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Core Values of a Benedictine Education

Sr. M. Christine Lauzon Pinto, O.S.B.

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CORE VALUES OF A BENEDICTINE EDUCATION

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Education

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Education

By
Sr. M. Christine Pinto, O.S.B.

August 2017
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Approved November 30, 2016
ABSTRACT

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August 2017

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Connie M. Moss, EdD

The purpose of this study is to examine a High School Student Handbook of an all-girls Benedictine school to determine its degree of alignment with the Rule of St. Benedict (RB). Christ is the foundation of the existence of a Catholic and Benedictine education. Saint Benedict wrote a rule about a way of seeking God and following Christ in the “school for the Lord’s service.” Using the RB as a guide, Benedictine education can be understood as the formation of the whole person towards a transformation into the image of Christ. The first phase of the study involved the gathering of information on how the RB shaped the formulation of the student handbook by the administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee. Likewise, Benedictine Sisters/Nuns who are formators and/or educators shared the chapters of the RB that are relevant to the implementation of a student handbook for the formation and discipline of high school
students. The second phase was an examination of the RB, commentaries, studies, articles and reflections on the RB and literature on Benedictine Education and its characteristics and hallmarks, to create a Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework. The core values of a Benedictine Education rooted in the Rule of St. Benedict are (a) Christ-centeredness, (b) silence and restraint of speech, (c) listening, (d) humility, (e) obedience, (f) discretion, (g) stability, (h) community, (i) prayer, study and work, (j) discipline and order, (k) stewardship, (l) hospitality, (m) service, (n) justice, and (o) peace. The Student Handbook was then analyzed against the Core Values Framework and the look for criteria for each core value. Examples of items or guidelines that were strongly and/or weakly aligned to the core value were identified. Gaps were also identified in the Handbook where values should have been discussed but were not. Following these illustrative examples, the analysis concludes with an example of how a value can be used to improve a section of the Handbook to make the Handbook more formative for students. The responses of the administrators and members of the committee explicitly showed the “living out” of certain Benedictine values in their activities related to the student handbook. One of the significant revisions of the Handbook is the inclusion of the CARE discipline system. The Benedictine Sisters/Nuns emphasized the need for authority and structure and replied that the goal in disciplining students is healing, compassion and keeping the student who erred in community. However, the goal is to make the entire Student Handbook a living example of the RB; to have a Student Handbook that authentically and intentionally transforms the core values of a Benedictine education into action and then be an integral part of the holistic formation of students.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated in memory of Mother Ferdinanda Hoelzer, O.S.B., Sister Petronilla Keller, O.S.B., Sister Crescentia Veser, O.S.B., Sister Winfrieda Mueller, O.S.B., and Novice Alexia Ruedenauer, our first five German Benedictine Sisters, whose unconditional YES to a mission to the Philippines one hundred ten years ago, gave birth to a ministry of educating and forming young minds and hearts in the spirit of our Holy Father Benedict.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Mother Adelaida Ygrubay, O.S.B., Prioress of the Manila Priory of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing and our former prioresses, Sister Mary John Mananzan, O.S.B. and Sister Lumen Dungca, O.S.B. who allowed me to pursue higher studies in a foreign land. Although away from home and my religious community, the prayers, mails, emails, phone calls, and even visits across the miles from my Sisters, family members, relatives and friends were my source of strength, support, encouragement and joy.

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From day one of my application to ProDEL until my last day at Duquesne University, you were my angel Dr. Rick McCown. Thank you for working out schedules and accommodating my requests to facilitate my acceptance into the program and for making sure that I will not get lost along the way.

In God’s own design and providence, I was brought to Southside, Pittsburgh, to St. Adalbert’s Convent of the Felician Sisters of North America. I found a home with Sister
Sister Marie Christine Sinkovich, CSSF, Sister M. Adrian Jumbelic, CSSF, and Sister Philip Kwolek, CSSF. Thank you, dear Sisters, for taking care of me and nourishing me physically and spiritually. The Sisters of the Humility of Mary of Villa Maria, Pennsylvania likewise generously welcomed me to their Spirituality Center for days of prayer. To my Campus Ministry Family, most especially the Discernment Group of Duquesne University, thank you for the beautiful journey we have shared; each one of you will be lovingly remembered and prayed for.

