October 2012

Dear Sisters,

This time AQUA has chosen as the main THEME: CHARACTER BUILDING/FORMATION as one important aspect of Ursuline Education. Some events in society have drawn our deep concern: events happening in civil government, public schools, families and other institutions have forced other institutions especially educational institutions to pay attention to the importance of character building of the students even university students. Character building/formation is a process that covers the entire personality of the person.

Sr. Francesco Marianti OSU is being involved for years in the field of education. At present she is the Coordinator of St. Ursula School in Bumi Serpong Damai – Tangerang. She has shared her experiences of what has been done in this process of character building for her collaborators and students. To share such experiences in various Ursuline schools can enrich each other in continuing to revive the heritage of Ursuline education.

An Ursuline Educator in the Senior High School “Regina Pacis” in Solo-Central Java, shared her experience during the exchange program for teachers within Ursuline schools in Bangkok- Thailand. In this rapid development of technology and its impact in the education world, we cannot neglect the attitude and action to go beyond our border.

The presence of the Ursuline Sisters in Cambodia which is now already two years of existence is a realization of the spirit of: to go beyond our border. Sr. Indira Krisanti Lengkong.osu, member of the community in Cambodia has shared about her experience as a new missionary. Their sharing surely becomes good news for all of us. We are united in the spirit and at the same time bring God’s Salvation.

United in the spirit of insieme

Sr. Edith Watu OSU
Provincial of the Indonesian Province.
Character Building
at Santa Ursula BSD

Thoughts of an Educator

Sr. Francesco Marianti, OSU
Coordinator of Santa Ursula BSD

Prologue

Character building will always be a fascinating topic to discuss. Not only when we are shocked and concerned with events in society which roots lie in the character of the human beings involved in those events, such as when a corruption case is exposed at an institution which is supposedly working for the public good, but also when we are engaged in “stop and think” situations in our ongoing effort for sustained self-improvement. This topic becomes even more interesting when discussed within the framework of the educational world, which is almost always considered as the party most responsible in building a person’s character.

Many questions may be asked by Santa Ursula BSD, as an institution which is heavily involved in educational activities, regarding character building. But all those questions are based on one fundamental question, namely what characteristics may be expected from an alumnus of Santa Ursula BSD? This is a common occurrence when we are used to a “begin with the end” method of thinking. In general, this thinking-method may clarify the things that must be done in order to achieve a certain goal. In this article, at least, we can only answer all other questions after that fundamental question has been clearly answered.

As an educator who has been active in this field for quite a long time, this article is aimed at contributing certain thoughts concerning the topic of character-building. That contribution will specifically be in the form of a basic model that may be used to review the ‘building of character’, something that has always been a part of the environment of Santa Ursula BSD.

This article, however, will not be overly concerned with Santa Ursula BSD’s definition concerning the character that it expects from its alumni, but rather with how to build a character that fits with Santa Ursula BSD’s definition of that word.

“Character” may be loosely defined as the basic attributes of a human being. These attributes are so fundamental so that they may become the distinguishing characteristic, or character, of an individual. As an attribute, [a person’s] character may be formed, and it is primarily formed by their environment and their own personal maturing process. Considering that most of a person’s time until that point will be spent in a school environment, then, whether we like it or not,
it is a fact that the formation of a person’s character is heavily influenced by the character of that person’s school.

A school’s character is also formed as a result of the continuous vision of the school’s founder concerning that school’s establishment. A vision is an idea about what things are to be achieved by establishing the school. For a school such as Santa Ursula BSD, its universal vision is connected to the purpose of spreading positive life-values that are generally considered important and valuable for people’s lives. In order to achieve that vision, the school also needs a mission as the basis for what the school will, or must, do. The writer will further elaborate and focus on how the vision and mission of Santa Ursula BSD permeates every activity conducted by the Santa Ursula BSD School.

The process of education essentially teaches two sets of knowledge or skill, namely hard skill (science) and soft skill. Hard skill is the knowledge or skill relating to academic subjects which are objective in nature, such as mathematics, linguistic knowledge, natural sciences, and also social sciences. Soft skill, on the other hand, is a knowledge or skill in non-academic fields or in fields which are subjective in nature, such as the arts, ethics, and education in values.

