



DIS Welcomes a New Principal



Sr. Jacqueline C. Manuel, OP is not a stranger to DIS. She has had several years' experience as a Religious Studies teacher, Treasurer, and Vice-Principal at DIS before being appointed as Principal at DIS, Taipei.

Sr. Jackie (as everyone knows her), was previously also the Provincial Secretary of the Province of St. Vincent Ferrer of the Religious Missionaries of St. Dominic, and the Principal at DIS Kaohsiung.

She obtained her Licentiate and Bachelor Degrees in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome. In 2017, the College of New Jersey in the United States granted her Principal Certification and Qualification for Educational Administration.

She holds teaching credentials from the Spanish Universities of Salamanca and Valladolid. She has served in a number of Dominican institutions of learning all over the world in different capacities. She was a Certified Public Accountant before entering religious life.

Sr. Jackie loves to read during her free time.

Global Citizenship Award

We are very proud to announce that Rachel Park is a recipient of the EARCOS (East Asia Regional Council of Schools) Global Citizenship Award.

According to the EARCOS website "this award is presented to a student who embraces the qualities of a global citizen. This student is a proud representative of his/her nation while respectful of the diversity of other nations, has an open mind, is well informed, aware and empathetic, concerned and caring for others encouraging a sense of community and strongly committed to engagement and action to make the world a better place. Finally, this student is able to interact and communicate effectively with people from all walks of life while having a sense of collective responsibility for all who inhabit the globe." Congratulations to another deserving DIS student filling her spot in the international ranks.



Pastoral Visit of the Mother General Sr Ma. Asuncion Gonzalez

by Br Patrick Bugarin, OP



From left to right: Fr Tomasz Zalewski, Sr Jackie Manuel, DIS Principal, Mother General Sr Asuncion Gonzales, Sr Marie Lee, and Sr Flor Ordenez , DIS Prioress, next to the statue of St Martin de Porres

The Mother General, Sr. Asuncion Gonzalez, OP was with Sr. Maria Lee, OP, the General Treasurer, on her canonical visit to Taiwan. Canonical visits are mandated in order to look after the overall well-being of the communities of the “Misioneras”—as the Institute of Religious Missionaries of Saint Dominic is fondly called. During this time, every Sister, without exception, is given time to talk to the Mother General. All the issues and concerns of every community in the Province are brought to her for discussion. This practice sums up the very idea of “synodality” which has long been practiced in the Order. The DIS Community was blessed to have the visit coincide with the launching of the Month of the Holy Rosary. Sr Asuncion and Sr Maria assured the DIS Family of their prayers for the success of our endeavors.

The Rosary Month

An Opportunity to Rekindle God’s Blessings and Protection Through Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary

by John Erick Moje

Centered on the theme, “Do whatever He tells you (John 2:5): Mary’s Spirit of Discipleship”, the entire DIS learning community actively participated during the launch of the Rosary Month on October 2nd.

Guided by the well-rehearsed hosts, Ella Sarmiento (DOMNET President) and Daphne Yeh (DYM President), the ceremony formally commenced with the procession and opening Marian Hymn which was led by Grades 3 and 5 Religious Studies students, under the direction of Mr John Erick Moje and Mr Jayno Jabonillo. Sr Jackie Manuel, OP, spearheaded the consecration of the entire school to Mother Mary. The intentions and reflections on the Luminous Mysteries were thoughtfully done by Grade 10 Religious Studies students. The blessings of Fr Tomasz concluded the morning prayer.

The second part of the ceremony was a short program to joyfully welcome the Mother General of the Dominican Missionaries of St Dominic de Guzman, Sr Asuncion Gonzalez, OP, along with Sr Maria Lee, OP, the General Treasurer.

The last part of the ceremony introduced the school’s initiative to promote mental health in collaboration with the World Federation for Mental Health centering on this year’s theme, “Mental Health is a Universal Right.” The Grade 12 Psychology Class under the supervision of Ms. Anne, prepared a meaningful program.

Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Pray for us!



First Marian Activity: Launching the Rosary Month in the presence of Mother General and the General Treasurer, Sr Marie Lee (left) who assisted Sr Jackie.

THE DOMINICAN TORCH Editorial Team

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Thank you to all our contributors.

A special word of thanks to Mr John Erick Moje, Dr Patrick Bugarin, and Dr Gustl Pido for their regular contributions to this publication.

Marian Exhibit

The Marian exhibit was formally opened on October 23rd. The creative input, and constant communication of all Religious Studies teachers made this successful event possible.