My first extensive study of the RB was in May 2009 under Sister Aquinata Böckmann, O.S.B., also a Missionary Benedictine Sister of Tutzing. She came to the Philippines to share with us, her sisters in the Manila Priory, and other Benedictines from other congregations the depth and breadth of her scholarly work on the RB and the monastic life. Thank you Sr. Aquinata for the books that you have written on the RB which were valuable resources for this research. My “heart’s thanksgiving” to my sisters in the Manila Priory: (+) Sister Mary Bellarmine Bernas, O.S.B., my first Prefect of Studies followed by Sister Rebecca Maglalang, O.S.B. for their encouragement, guidance and valuable support; Sisters Josefina Nepomuceno, O.S.B., Mary Thomas Prado, O.S.B., Rosalina Fajardo, O.S.B., Pauline Triviño and Daniela Romero, O.S.B. for their thoughts, insights and feedback during the different stages of my dissertation process. I would also like to acknowledge my spirit-filled encounters with various Benedictine congregations in the United States which has enriched my monastic vocation and deepened my appreciation for the Rule that unites us. I have experienced our heritage of Benedictine hospitality from the Benedictine Sisters of Pittsburgh in Bakerstown, PA, Benedictine Nuns of Saint Emmaus Monastery in Greensburg, PA, the Benedictine monks of
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To all the Filipinos who have welcomed me into their lives and into their homes during the years of my studies in the United States, maraming salamat po (thank you). You were my family away from home. May the Lord bless you and reward you for all your extravagant generosity and kindness.

Lastly, to each and every member of Cohort 2016, I give my love, honor, respect and gratitude.

“I thank my God each time I think of you and when I pray for you, I pray with joy.”

Frank Anderson, MSC
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The goal of Christian Education (Second Vatican Council, 1996) is the holistic and integral formation of the whole person. Thus, “children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom” (The Code of Canon Law, 1983, Can. 795). The education in a Catholic school must be an “integration of faith and culture” and “integration of faith and life” (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). The aim of the school is not only to equip the students with skills and knowledge but to also form in them virtues that will enable them to live a new life in Christ and participate in the building of the kingdom of God. Clearly, the holistic formation of a student towards a transformation in Christ (Lickona, 1997) is central to the mission of a Catholic school.

There seems to be an apparent disconnect, however, between the school experience of students and the mission of a Catholic school. When Gutierrez (2012) explored the outcomes of Catholic education in the Philippines the findings revealed perceived weaknesses of Catholic education as reported by college/university alumni that included: “too many restrictions,” “strict regulations made students rebellious,” “led [one] to be conservative and afraid to take risks,” “made [one] inflexible; [expecting] others to have the same values/opinions,” “led [one] to become self-righteous, perfectionist and judgmental, which made it difficult for one to adjust to new situations” (p. 25).
**Education in the Philippines**

To better understand the current disconnect between the aims of Catholic education and the environments Catholic schools foster and maintain, it is first important to contextualize that investigation within the current public school culture in the Philippines. A study commissioned by PLAN Philippines (2009) investigated violence against children in public schools. The participants were 2,442 children below 18 years old. Of those students, 50.20% were elementary students and 49.79% were high school students. The sample was drawn from 58 public schools in Masbate, Northern Samar and Camotes Islands in Cebu, Philippines. Adult stakeholders such as parents and other community representatives, school personnel and guidance counselors also participated in the study. The researchers concluded that, “ridicule or teasing by peers was the most common experience of violence in schools cited by the children for reasons . . . often related to a child’s inability to read or to give correct answers during class recitation, but was also occasionally brought upon by specific circumstances of children such as being gay, being poor and suspicions of being an adopted child” (PLAN Philippines, 2009, p. 39).

Although conducted only in public schools, findings shed light on possible experiences that may also occur in a Catholic school. In fact, Catholic schools are “perceived to be even less friendly places for lesbian, gay and bisexual people” (Love, 1998, p. 299). Interviews with gay and lesbian students educated at different Catholic high schools in North America showed that they experienced familial, social, institutional, spiritual and identity dis-integration (Maher, 2001).

