



“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.” - Confucius



The entire DIS Faculty, after the Faculty Recognition Ceremony. All the DIS teachers were recognized for giving outstanding service to the students and the school. Seated in the front row, between Sr. Leticia and Sr. Socorro, is Fr. Dexter Austria, O.P, facilitator for the Teachers' Recollection. Uncle Jimmy Chu, who retired after 19 years of service, is seated next to Sr. Zenaida. Others in the front row are Ms. Janice Doyle who received the D'TORCH Award, Dr. Mercia de Souza, recipient of the Star Service Award and Mr. Elliott Wakeling, Teacher of the Year.

TEACHERS' DAY AND RETREAT 2017

The Teachers' Day celebrations and Teachers' Annual Retreat kicked off early on Wednesday morning with a program organized by the Student Council. The celebrations ended on Friday, September 29 with a final luncheon at the end of the teachers' retreat. The teachers had time to grow spiritually, got to know one another a bit better, and enjoy time together as a faculty, which is not often possible during the very busy school year when the students are the ones who should get the attention. It also gave teachers and staff time together as a whole DIS family. While the teachers were grateful for their special time together in the beautiful environment of the Tamsui Fisherman's Wharf, the students were very happy to have two days' study leave before writing their quarter exams and starting the new quarter after the Moon Festival holiday.

Faculty and Staff Retreat By Mr. John Erick S. Moje

“... Give me a drink!” A passage from the Gospel of John that explains the longing of our hearts for the water that will not make us thirsty again, became the theme for the retreat. The Samaritan woman’s encounter with Jesus was the beginning point of the DIS two days of reflection and dialogue with God. “This is the Dominican Spiritual journey that leads us to heed the call of God, to be true witnesses more than just preachers or teachers.”- Fr. Dexter Austria, O.P.

DIS provides spiritual formation that is not only authentically international, but also God-centered. This year’s retreat was part of the preparation for the school’s jubilee with the theme: “Dominicans: Sparkling Diamond.... in mind, heart and spirit! The school is celebrating its 60th anniversary.

This meaningful Spiritual encounter for two days helped all the teachers and staff members to:

- rekindle the joy of being true Dominican Educators in the light of the Dominican Spirit!
- share the joy of responsible and selfless service to our school as one loving and joyful community;
- celebrate the gift of Dominican Education and Formation through a sincere thanksgiving with God and for God in the celebration of the Holy Mass.

The celebration of the Confucius Day in Taiwan marked also the commencement of DIS faculty and staff’s Spiritual Encounter that was held on the 28th and 29th of September. Dominican participants were able to embark into a meaningful introspection, ‘a journey within’ with the facilitation of Rev. Fr. Dexter Austria from the Order of Preachers. The Fullon Hotel, Tamsui Fishermen’s Wharf welcomes all the participants with its serene body of water -‘water’ in a Christian way holds a very significant meaning or symbolism.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass opened the entire Retreat. Rev. Fr. Dexter Austria, O.P. highlighted the importance of the martyrs of the Church and challenged all the participants to be martyrs themselves, to be witnesses of the Truth, of Jesus Christ! After taking the spiritual meal, everyone was invited for a sumptuous snack.

The first Conference started with the story of the discourse between Jesus and the Samaritan woman that is taken from the Gospel of John 4: 5 to 42, the longest dialogue in the Gospel with the a single person. The following reflective points were drawn from this beautiful encounter:

1. Jesus wanted to include the excluded. The convoluted route of animosity and exclusivity should be broken down. This is a challenge to transcend the boundaries despite culture, language and other barriers.

2. Everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven by God. When Jesus told to the Samaritan woman, “give me a drink! It shows how God initiates the call for renewal.

3. A Catholic Educational Institution must be a place of encountering the Living God as the family is a school of mercy that develops the culture of sharing and loving against the culture of individualism and narcissism.

During the celebration of the Mass, the altar table bears a very significant symbol of sharing God’s blessing through His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. After the first conference, everyone was encouraged to dine with people whom they have not engaged with in dialogue recently. Indeed, the dining table, like the altar, becomes a moment of sharing, a moment of blessing.

After the first Conference, there was group discussion that gave everyone an opportunity to share reflections. Mr. Charles and Ms. Mafalda, gave their feedback about the first Conference to everyone.