Sr Cecilia and Sr Rosa cut the ribbon and Sr Jackie blessed the entire exhibition area. DIS Administrators, DYM, DOMNET, STUCO, and Class Presidents were able to witness this momentous event.

Depicting the Rosary Month’s theme all the Religious Studies students exhibited the fruit of their reflection, encapsulated in creative artworks, during this exhibit. The Lower School Religious Studies students, under the guidance of Ms Annie Lin, Ms Jessy Cardenas, Mr John Erick Moje, and Mr Arcel Amoguis, colored the mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary. The Middle School students under the supervision of Mr Arcel Amoguis, successfully crafted creative and informative posters displaying the many titles and apparitions of Mother Mary in the different parts of the world. Mr Amoguis motivated his students to begin with their home countries so that learning became significant, authentic, and relevant. Mr Jayno Jabonillo and Mr John Erick Moje directed the High School students. Grade 11 students created videos showing the virtues of Mother Mary. Grade 12 concentrated on depicting the theme of the Rosary month, using Canva and other creative platforms.

Finally, all Religious Studies students were able to visit the Marian Exhibit to offer prayers and discover interesting facts about Mother Mary.

Culmination of the Rosary Month in the Spirit of Joy and Hope

by John Erick Moje

Gathering in the spirit of joy and hope, the entire DIS learning community participated in the culmination of the Rosary Month in front of the statues of St Dominic de Guzman and Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary.

Hosted by Ryan Duh and Isabella Hsieh (Grade 12 students and student leaders), a creative introduction marked the entrance of St Dominic de Guzman, who was portrayed by Sean Lai, and Mother Mary, who was portrayed by Stella Wang (both Grade 12 students).

According to the history of St Dominic, he traveled in Southern France at the end of the 12th Century and the early 13th Century in order to try to prevent the heresy that was spreading rapidly and causing great trouble in Christian culture. His examples and wisdom moved the hearts of the

Catholic News

people around him so that they became heralds of Truth. Dominican tradition has it that in 1208 Dominic experienced a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the church at Prouille, during which she gave him a rosary. This gave rise to the title, "Our Lady of the Rosary". The spread of the Rosary is attributed to the preaching of the Dominicans.

The Lower School choir, under the musical direction of Ms Zoe Lin and Mr Ronaldo Francisco serenaded Mother Mary with the "Dominican Magnificat". All the Lower School students also joined in the singing. Rehan Schoeman, a Grade 8 Religious Studies student, led the opening prayer. Ryan Wang of Grade 8 officiated the Pledge of Loyalty.

Harmonious, live instrumental Marian music was rendered by Ryan Liao, Rachel Park, and Danny Kim. Grades 8,9, 10, 11, and 12 students then remarkably depicted the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Fr Tomasz closed the ceremony with a prayer and a blessing, after which the entire DIS learning community sang, "Hail Holy Queen", while facing the statues of St Dominic and Mother Mary.

Mr John Erick Moje, Head of the Religious Studies Department delivered a message of gratitude to acknowledge everyone who contributed to this truly successful Marian event.



2023 Teachers' Appreciation Conference

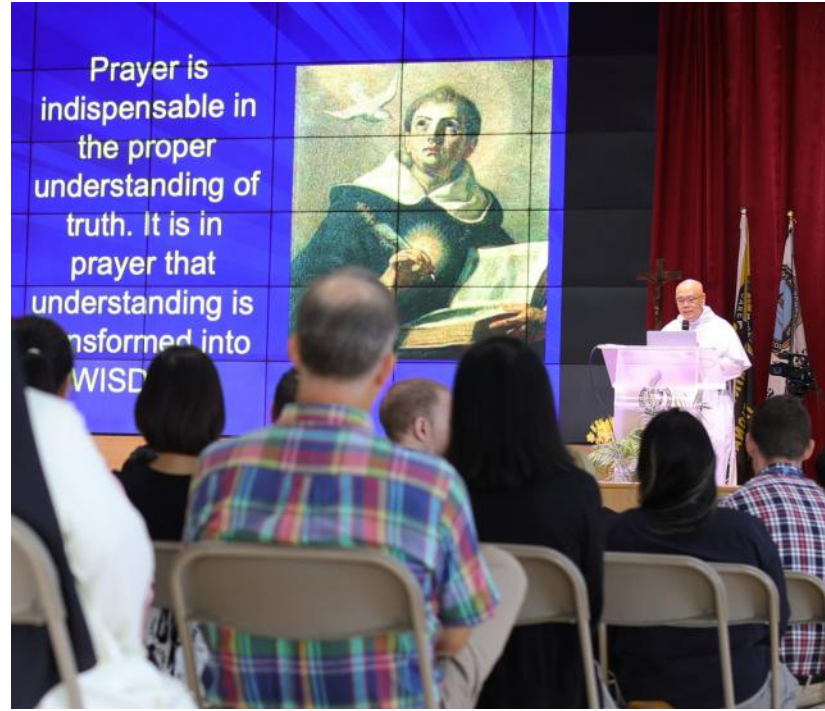
Dynamic Keynote Address

by Patrick Bugarin

Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, OP was the main Mass Celebrant and Keynote Speaker at this year's Teachers' Conference.