During the 2013 Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) National Convention, the Department of Education in the Philippines presented a
Summary of Reports on Bullying, Child and Sexual Abuses for the 2012 – 2013 School Year that were based on reports submitted as of September 2013 by the 16 regional offices in the Philippines. There were 1165 cases of bullying and 291 of child abuse. The data in the reports, however, do not further distinguish between cases from the public or private schools. In response to this finding, then Philippines’ President Benigno Aquino III approved the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 (R.A. # 10627) on September 12, 2013. The Act required all elementary and secondary schools to adopt policies to prevent and address the acts of bullying in their institutions.

Coupled with issues of school misbehavior are issues of harsh and punitive discipline approaches, negative effects of exclusionary discipline and disparity of discipline practices among students (Skiba, Arredondo, & Rausch, 2014; Skiba, et al., 2014). Furthermore, suspensions or expulsions as disciplinary sanctions are linked to negative academic outcomes, subsequent behavior problems, and lack of political and civic engagement. Too often, discipline policy changes are made over time that actually put the students in more trouble, increasing the likelihood of severe punishment. These problems continue to exist for policies are codified into rules of conduct that legitimize the authority of the school to control behavior and enforce discipline (Irby, 2013). The emphasis of school discipline on correcting or controlling behavior through a code of offenses and sanctions does not only affect negatively the erring student but also the other students in denying them an environment that is conducive to learning. Moreover, “school punishment may [also] socialize students into cynicism, disengagement, and apathy” (Kupchik & Catlaw, 2015, p. 117) towards the government and society during their young adult years and beyond.
Statement of the Problem of Practice and Importance of Study

There is an apparent disconnect between the school experience of students and the mission of a Catholic school. It is then a matter of social justice, for school communities to create a teaching and learning environment that will allow all students to develop into fully integrated persons: physically, emotionally, morally, spiritually and intellectually. Catholic exclusive schools have to be intentional in creating an environment where the emotional safety and self-esteem of all young people can be nurtured (Payne, 2009).

At the same time, the strong need to focus on formation of values becomes more imperative when, Archbishop Jose S. Palma, then President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), mentioned the “seeming depreciation of the distinctiveness of Catholic Education” (Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines [CBCP], 2012, Present-Day Context & Challenges section, para. 5) in the CBCP’s Pastoral Letter on the occasion of the celebration of 400 years of Catholic Education in the Philippines. Archbishop Palma also stated that “with the increasing secularist and pragmatic mentality, Catholic values are no longer seen as relevant by Catholic families” (CBCP, 2012, Present-Day Context & Challenges section, para. 5). What’s more, in a national convention, Fr. Gregorio L. Bañaga, then President of CEAP, urged Catholic educators to be critical and to ask themselves “where [they] need to improve on in teaching values and why there is a gap between learning the values [they] teach [their] students while in school and with [the students’] behavior when they pursue their careers” (Bañaga, 2012, p. 6).

For Catholic schools that are owned and/or administered by religious congregations, the educational climate of the schools is enriched by the traditions and values espoused
by the congregations according to their respective gifts or charisms based on the spirit and aims of their founders (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1988). As consecrated persons the whole life of a member of the congregation is dedicated to” allowing oneself to be educated by Christ . . . [and] choosing His same form of life” (CCE, 2002, para. 9). This “educational and formative model” (CCE, 2002, para. 18) is the very mission of a member of the congregation in schools they lead: to educate and to form. This formation includes drawing out the authentic needs and desires of the students; bringing out an understanding of their identity (CCE, 2002). At the same time members of the congregation must offer concrete ways of doing things, model how students will apply what they know and what they have discovered, and equip students with the values and skills to live out what has been taught to them.

**Benedictine Catholic Schools**

Among the many different religious congregations who have dedicated themselves to apostolic and missionary work according to a specific charism are the Benedictines who follow the spirituality of Saint Benedict in his Rule. The Rule of St. Benedict (RB) describes monastic life as a way of seeking God in community under the leadership of an abbot or a superior (Böckmann, 2005; Chittister, 2010; Frigge, 2003; Kardong, 1984).