This approach indeed gives rise to the question of, which realm does Religious education fit into? Does it constitute a hard skill or a soft skill? In my opinion, as an educational subject Religion can be a hard skill because it gives certain knowledge which is considered to be objective from that Religion’s point of view. And yet, the teaching of Religion may also be a soft skill as it contains within it the understanding of subjective life-values which are important as the foundation of a person’s life. However, there will be no further discussion of Religious education in this writing because the teaching of Religion [to a child] is essentially the responsibility of the parents in a family.

It is expected that the Education of Values as a soft skill shall be a part of the students’ character-building process. We need to be aware that building character through the education of values contains three aspects, namely the knowledge, affective, and cognitive aspects. The building of character can only be seen, and considered successful, if a student not only comes to understand the Education of Values as a form of knowledge, but also make it a part of their life, and then consciously lead their life based on those Values.

**Character Building at Santa Ursula BSD**

As an institute of education, Santa Ursula BSD is aware of the importance of building a student’s character – whether through the learning Process in class, or through skills-training. The purpose [of character-building] is so that students will not only obtain knowledge, but also acquire skills that will enable them to optimize their growth as human beings. To achieve that purpose, Santa Ursula BSD conducts several activities, including:

**Education of Values**

Santa Ursula BSD first endeavored to teach Education in Values ten years ago. Through a lengthy learning process, the educators collectively search for a form of Values-Education that may be synergized in every subject taught, whether for subjects which are considered hard skill or those considered soft skill. Within this learning-process, both students and educators actively study the values that are universally deemed important. The success of a student’s character-building is not
wholly dependent on the education given in school, because the student also undergoes a similar process both in their environment or family. As an educational institute, Santa Ursula BSD is merely a vehicle for a student to learn and undergo the process of becoming a person of character.

- **The Implementation of Education in Values at the TK (Kindergarten) and SD (Elementary School) Levels at Santa Ursula BSD**

  The implementation of an Education in Values at the Kindergarten and Elementary School levels is based on the principles of togetherness and community. For example, at the TK/SD level, a policy has been made that during one period of time (3 months minimum) teachers should consistently inculcate one important value within students. This habituation process is hoped to help form the character of students at the TK/SD level.

  In its implementation, starting from the time the students come to school, during class hours and at the time they go home, the students collectively familiarize themselves with a certain Value and carry it out. For example, the value of Responsibility is socialized for 3 months. This means that the students are invited to consciously carry out responsible behaviors every day they are in school, starting from how to prepare their study books so that none of it is left at home, to how to responsibly dispose of trash-examples of how the value of Responsibility may be learned within school activities. Through the process of learning Values at school, the students are hoped to be able to make those values a part of their new life-habits at school and at home.

- **The Implementation of Education in Values at the SMP (Junior High School) and SMA (Senior High School) Levels at Santa Ursula BSD**

  For The SMP and SMA educational levels, the Education in Values may be given in two ways. First, through a learning session presented as a form of Training, where the students are equipped with knowledge of a certain Value. Afterwards, the students are invited to further research that Value through a game. The next process is reflecting on that game to find the important things contained within the Value learned in that game.

  Through both the knowledge and the learning process [game], it is hoped that the students will be able to utilize that value in their studies, both in school and at home.

  In order to observe the learning-results, the Value learned will then be re-evaluated after a pre-determined amount of time has passed.

  The second way is by synergizing the value in class-subjects. The educator injects certain subjects with Values that are compatible with those subjects. The educator needs to carefully observe the process of how the students learn the Value(s). Apart from the observation, the educator and their students need to reflect on how far a certain value has been carried out by student, and whether or not it has become a new habit with them. The process of familiarizing themselves with a Value becomes an important part of students’ character-building. Through this
process, it is hoped that by the time they graduate, the students will already have acquired a good character which will prove beneficial for themselves, their families and their country.