He is currently the Provincial Archivist of the Dominican Province of the Philippines. He was the Rector Magnificus of the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas in Manila from 1990 to 1998 and from 2008 until 2012. Among his many accomplishments is the creation of the Research and Endowment Foundation Incorporated, which raises money to support the university's ongoing research initiatives. This made it possible to build the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex, which now houses the Graduate School and the university's several research centers. He is the driving force behind the University's community development initiative, which is currently recognized as a service-learning model known as the UST SIMBAHAYAN. For his civic and professional accomplishments, he was honored with multiple accolades. He received the 2012 Outstanding CEO Award in Education, the Kyung Hee University (Korea) Medal of Highest Honor, the National Book Award in History, the Catholic Authors Award, and the Outstanding Manilan Award twice (1995 and 2011), among others. He is a sought after speaker and a prolific writer. A number of his articles and scholarly treatises have been translated into German and French, or anthologized in international publications.

Fr. De la Rosa's homily and keynote speech centered on the importance of order according to St. Thomas Aquinas. Ordering our lives reminds us to reflect on our purpose and how it contributes to harmony and grasping the Truth revealed among us. You can follow his Sunday reflections published by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, one of the leading and trusted news sources in the country. The DIS Community rejoices in this moment that he did not hesitate to share with us.

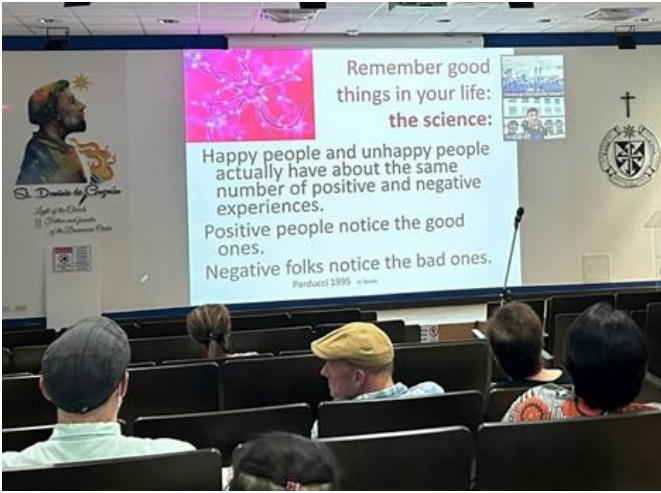


Fr. Rolando de la Rosa addressing the faculty and staff during his very dynamic keynote address.



The Conference was opened with a celebration of the Holy Mass. From left to right: Fr. Tomasz Zalewski OP and the commentators, Dr. Mercia de Souza and Mr. John Erick Moje

2023 Teachers' Appreciation Conference



Teaching and Serving with a Smile in One's Heart: The Dominican Way by John Erick Moje

This was the title of the presentation by one of the erudite speakers at this year's conference, Dr. Alvin Sicat, who is an advocate of Positive Psychology of the Science of Happiness. His family name, "Sicat" (In Filipino language) literally means "famous" or "shining". Fittingly, his contribution to education is truly illuminating. His shining smiles engage his audience and he inspires them to delve into effective and meaningful learning.

This dynamic speaker provided an opportunity for teachers and staff to navigate a significant, but often neglected area of teacher development, that is teacher well-being. The recent teachers' conference became an avenue for teachers to reflect on their own well-being. During the virtual conference, Dr. Sicat creatively engaged the teachers with research-based information about teacher's well-being and happiness and evoked their thoughts and curiosity to share authentic perceptions and life experiences pertaining to happiness. An almost two hours long presentation was filled with animated and introspective conversations. One teacher even commented, "I love the way he managed the conference even though it was virtual. He could even give us a workshop on effective virtual instruction in the future."

AI Ethics in Education

by Mercia de Souza

In an era where artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly integrated into our daily lives, understanding its ethical implications is paramount, especially in the realm of education.