The key to the “pedagogical concept” (Schutz, 2009) of Saint Benedict is a life that is directed to seeking God. The RB illustrates a process of education and formation that a monk must go through in a monastery. Saint Benedict sees the human person as someone who must be continually educated and formed since “education is primarily education for life” (Schutz, 2009, p. 158). He recognizes that as persons go through the path of life, they are transformed along the way (Böckmann, 2005; Kardong, 1984, 1996; Klassen et
In this process of education and formation, Saint Benedict recognizes the uniqueness of each person: the differences in gifts and talents, needs and wants, and weaknesses and strengths (see Böckmann, 2005; Caveglia, 1999; de Vogue, 1983; Frigge, 2003; Kardong, 1984; Klassen, Renner & Reuter, 2002; Schütz, 2009). The goal then is to draw out from persons the gifts and talents God has bestowed upon them that they may be able to discern God’s will. Benedictine education, therefore, can be understood as formation—the process of knowing, understanding, and discovering one’s self, acquiring values and transforming into the image of Christ.

The wisdom of the RB written in the 6th century lives on to this day and has permeated and shaped the very fabric of Benedictine communities and educational institutions. Scholars and educational practitioners have identified the characteristics and hallmarks of Benedictine education. The work of De Jesus (2007) is particularly significant in describing Benedictine education in the Philippines. He applied the grounded theory model to “allow the theory on the vision of Benedictine education in the Philippines for the twenty-first century to emerge” (De Jesus, 2007, p. 2). Parallel to the RB is the Student Handbook that is used by the school to actually capture the schooling experience of the students in their “school-home.” The Student Handbook contains information regarding the vision and mission of the school, its student officials, rights and responsibilities of students, academic policies, guidelines on decorum and behavior, rules and regulations, school discipline, student services, student activities and guidelines for parents. Student handbooks, however, as they are currently written and used serve more as an aid for orientation of new students and a constant reference guide for behavior and as such become a disciplinary tool to make students behave (Bailey & Ward, 1968;
This study offers an alternate view of a student handbook as an important formative tool that can actually advance the hallmarks (core values) of Benedictine education in the lives of students.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the present design of a Student Handbook for female high school students in a Benedictine school to determine its degree of alignment with the RB. Benedictine schools share a “common Benedictine heritage . . . enshrined in the Rule of St. Benedict, which serves many of the Schools as a foundational document providing a vision of how the School should live” (Mohrman, 2006, Introduction, para. 6). The study begins with a comparison of the values reflected in the RB and the values articulated in the context of a Benedictine educational institution. The common values are those that emerged from the literature review that follows and were used to developing a framework against which the researcher could examine a High School Student Handbook of a Benedictine school. The common values as a whole depict a Benedictine education that is deeply rooted in the RB.

The results of this evaluation of an existing Student Handbook have the potential to contribute to a deeper understanding of the core values of a Benedictine education in order to help institutions carry out their mission to form and educate young people in the Benedictine wisdom tradition. The evaluation of the Student Handbook against the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework also holds promise for shifting the orientation of the handbook from its current primary discipline purpose to the formation of values. Finally, this study can also facilitate dialogue focused on whether or not there
should be a common articulation of the core values of a Benedictine Education among all the member-schools of the Association of Benedictine Schools in the Philippines.

**Research Questions**

In examining the present design of the Student Handbook for high school students in a Benedictine school, two research questions guided the study:

1. How was the High School Student Handbook for a Benedictine school in the Philippines shaped mutually by the Benedictine formators and administrators and members of a Student Handbook Committee?

2. How reflective is the Student Handbook of the Rule of St. Benedict?

The review of the literature that follows in Chapter two is organized to shed light on the investigation. It begins with a brief historical exploration of Christian education with an emphasis on Catholic education and Catholic education in practice. Next the review presents the research on Catholic education in the Benedictine tradition including a detailed examination of the RB and its influence on pedagogy. Then the review examines Benedictine education to surface the characteristics that set it apart from education guided by other faith traditions. Then the review explores the history and tradition of the student handbook in schools and Catholic schools. The literature review concludes with a brief history of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters in the Philippines.
Chapter 2

Church Documents Revisited

The Declaration of Christian Education of the Second Vatican Council sets the standards, lays down the principles, and defines education’s role in the mission of the Church. From this declaration will arise documents from one of the Discateries of the Roman Curia, the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE; formerly called Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education). Documents had been written to guide CCE’s three offices: Office for Seminaries, Office for Universities and Office for Catholic Schools. For purposes of this study, focus will be on Catholic Schools. Through the CCE, Gravissimum Educationis was given life. The mission of educational institutions was articulated and understood in the context of the times.