Training in Skills

There are several types of skill that are continuously cultivated among the students from class X to class XII at SMA Santa Ursula BSD, including:

- **Social Awareness**
  Class X SMA students are provided with a Social Awareness training so as to improve their skills in analyzing the social problems that exist around them. Furthermore, this training enables students to be more caring and sensitive to those social problems. Several values may be learned through Social Awareness Training, such as Solidarity and Responsibility, and it is hoped that the students may be able to develop those values in their lives and make them a part of their individual character-building processes. Through this training, it is hoped that in the future the students will be able to conduct themselves based on what they believe to be good values.

- **Problem Solving Skills**
  This training is geared more towards class XI SMA students. As teenagers who are gradually approaching adulthood, SMA students are often faced with many problems. These problems may come in the form of academic problems, relationship/social problems, and even family problems. Teenagers frequently experience difficulties while faced with their problems, and these difficulties often make them unable to carry out their duties or routine tasks in an optimum manner. Through training in Problem Solving, it is hoped that the students may learn how to solve problems by utilizing their reasoning faculties. Furthermore, the students are also trained to make accurate and effective decisions, according to the situations that they may face.

- **Communication Skills**
  This training is also given to class XI SMA students. The fundamental thought that underlies this training is that most of the problems that students face have something to do with communication problems. Through this training, students learn how to develop effective communication skills in their social relations, whether at school, at home, or in other environments. By possessing good communication skills, it is hoped that the students will be better able to express their opinions and be more open to the feedbacks and criticisms that are beneficial for the development of their character.

- **Training to Find One’s Identity**
  During a teenager’s development as a person, they generally go through a process in which they search to find their true identity. This process must be undergone so as to enable a teenager to be fully aware of their existence and feel comfortable with themselves. There are many situations that may confuse a teenager while learning to become a more mature person. Demands from their environment and family will also influence a student’s identity-finding process. It is hoped that this training, which is especially aimed for class XII SMA students, will help students to find their true identities and prepare them to develop into mature human beings. Ultimately, the students may become mature human beings who are able to contribute positively to their respective environments.

- **Cadre Formation Training**
  To develop the character of a leader is not an easy task. Becoming a leader, according to the Santa Ursula BSD version, means becoming a human being who is able to responsibly carry out their roles and duties in daily life. However, the cadre formation training does not aim to achieve lofty goals, since its purpose is not to create leaders in the political or social fields. This training is given for cases XI and XII SMA students, specifically for those who are interested in it and have passed the selection process. In cadre formation training at Santa Ursula BSD, not only do the students gain knowledge about leadership, they are also invited to train their affective sides so
as to enable them to become leaders who are socially caring and sensitive. Indeed, becoming a leader does not always mean holding an important post within an institutional structure, whether at school or in society – more often it means having the will to participate in and the initiative to give one’s self and time for the growth of other people and the environment around them. Through this training, it is hoped that the students will gain personal maturity in their emotional and social aspects, which will enable them to be effective at whatever roles they may find themselves playing in the future.

Forming Class Committees

Through the formation of these committees, the students are expected to experience and learn for themselves several life-values which will be important and beneficial for the development of their character.

In every class, 4 committees are made, namely:

1. **Welfare Committee**, which aims at motivating every member of the class to undergo the learning process in an optimal manner, as well as creating an environment conducive for learning in class. Here the students are invited to learn to care for others, and to be responsible for the situations happening in their own classroom. In order to achieve this objective, the students who are members of the welfare committee have the duty to:
   - Be responsible for class members who are ill,
   - Be responsible for all matters relating to lessons.

2. **Study Committee**, which aims at optimizing the learning ability of every class member so that all of them may be promoted to a higher class; as well as being responsible for the teaching-learning process. Through the Study Committee, students may learn the values of Responsibility and Cooperation. The Committee’s duties are:
   - Working with the homeroom teacher to create study-group timetables, and to give reports on the academic achievement of every class-member,
   - To tutor friends who are not doing well in certain subjects,
   - To make evaluations on teachers’ training methods.

3. **Disciplinary Committee**, which aims at assisting the school in implementing the school rules. A few values that may be learned through this Disciplinary are discipline, responsibility, and the duties of this committee are:
   - To assist in the implementation of the school’s regulations,
   - To coordinate students in conducting Assembly Meetings.

