

Dear Heads/Headmistresses,

The Fourth International Conference for Heads of Schools of the Society of Sacred Heart was held at Sacred Heart School in Taipei, Taiwan from October 20th to 24th, 2011. We were 56 participants from 15 countries. The theme of the Conference was "Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation."

The warm welcome of the students, faculty, parents and alumnae at Sacred Heart Schools Taipei overwhelmed and touched our hearts. We experienced transformation, solidarity and common faith. The value of the presentations and our conversation was powerful and empowering.

The keynote speeches of Sr. Kathleen Hughes rscj, formation to mission advisor within the USA Network and Ji Ping Chang, an engineer involved in sustainable design and design for the majority, provided us with many insights to help us reflect upon the nature of the Sacred Heart education we offer our students in this digitalized, globalized and divided world. In all our discussions the spiritual and the relational continue to be central to the development of the whole person today, just as they were in the times of Sophie. Our various groups discussed the why and the how of our mission. There was a clear affirmation of Kathleen's call for *compassion to be the character trait above all others that we need to instill in our young people and foster in ourselves*. Silence, dialogue, critical thinking, prayer are essential if we are to assist young people in experiencing the Spirit within and in comprehending that they are the face of God in our world by being people of hope, innovation and compassionate action.

Decisions:

- **Establish a Virtual Community**

Rationale: To ensure on-going sharing of information and ideas in order to respond to the needs of our world as Sacred Heart School Communities; to foster exchange ideas about global issues ; and to ensure that we are living our internationality as both a gift and a responsibility.

Plan: We ask the USA Network to provide a space on SOFIE www.sofie.org for our transitional virtual community. There we would exchange ideas regarding Formation to Mission, Good Ideas by Goals, Announcements about conferences and workshops, student and faculty exchanges, curricular projects and service/social justice programs. We could make use of this space to communicate urgent needs. The website will link Websites from Regions to one another and to the websites of Provinces and Schools as well as to the International RSCJ site. <http://www.rscjinternational.org/>. Ideally there will be a search option to help with the navigation of the website. We agree that initially the language for the majority of the page will be English. We recognize that Google can provide initial translation options, we invite one another to correct translations that are inadequate and/or poor and hope to allow for postings in other languages to encourage participation. We need to encourage all leaders to contribute and keep current to the international page.

Task Force: Kevin Foster (UK-Newcastle); Penny (Taiwan); Hilary Johnston-Croke(AUS) to work with Stephanie Moore to create this page on SOFIE by December 31, 2011. We hope that a member of RedLac will join the Task Force.

Outcome: We hope communication among us will be strengthened and as the International Family of Christ's Heart we will better implement the mission of the Society to make God's love known. A place to share ideas, hopes, needs and dreams will support the development of the International Network of Sacred Heart Schools.

- **Write Sr. Conan, Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart**

Rationale: As a response to her letter welcoming the Heads to the 4th International Conference for Heads of Schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart; as a follow up to our letter the Superior General following the first Conference in 2000 in Joigny; to share our abiding commitment to the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart and to

strengthening our relationships with RSCJ; to communicate our need for the Society leadership to support us in our shared mission.

Plan: The letter outlines our profound appreciation for the vision of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat and our belief that collaboration is a sacred responsibility.

- **A day of prayer for all Sacred Heart Institutions**

Rationale: To unite the communities of the sacred Heart in prayer to create a sense of union and identity as the community of schools of the Sacred Heart.

Questions

Many of our discussions resulted in important questions we need to continue to discuss:

- Educating in a pluralistic society continues to raise challenges, especially in areas where there is greater polarisation. How do we honor the faith traditions of all our students and remain true to our identity as Catholic schools?
- We explored the idea of competencies for global citizenship. We sense that there are competencies for compassion and community. What are they and how might we Sacred Heart educators identify and define such competencies for both the educators and the students?

Next Steps:

Communication - We are most grateful to the planners of the 4th Conference and Sacred Heart School in Taiwan for the creation of the conference website and to Stephanie Moore for creating the conference wiki. <http://intlhos2011.wikispaces.com/> These are important tools for communication. We commit to communicate this important information to those who are unable to be with us in Taiwan by speaking to those whom we know, asking the existing Networks to share within the Networks the fruit of the meetings and the Central Council to speak with the provincials and those schools without networks.

We ask the Directors of the Networks of Sacred Heart Schools to schedule a Skype session on sacred Heart competencies by October 20, 2012. Between now and then Heads could exchange ideas about the topic through email.

We hope that our next gathering might be in.....

We complete our days together in Taiwan inspired by Sophie and all who have gone before us. The reality of our fragile world challenges us. Having shared both the Feast of Mater and Mission Sunday, we are renewed in spirit as we move into the move into the future. We ask Mater to continue to help us focus on the essential in our work as Educators of the Sacred Heart.