Declaration on Christian Education (1965)

The Second Vatican Council’s (1996) Gravissimum Educationis (Declaration on Christian Education) documents the fundamental principles of Christian education promulgated by the synod. According to the synod, “true education aims to give people a formation which is directed towards their final end and the good of that society to which they belong and in which, as adults, they will have their share of duties to perform” (p. 576). The formation of the children and young people should focus on the following:

- [help them] develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities;
- [train them] to acquire gradually a more perfect sense of responsibility in the proper development of their own lives by constant effort and in the pursuit of liberty, overcoming obstacles with unwavering courage and perseverance; and
• [stimulate them] to make sound moral judgment based on a well-formed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment, and to know and love God more perfectly. (Second Vatican Council, 1996, pp. 576-577)

The synod also promulgated the principle that all Christians have a right to Christian education which is not merely concerned with the development of maturity as a human person but also to grow in appreciation for the gift of their faith. Emphasis was likewise made on the parents’ primary and principal responsibility to educate their children. The synod sees it as the parents’ duty to “create a family atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and humanity which will promote an integrated, personal and social education of their children” (Second Vatican Council, 1996, p. 578).

The emphasis on formation of the young people is echoed in another document of the Second Vatican Council (1996), the *Apostolicam actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People). Recognizing the significant influence of young people in society, the synod considered the young as one of the fields of apostolic action open to the laity together with church communities, the family, the social environment, national and international spheres. The young people’s witness of Christ in their daily life to their families and peers is an apostolate by itself; their participation in the mission of the church (Second Vatican Council, 1996).

The importance of the principles enunciated in *Gravissimum Educationis* is emphasized by their inclusion in The Code of Canon Law on Catholic Education:

> Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical,
moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life. (The Code of Canon Law, 1983, Can. 795)

**The Catholic School (1977) and Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith (1982)**

After *Gravissimum Educationis*, a deeper reflection on the nature and distinctive characteristics of the Catholic school and its educational value was made by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (SCCE; 1977) in the document *The Catholic School*. The document was written for schools that identify themselves as a Catholic school and provides the premises for the schools to study and implement. The Catholic school carries out its part in the evangelization work of the Church through “education in the faith and the total formation of the faithful” (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education [SCCE], 1977, para. 9).

**Basic characteristics of a school.**

A Catholic school must first and foremost have the characteristics of a school. SCCE (1977) defined the concept of school in this document as a “place of integral formation by means of a systematic and critical assimilation of culture” (para. 26). SCCE further stated that just like any school, a Catholic school must provide opportunities for students to “relate their studies to real-life situations with which they are familiar”; and to make “meaning of [their] experiences and their truths” (para. 27). The school must then have the following features:

- an educational program intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person;
- [students] who are responsible and inner-directed capable of choosing freely in conformity with their conscience; . . .
a community whose values are communicated through the interpersonal and sincere relationships of its members and through both individual and corporative adherence to the outlook on life that permeates the school. (SCCE, 1977, para. 28-32)

Five years later, SCCE offered another document for reflection that expands the themes and ideas presented in the Catholic school document. The focus this time was on *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (SCCE, 1982). The term laity or lay Catholics in *Lumen Gentium* refers to “all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by church; all the faithful, that is, who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ” (Second Vatican Council, 1996, p. 48). Although much of the discussion in this document on lay Catholics refers to the lay Catholic teachers who are teaching in primary and secondary schools, the document also applies to other lay Catholics who have different roles in the schools like administrators, non-academic personnel and parents. It also acknowledges the presence of lay non-Catholics as partners in the mission of educating the young. To establish a common understanding of the mission of a Catholic school that all lay educators in a Catholic school must embrace, the SCCE (1982) expands the definition of school earlier laid down in the Catholic School document:

The school must be concerned with constant and careful attention to cultivating in students the intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties of the human person; to develop in them the ability to make correct use of their judgment, will, and affectivity; to promote in them a sense of values; to encourage just attitudes and prudent behaviour; to introduce them to the cultural patrimony handed down from
previous generations; to prepare them for professional life, and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding. (para. 12)

**Specific characteristics of a Catholic school.**

The Catholic quality of the school hinges on Christ being the foundation of the very existence of the school.

Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school. His revelations give new meaning to life and helps man to direct his thought, action and will according to the Gospel, making the beatitudes his norm of life. The fact that in their own individual ways all members of the school community share this Christian vision, makes the school “Catholic”; principles of the Gospel in this manner become the educational norms since the school then has them as its internal motivation and final goal. (SCCE, 1977, para. 34)

The education in a Catholic school must be an “integration of faith and culture” and “integration of faith and life” (SCCE, 1977). The aim of a Catholic school is not only to equip the students with skills and knowledge but to form in them virtues that will enable them to live a new life in Christ and participate in the building of the kingdom of God. The essential element in this process of transformation is the teaching of the Gospel which should not only happen in a religion class but must be experienced in the entire school environment. It is also the purpose of a Catholic education to help students live responsibly in a community with others and be living witnesses of God’s love in their service of one another. However, building the kingdom of God and living the spirit of
the Gospel is a task not only of the students but of the other members of the school community as well (SCCE, 1977).

Adopting the Second Vatican Council’s (1996) characterization of Catholic schools in *Gravissimum Educationis*, SCCE (1982) makes reference to the distinctive features of a Catholic school:

To create for the school community an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity. It aims to help the adolescent in such a way that the development of his or her own personality will be matched by the growth of that new creation which he or she becomes by baptism. It strives to relate all human culture eventually to the news of salvation, so that the light of faith will illumine that knowledge which students gradually gain of the world, of life and of the human race. (para. 38)

CCE subsequently refers to these distinctive features as the religious dimension of education in a Catholic school in its document *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal* (CCE, 1988).


In this document, CCE (1988) reverts to *Gravissimum Educationis, The Catholic School* and *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to the Faith*. CCE looks closer and deeper into the nature of a Catholic school. CCE focuses on the task that Catholic schools face in educating young people who live in a vastly changing world which impacts their search of identity, sense of values, and their outlook in life. Catholic schools face an even greater challenge in having students that are non-members of the Catholic Church.
and its implication on the freedom of the student to practice one’s religion and the Catholic school’s “own freedom to proclaim the Gospel and to offer a formation based on the values to be found in a Christian education” (CCE, 1988, para. 6). Therefore, CCE offers in this document principles and ideas that can guide the Catholic schools in effectively carrying out its distinct role and mission in the Church amid the changing times and the growing diversity in the school community.

**Catholic school climate.**

As first described in *Gravissimum Educationis* (Second Vatican Council, 1996) and restated in CCE documents (1977; 1982; 1988) the religious dimension of the Catholic school climate is characterized by a school environment infused by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity or love. CCE (1988) considered the following elements in its analysis of the Catholic school climate: (a) persons, (b) space, (c) time, (d) relationships, (e) teaching, (f) study, and (g) various other activities. According to CCE, when students first set foot in a Catholic school, they should immediately see and feel a different ambiance. A Catholic school will have crucifixes in the classrooms and offices; statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary or saints in the corridors or in the gardens; and the presence of a school chapel, a prayer room or a parish church in the school vicinity. CCE further states that this religious dimension is further expressed “through the celebration of Christian values in Word and Sacrament, in individual behaviour, in friendly and harmonious interpersonal relationships, and in a ready availability” (CCE, 1988, para. 26) of every member of the school community to each other.

As observed by the CCE (1988) many of the students who attend a Catholic school would most probably be in the same school for their primary and secondary education
and may even choose to stay for college if the same institution offers higher education. Thus, according to CCE, it is not surprising that students may consider their school as an extension of their own homes; and as a “school-home”, the Catholic school should have the facilities that will make the students’ stay in school pleasant, comfortable and enjoyable. There must be spaces for classrooms, group work, rooms for parent-teacher meetings, sports and recreation, cafeteria and eating places and restrooms. Concomitant with the use of such spaces is the responsibility for the care of the school-home; the care of the environment (CCE, 1988). This aspect of formation in a Catholic school becomes more pronounced with Pope Francis’ call to care for our “common home” in his encyclical *Laudato Si’* (Francis, 2015).