4. **Cleanliness Committee**, which aims at helping the school to create a clean and beautiful environment. Several values that may be learned [in this Committee] are Love of One’s Environment, Responsibility, and Cooperation. The Committee’s duties include:
   - Coordinating waste-selection,
   - Coordinating students in maintaining cleanliness in classrooms.

Teenager Support Activities

The Support Program is given by Santa Ursula BSD also involves its alumni. Why? Through the alumni’s support, we hope that the current students may catch some of the spirit and good character that the alumni have previously acquired from their alma mater, thus helping them to become successful personalities in the future.

One of the support activities is the teenager-support activity. This activity is conducted in a routine and continuous manner for one semester in each class. At the end of the semester, the whole process is concluded with a big seminar for all students per class level, with the hope that the students will be able to understand the whole process that they have undergone in that one
semester, as well as preparing the students to enter into the next class level. The teenager-support activity starts from the time they are in class VII SMP up until the time they are in class XII SMA.

There are several different themes for this support activity, in accordance with the specific needs of the children in each age group. But an underlying thread runs through all these themes, namely to help students to know themselves better and be at peace with themselves. Furthermore, the program develops the skills that the students need to interact in a positive manner with peers, members of the opposite sex, and parents. Finally, it helps the students to become a part of the world and of their society.

The general themes for each class level are as follows:

- Class VII Myself and I
- Class VIII My Peers and I
- Class X Sexuality and I
- Class XI My Parents and Family, and I
- Class XII I as a Part of the World and of Society

At the Conclusion of the program, the general theme is about Resilience, developing one’s self to become a teenager with a strong personality.

Therefore, it is hoped that through this intensive support program a student will not only grow as someone who is intelligent, resilient, and has a strong personality, but also as a person who truly cares for their family, environment, and nation.

**An Example of Success in Character-Building through developing good trash-disposing behavior at Santa Ursula BSD**

An example of successful character process at Santa Ursula BSD is the formation of a Responsible character in regard to the disposal of trash. The beginning stage of this process is not easy: students are taught to consciously dispose of trash according to the type of trash that they have, but they view this behavior as something that is difficult, boring, and is only a formality. Why do they have this view? Because in our own society, we see many examples of irresponsible behavior regarding trash disposal. Therefore, giving appropriate examples may be the easiest learning method for the students. The role of every individual in a community is also very important in the process of making the value of Responsibility a habit. Through a consistent habituation process, it is hoped that the students will be able to develop Responsible attitudes and values within themselves. In the end, a responsible attitude concerning trash-disposal becomes an uncontested culture.

What, specifically, does Santa Ursula BSD do to help their students in this character-learning process? The students are introduced to the different types of trash, namely dry trash, wet trash, recyclable trash, and non-recyclable ones. Apart from that, the students are also taught to reduce the amount of trash through simple measures, such as bringing their own food and drink. All members of the school, whether they are students, educators, or general staff, will thus feel responsible and involved in the process of maintaining the school’s cleanliness. The result? Santa Maria BSD becomes clean and trash-free.
At present, some students may assume that the duties of maintaining cleanliness, picking up and sorting out trash are unpleasant tasks. They may also feel forced to do these things because the school has made those behaviors mandatory. But I am confident that when these students leave Santa Ursula BSD one day, those values will still be embedded in their minds. Cleanliness, Responsibility, Love of Environments – these things will be an integral part of their being. That is the time when we may say that a good character has grown and develop within the student’s personality.

Conclusion
The writer herself is of the opinion that a complete education is an education which does not only emphasize the cognitive aspects, which more often aims to produce students with high achievement, and so build the school’s reputation as the best among other schools. A complete education should also provide an education in values, values that are universally deemed as important to be possessed by a person living in society. As educators, our duty is to develop those values so that they may grow and become part of the students’ character-building process. This means that the success of an educational institute may be measured by how well their alumni, who now play various roles in society, live by those values. Indeed, it is an educator’s pride and joy to know that they have helped a student to acquire new character and become a ‘successful person’ in their life: when that happens, we – as educator – may smile happily.