In the final session for the day, all the participants were ushered into a deeper reflection about the Samaritan woman’s



Group discussion. From left to right, Mr Edwin Portillo, Mr James Henselman, Mr Tim Sampson, Ms Mary Grace Crisostomo, and Ms Susan Wu

desire to quench her thirst for Truth. This conference gave teachers and staff the following points to ponder:

1. Only God can make people happy.
2. More than teachers and preachers, we need witnesses. The springs of hope come from the person of Christ.
3. It is in our loneliness that we magnify the Lord. Lonely but chosen.
4. When we encounter God we are able to have authentic dialogue.

The retreat was closed with the celebration of the Holy Mass at St. Columban Church in Beitu.

Teacher Awards



From left to right: Mr Elliott Wakeling, Teacher of the Year; Ms Janice Doyle with the D'TORCH Award, and Dr. Mercia de Souza with the Star Service Award

Three teachers were given special awards this year during the Teachers' Day Celebrations.

Mr Elliott Wakeling was awarded **Teacher of the Year** in recognition of his tremendous contribution and dedication in promoting active learning; successfully encouraging students in thinking imaginatively, critically, and independently. He fosters a love of learning that gives students a deeper appreciation of the interconnectivity between concepts. Mr. Wakeling's pedagogical techniques are appropriate and applicable to a variety of learning styles. He interacts enthusiastically with students and addresses individual student needs masterfully. He demonstrates a positive attitude and willingness to be challenged as a leader in carrying out the tasks as Chair/Adviser of the newly organized Middle School D'TORCH chapter of the National Junior Honor Society.

Ms Janice Doyle was awarded the **D'TORCH Award** for her dedicated service in organizing and training DIS students who perform outstandingly in both local and international World Scholar's Cup competitions every year. Throughout the years, Ms. Janice has remained truthful and reflective as Teacher and Coach. She actively inspires, supports, and lends a helping hand to student participants. Her teams develop outstanding team spirit. Ms. Janice also trains and instructs students courageously to achieve their team goals while participating in all tournaments. Every year Ms Janice gives up weeks of her summer vacation to accompany students to international tournaments.

Dr. Mercia de Souza received the **Star Service Award** for her immense dedication as Chair of the Steering Committee for WASC Accreditation. As the school's Professional Development Coordinator, she developed the Professional Learning Communities for teachers to focus on critical areas of student learning. In addition, she produced publications for marketing and promotion purposes, such as the school's first prospectus.

In the past year, Dr. Mercia has been a DIS TEDx presenter, an East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) Leadership Conference keynote speaker, and will be an Asia-Pacific International School Conference (AISC) keynote speaker this December.

Good-bye, Uncle Jimmy



The school's beloved Mr Jimmy Chu retired on September 29, after nineteen years of service at DIS. Known to all of us as Uncle Jimmy, he was loved by everyone at DIS and he is missed. The school is not the same without our school Receptionist saying good morning to us as we arrive in the mornings. His patience and kindness will be remembered for many years to come. Uncle Jimmy knew everyone and there was never a day that he was not out at the front come rain or shine. Uncle Jimmy addressed the entire school on his last day at DIS. Everyone was very emotional when the VIPs gave him a gift thanking him for his nineteen years of service to the school and wishing him well with his retirement. The whole school stood up to applaud him and thank him. In the afternoon, Uncle Jimmy was given a special award by Sr. Zenaida, O.P. the school's Principal to thank him for his dedicated service

Teachers' Day 2017

The DIS Faculty want to thank our VIPs for the wonderful Teachers' Day gifts. We really felt appreciated and special.



From left to right: VIP Members Ms Carryll Hua, Ms Yvonne Kuo, Sr Zenaida Ancheta, O.P (Principal), Ms Ellen Chu and Ms Yvonne Hsu (Chairperson of the VIP). Here they are pictured with the very generous gift bags they prepared.

The Student Council treated the DIS faculty to a special Teachers' Day performance. One can clearly see the enjoyment on the teachers' faces as they are watching. In the front is Sr. Ma. Zenaida Ancheta, O.P. the Principal, with Vice-Principal Sr. Socorro Teofilo, O.P. Before going back to class the Student Council gave the teachers tea and coffee for that special wake-up boost at the beginning of the day.