More than a school-home a Catholic school is also referred to as a school community in *Gravissimum Educationis* (Second Vatican Council, 1996). Administrators, students, teachers, parents and staff form the school community not only because they occupy a common physical space, establish relationships and engage in activities together (CCE, 1988; 1997); but because they are all part of the People of God, in communion with each other as members of the Body of Christ, the Church, as elucidated by the Second Vatican Council in *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* (1996). As an instrument of the Church in carrying out her mission, the Catholic school is a “place of evangelization, of authentic apostolate and of pastoral action” (CCE, 1988, para. 33) towards the growth of all its community members in faith and each one’s transformation in Christ. As has been emphasized in the documents, the climate of a Catholic school community must radiate the Gospel spirit of freedom and love in the surroundings, relationships, and the educational program. There is the spirit of collaboration in the pursuit of the educational
goals and the openness to engage in a process of evaluation participated in by everyone for the common good; being more intentional in fostering greater participation of the families of the students (CCE, 1988). CCE (1988) also acknowledges that Catholic schools administered by religious congregations will have a school climate likewise shaped by the rituals and traditions brought by the religious women and men into the school community.

**Catholic school life and work.**

The education in a Catholic school must be an “integration of faith and culture” and “integration of faith and life” (SCCE, 1977). Thus, CCE (1988) asserts that school life and work of a student in a Catholic school is more than just academic work, extracurricular activities, class activities, institutional celebrations, and relationships with teachers, classmates and peers. Students recognize that their school experience is rooted and inspired by the Gospel; the person and life of Jesus. Hence, students will find themselves learning certain attitudes and values: “school work accepted as a duty and done with good will; courage and perseverance when difficulties come; respect for teachers; loyalty toward and love for fellow students; sincerity, tolerance, and goodness in all relationships” (CCE, 1988, para. 47).

CCE (1988) maintains that the religious perspective must also be evident in the curriculum of the students; incorporated by the teachers in all subject areas. Moreover, as students pursue their intellectual work, they should also have the opportunity to encounter the Divine Creator.

Students should be helped to see the human person as a living creature having a physical and a spiritual nature; each of us has an immortal soul, and we are in need of
redemption. The older students can gradually come to a more mature understanding of all that is implied in the concept of ‘person’: intelligence and will, freedom and feelings, the capacity to be an active and creative agent; a being endowed with both rights and duties, capable of interpersonal relationships, called to a specific mission in the world” (CCE, 1988, para. 55).

Christian formation process.

A Christian formation process is “an organic set of elements with a single purpose: the gradual development of every capability of every student, enabling each one to attain an integral formation within a context that includes the Christian religious dimension and recognizes the help of grace” (CCE, 1988, para. 99). Some of the factors presented by CCE (1988) that could favorably impact the quality of the formation process were (a) clear articulation of educational goals and regular evaluation, (b) creation of a positive and supportive school climate, (c) active involvement of the students in the formation process, and (d) commitment of the teachers to the formation process.

CCE (1988) suggested further on how the students can be encouraged to cooperate in the implementation of the formation process. The students can be asked to help in the development of the educational goals. They can also be asked to share their experiences and ideas on what will help them grow towards maturity.

Even students who are very young can sense whether the atmosphere in the school is pleasant or not. They are more than willing to cooperate when they feel respected, trusted and loved. And their willingness to cooperate will be reinforced by a school climate which is warm and friendly, when teachers are ready to help, and when they find it easy to get along with the other students. (CCE, 1988, para. 106)
Thus, the disposition of the teachers is crucial in the formation process. If students see the commitment and the importance teachers give to the achievement of the educational goals and the development of values through their witnessing in words and deeds; the students are then inspired and motivated to commit themselves to participate in the process (CCE, 1988).

