creation/improvement, enhancement and management of Campus Ministry program in their respective Catholic secondary schools and in the whole of the Diocesan Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Iba, Zambales to provide activities and opportunities for practicing and living the faith. To further realize that Religion is the core of the curriculum, with the function of binding together all the other disciplines in the spirit of collaboration among administration, faculty/staff, students, parents, and the wider community, non-Religious Education Teachers are encouraged to take the Proposed Religious Education Curriculum to better equip them with appropriate and adequate knowledge of the Catholic faith and Tradition grounded in Sacred Scriptures and Teachings of the Church. This will enable them to live up to the school community's expectation of them to be true witnesses of the Christian faith and be communicators of the Gospel values in their subjects, leading their students to know, love and serve Jesus Christ and His People.

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