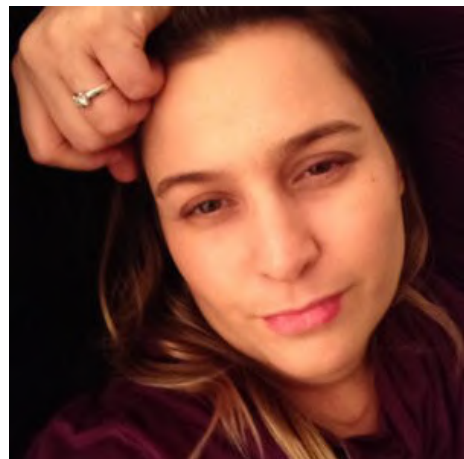
Dr M.C. de Wet, an ethicist with a background in both academia and applied research addressed the teachers about how AI is transforming educational settings, from personalized learning pathways to innovative classroom management techniques.

For educators, the landscape offers promising benefits but is not without its challenges: what if an AI system grades a student incorrectly? How much reliance on AI is excessive, risking a teacher's independent decision-making?

For students, while AI has the potential to customize learning, there are valid concerns about reduced human interaction and biases embedded within AI algorithms. Dr de Wet aimed to highlight both the opportunities and potential ethical issues, and some steps teachers can take to ensure that they harness AI for good while mitigating potential harms.

She also discussed some current and anticipated regulatory developments, and possible future developments in AI and machine learning that could impact education significantly in the years to come.

Dr de Wet pointed out that understanding AI's ethical implications was very important to all educators. The new development cannot be rejected, but has to be embraced and used as a powerful tool.



Dr M.C. de Wet who is currently involved in the Global Z inspection® initiative exploring the trustworthiness of Generative AI within higher education

September Conference

CPR Training

During the annual September professional Development for teachers, faculty and staff were able to either update their CPR training certification, or get certified.

Taiwan Sports Safety and First Aid Skill Training Association, with their very dynamic team leader, trained the faculty and staff. Everyone had the opportunity to learn the new skill, or renew their existing skills using test dummies and other equipment supplied for the training.

In the event of a sudden cardiac arrest or other medical emergencies, having trained staff on-site means that life-saving measures can be initiated promptly, potentially preventing brain damage or even death. Training all faculty and staff in CPR helps foster a culture of safety within the school. This demonstrates our commitment to the well-being of both students and staff.



Mr Ian Crisostomo saving the dummy's life.

Teachers' Conference
Dominican International School - Taipei

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH

OPENING MASS - 8:00
Keynote Address:
Fr. Roland de la Rosa, OP
ON THOMAS AQUINAS, AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION - 9:30

Dr. MC de Wet
AI ETHICS IN EDUCATION - 2:30

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

CPR / First Aid Refresher Course and Training - 9:00 - 11:00

Dr. Alvin Sicat
TEACHING AND SERVING WITH A SMILE
IN ONE'S HEART: THE DOMINICAN WAY - 2:00

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH

DAY TRIP FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH

Teacher Appreciation Day - 9:30

The beautiful program design was the work of Mr Erick Gonzales

CPR training for all faculty and staff members in the school can greatly enhance the safety and well-being of everyone in the school community. It's an important investment in the health and security of both students and staff.

The trainer also demonstrated the Heimlich maneuver, a first-aid technique used to dislodge an obstruction from a person's airway. It is performed when someone is choking and unable to breathe due to a blocked windpipe. The purpose of the Heimlich maneuver is to create a forceful upward pressure on the diaphragm, which helps expel the object causing the obstruction, allowing the person to resume normal breathing.

Annual EARCOS Leadership Conference

Dr Mercia de Souza, Ms Mafalda Wu, Dr Jenny Pan, and Mr Joe Schoeman represented DIS at the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) 53rd annual Leadership Conference in Bangkok from October 25-28, 2023. The theme of the conference was “Creating Safe Harbors”.

Delegates were thrilled to meet up with old friends and acquaintances, and to share their experiences coping with a changing world in which to educate the young. First timers made new friends and shared many concerns about teaching in today’s world.

There was an impressive array of keynote speakers: including **Dr. Derrick Gay** who is an internationally recognized Diversity and Inclusion expert, **Charles Vogl** an adviser, speaker, and the author the international bestseller *The Art of Community*, **Leslie W. Grant** Professor of Education who specializes in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership and **James H. Stronge**, Professor of Education. Some of the most impressive topics covered were “AI” and “The Future of Education and AI in the Classroom”, “Supporting Teacher Collaboration to serve all learners”, and “ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.”