“Character is the sum total of thousands of daily attempts to develop what is best in one’s self”
It was a very great experience that we could teach in Mater Dei School, Bangkok, Thailand. We are Veronica Puji Astuti and Rini Pramesti, teachers from Regina Pacis Senior High School Surakarta Indonesia, who went to Bangkok. We stayed in Mater Dei School for seven weeks, from June 12, 2012 until July 30, 2012.

There are three levels of school in curriculum of Thailand, kindergarten, Phratom 1-6 (elementary school), and Mathayom 1-6 (junior and senior high school). As guest teachers, we had to give some lessons. We focused on culture and language of Indonesia. We taught about social studies, batik class, dancing class, and Indonesian language. In social studies class, we discussed all about Indonesia, like the government, traditional custom, commodities, traditional food, and also some tourism places in Indonesia. We gave this subject for students in Mathayom grade 1 until 4. We also gave social studies subject for student in Prathom 1-6, but the material was more simple. The students liked this lesson very much, because it could give more information about Indonesia as the one of ASEAN country. Some students said that they want to go to Indonesia someday.

Dancing class was the most attractive class, because we had to give more energy in this class. We taught Javanese dance, Merak dance, for students in Mathayom 1, 3, and 6. The students liked dancing class very much, because it was a kind of new dance for them, although they felt difficult to follow the move. Actually, merak dance is a basic dance in Java, and we tried to teach the students in Mater Dei School. The students enjoyed batik class too. The students in Mathayom 4 and 6 really liked to join this class. They liked to draw pattern in cloth material using way, and gave colour to their painting, and it becomes their own batik pattern. We also had extra class for batik, and it was belong to the teacher who interested to study about the batik process. We had two sessions for student and teacher. Indonesia language class was also extra class for teacher. There were fifteen teachers who joined in this class. We taught them about greeting, introducing themselves, and short conversation in bahasa Indonesia. We could see the teacher in Indonesia language class really wanted to study about Indonesian language.

When we taught about Indonesia culture and language, it made us become proud of Indonesian. And both of us realize that Indonesia is a very big and beautiful country. We think that it is not enough talking about Indonesia only in seven weeks period. There is one thing that we can learn from Mater Dei School.

As a learning community, they really try to make English as a second language at their school. Both students and teachers, they are enthusiastic to learn English. It was a very great experience in our life that we never forget it. It is as beginning to make Ursuline ASEAN community.
My Experience in Cambodia

I arrived in Cambodia with Sr. Darna on August 21, 2012. We arrived in the city named Siem Reap, the city of tourism where the famous temple Angkor Wat is located. Sr Paulina Gani fetched us at the airport. Then we continued our trip to Ursuline Community in Battambang. It takes about two hours by car from Siem Reap to Battambang.

We were very happy when we arrived in Battambang. The people were nice. They had beautiful art and culture. Last year Sr. Darna stayed in Battambang for four months so she has already known some places and can have short conversation with people. For me this is my first time to come to Cambodia. I learned a lot of new things here. People, language, culture, places and many other things. It is very interesting and also challenging. In Cambodia there are many volunteers, priests and sisters from many foreign countries. I really feel the international atmosphere here.

Many people are willing to help the Cambodian developing their country. Many young Cambodian people are qualified and want to improve themselves in order to develop their country. On August 27, just after one week staying in Battambang - Cambodia, Sr Darna and I went to Thailand for the immersion program. The aim of this program is to give us the chance to know the Ursuline Communities in Thailand because for this time Ursuline Community in Battambang - Cambodia consists of sisters from Thailand and Indonesia. Next month Sr Jantana will also come to Indonesia for immersion program. Sr Darna and I stayed in Thailand for two weeks. We were very pleased to experience the community life of Ursuline Sisters in Thailand. We were very happy for the warm hospitality from the sisters in Thailand. A glance we also learned about the people and culture.
On September 10, we went back to Battambang, Cambodia. On the next day we went to a Seneng, a village which is about 30 km from Battambang. We had a workshop for the children about the basic knowledge for healthy life. There were 40 children came to the workshop. We taught them how to brush their teeth and wash their hands properly. We worked together with teachers there. The teachers helped us in explaining to the children. Therefore, the teachers were also trained to teach the students about healthy life. Beside explanation, to make the workshop more alive we gave quizzes about healthy life and taught song about brushing teeth. Then, the children had lunch. After lunch, we gave the chance to the children to practice brushing their teeth and washing their hands properly. We provided toothbrush, toothpaste and soap for them. Before going home, each child got a cup of milk.