Dr Jenny and Ms Mafalda spent a day in WASC training for possible school visits while Dr Mercia and Mr Joe, both veteran WASC Committee Members, attended workshops run by old friends of DIS. Mr Joe attended the workshop



Dr Derrick Gay delivering the keynote address at the 53rd EARCOS Leadership Conference.

presented by Professor Lee Ann Jung, who presented at the DIS September Conference before. Dr Mercia had a happy reunion with Dr Leslie Pendergast of the Danielson’s Group, who are the internationally recognized experts on teacher evaluation



Right: Ms Mafalda Wu in Bangkok at Arun Ratchawararam during a moment of leisure after the final workshops on Saturday afternoon, October 28th



Another DIS Grandchild!



We are delighted to welcome our first DIS Grandchild for 2023/24.

Congratulations Dr Ram Gopal, and Dr Pooja Sharma who gave birth to their little girl on 28 October. She is a very welcome addition to the family, and a long-awaited sister for Yashika.

English Teachers' Professional Development

by Kevin Henry

On Saturday, November 11th, Ms Robeth Collado, Ms Mafalda Wu, Ms Wenny Moges and Mr Kevin Henry took part in the Caves Professional Development Seminar.

They learned about unique teaching techniques, new reading curriculum and methods to engage readers with reading, as well as writing methods to ensure class-wide participation and involvement. The first guest speaker, Vice President of Savvas Learning Company- Karen Miller, spoke about scaffolding methods that ensure early childhood aged students succeed in directing and retaining information. Delegates participated in a reading exercise that demonstrated how, as young learners, it can be confusing to understand all the words. However, by teaching with strategies such as Scarborough's Reading Rope, fluent and efficient readers can be created. The second guest speaker, Associate Professor at Feng Chia University Difeng Chueh, gave examples and suggestions on how to have higher grades be more involved in their writing. This interest is stemmed from passion and giving the students many opportunities to discover their interests in subjects and then be given time to expand upon their passions. After a lunch break and some mingling with other teachers from other schools, the delegates listened to a third guest speaker, an education consultant for Savvas Learning Company Erin Koning, who spoke about Close Listening. Close Reading and Close Listening are closely linked, though close listening focuses on applying the comprehension and how the reading relates not just to the text but to ourselves and the wider world while being supported with critical thinking. The final guest speaker, the senior ELT consultant for Caves Education - Freeman Kao, spoke about the importance of establishing a firm foundation to ensure our students will be lifelong learners who love to read. Her techniques focused on giving enough background information on the selected texts and being able to approach the readings with multifaceted interests so that interest is inserted into the students and engagement is built for them. After Ms Mafalda and Ms Moges won big with the prize draws, the delegates from DIS left the seminar more informed about techniques to be used in engaging not just the individual but the whole classroom in reading and writing.



From left to right: Ms Wenny Moges, Ms Robeth Collado, Ms Mafalda Wu, and Mr Kevin Henry

Sports News

by Gustl Pido, Athletic Director

Swimming



Coach: Coach Oscar
 Team Manager: Ms. Vivian
 Team Captains: Josh Tsen and Morrison Tseng
 The DIS swimming team brought home a large number of medals (gold, silver, and bronze) this school year. Overall, they got 3rd runner-up out of 12 international schools in Taiwan. Congratulations to all swimmers, coaches, and VIP parents for supporting our swimming team.



Tennis

Coach: Coach Charles
 Team Manager: Ms. Christine
 Our 2 players DanZuo and Sylvia made it to the quarterfinals. Everyone played good game and represented DIS well.



Sports News

JV Girls Volleyball

Coach: Coach Emily
 Assistant Coach: Coach Jayno.
 Congratulations to our JV Girls Volleyball team for making the top 3 in the North.



Varsity Girls Volleyball



Coach: Coach Joseph
 Assistant Coach: Coach Emily
 Team Manager: Coach Jayno
 Student Team Manager: Michelle, Kasey



Accolades for the JV Boys Soccer Team



Coach: Coach Isaac; Assistant Coach: Coach Nguyen. Here is Coach Isaac with the team.

This year the JV Boys Soccer Team made history by winning games against archrivals TES and other competitive International schools. In addition, for the first time the JV team won a trophy in the TISSA tournament by bagging a bronze medal. - Isaac Matere

For the first time, the school created two teams in the high school football team, both teams qualified in the TISSA qualifying game, and they played at the TISSA Championship round.

Varsity Boys Soccer Team

Coach: Coach Nguyen
Assistant Coach: Coach Isaac
Student Team Manager: Emily Lai