On the following day we held the same workshop in other village named Tapung, about 40 km from Battambang. There were 100 children attended the workshop. We also involved the teachers in giving the workshop. Like in Seneng, after the explanation, we gave quizzes and taught songs to the children. Then let them practice brushing their teeth and washing their hands properly.

In order to communicate with the Cambodian people, Sr. Darna and I are having Khmer language course twice a day from Monday to Friday. In the morning we study the alphabets and writings. In the evening we study conversation. Outside the class we try to practice speaking.

I also came to the kindergarten near the church to teach English to the teachers. There are three teachers in that kindergarten. It was very interesting for me because I also got the chance to study Khmer vocabulary from them.

On September 29, 2012 we celebrated two years anniversary of Ursuline Community in Battambang. We had a thanks giving Mass celebrated by Father Jub, SJ, Sr. Chintana Chatrasubhang, Provincial Ursuline of Thailand, came to Battambang to attend the mass. She came with Sr. Puangpaka Prapassan and Sr. Supunsa Tamart. It was also a farewell party for Sr. Paulina Gani that would go back to Indonesia. She had been in Cambodia for two years. In the sermon Father Job said that as a missionary we were called to get involved in helping people in many aspects of life. Father Job also thanked Sr. Paulina for her presence and services in Cambodia especially her willingness to be with the poor people in the village, helped them and encouraged them. After the Mass we had lunch together in our community.

On October 1, 2012, Sr Paulina Gani went back to Indonesia. Sr Darna and I accompanied her to go to the airport in Siem Reap. Now we are three in the community: Sr Jantana Wongsankakorn, Sr. Jusi Darna Lingga and me. For me and Sr. Darna, now we are focusing in studying Khmer language. It is very important to do our mission. Sr. Jantana can speak Khmer well. Sometimes she becomes translator for the doctors from Spain who come to visit people in the village. She has also involved in parish activities especially in education program. The Ursuline Sisters have been asked to make education program to people in villages about healthy life for next year. So we are going to improve the program that we did in Seneng and Tapung.

That’s all for now the story from Cambodia. We thank all the Ursuline Sisters for the prayer and support for our mission in Cambodia. May day by day we improve our apostolate according to God’s will.

United in Angela
Sr. Indira Krisanti Lengkong, OSU
Below are some photos when we held healthy life workshop:

Sr. Jantana and one of the teachers were explaining about brushing teeth properly.

Sr. Ira and Sr. Darna were teaching song about brushing teeth to the children.

Sr. Paulina was teaching song to the children.
Expanding Horizon in Woosong School

The cold breeze of autumn wind welcomed 66 teachers in Daejeon, South Korea, on Tuesday 23 October 2012. Teachers of Santa Ursula Schools Jakarta were very enthusiastic in joining the visit to SolBridge International School of Business, Woosong University, Woosong Kindergarten and High Schools, which are actually under the same foundation.

We were warmly welcomed by Dr. John. E. Endicott, President of Woosong University, Dr. Young Wook Jun, Dean of SolBridge International School of Business, and Mr. Ony Jamhari, Regional Manager of Global Center Woosong University. Some students also welcomed us with the Angklung Performance and Salsa Dance. Delicious Korean lunch was served by culinary students of Woosong University in SolDoree canteen for Santa Ursula teachers.

This visit really motivates us, teachers, by seeing the spirit and effort given by teachers there to their students, and also by the high-spirited students who sometimes have to study at school until evening. We were very lucky to have this opportunity, so that we could more insight in giving the best for our students.

Written by: Khrisna Putuningsih
(English Teacher of Santa Ursula Junior high School Jakarta, Indonesia).

“But let her be joyful and always full of charity, and faith, and hop in God”
(Saint Angela Merici writings; Chap. IX:11)