**The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1997)**

The economic, political, social, cultural, and moral climate in the world has influenced and impacted education and schooling through the years and this has led the Catholic Church to reflect on their implications and articulate how to respond to such implications. The Church documents have been instrumental in the renewal of our Catholic schools to better carry out the Church’s mission of evangelization. In this document, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, CCE (1997) focused its reflection on five fundamental characteristics of a Catholic school that must be strengthened for it to be a “means of education in the modern world” (CCE, 1997, para. 8). These fundamental characteristics are

- the Catholic school as a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation;
- its ecclesial and cultural identity;
- its mission of education as a work of love;
- its service to society; and
- the traits which should characterize the educating community. (CCE, 1997, para. 4)
In essence, the aforesaid characteristics reiterated as well as refined CCE’s initial reflection on the distinct characteristics of a Catholic school in its 1977 document titled *The Catholic School*. In 1977, CCE already emphasized the responsibility of the schools to be authentic to their Catholic identity and the corresponding principles and duties that characterize such identity. Catholic schools fulfill their role in the Church’s mission by providing education in the faith and to further integrate faith with culture and life. The Catholic school not only serves the Church but society as well. One of the concerns discussed in *The Catholic School* was the situation of some Catholic schools being a counter-witness to a just society in having the majority of their students coming from wealthy families. Such Catholic schools are basically dependent on tuition for its existence and therefore unable to accept large numbers of students in poverty (SCCE, 1977, para. 58).

In describing a Catholic school’s “mission of education as a work of love”, CCE (1997) presented the “new poor” to whom the Catholic school opens its doors “in a spirit of love”. According to CCE, they are “those who have lost all sense of meaning in life and lack any type of inspiring ideal, those to whom no values are proposed and who do not know the beauty of faith, [and] who come from families which are broken and incapable of love” (para. 15). Lastly, CCE’s reference to the educating community supports its assertion in *The Catholic School* that “it is the task of [the] whole educative community to ensure that a distinctive Christian educational environment is maintained in practice (SCCE, 1977, para. 72). It is essential that interpersonal relations, dialogue, and collaboration are fostered among the members of the educating community: students, teachers, administrators, non-teaching personnel, and parents.
Most Catholic schools are owned and/or administered by religious congregations and the educational climate of the schools is enriched by the traditions and values espoused by the congregations according to their respective charisms (CCE, 1988). The Second Vatican Council (1966) both in *Lumen Gentium* and *Perfectae Caritatis* emphasizes the fidelity of the religious institutes to the spirit and aims of their founders; and the recognition and continuation of traditions as part of the renewal of religious life.

After the Synod on “The Consecrated Life and Its Mission in the Church and in the World,” Pope John Paul II (1996) wrote his apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, echoing the discussions of the synod on the 3 aspects of consecration life: consecration, communion and mission. Pope John Paul II (1996) made a specific call for a renewed commitment of consecrated persons to the mission of education in schools. He also invited the members of institutes to be faithful to their founding charisms and tradition and to preserve the schools’ unique Catholic identity. According to John Paul II (1996), not only are consecrated persons called to be authentic witnesses to Christ but must be Christ himself to others.

It is in this light that the CCE’s (2002) further reflections on “Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools” compared consecrated life to a school “that every consecrated person is called to attend for [one’s] whole life. . . . It means allowing oneself to be *educated* by Christ, the eternal Word of the Father and, to be drawn to Him, the heart and centre of the world, choosing His same *form* of life” (para. 9). This “educational and formative model” (para. 18) is the very mission of consecrated persons in schools: to educate and to form. According to CCE (2002),
men and women religious *educate* [emphasis added], help young people to grasp their own identity and to reveal those authentic needs and desires that inhabit everyone’s heart, but which often remain unknown and underestimated: thirst for authenticity and honesty, for love and fidelity, for truth and consistency, for happiness and fullness of life. Desires in which in the final analysis converge in the supreme human desire: *to see the face of God.* A school *forms* when it offers a precise proposal for fulfilling those desires, preventing them from being deformed, or only partially or weakly achieved. (para. 18-19)

The fact that education and formation in consecrated life takes place in community is replicated in the task of consecrated persons to create a true educational community of students, parents, teachers, non-teaching personnel and administrators in carrying out their educational mission (CCE, 2002).

In actual fact consecrated persons undertake, together with their lay colleagues, to assure that schools are structured as places of encounter, listening, communication, where students experience values in an essential way. They help, in a directed way, to guide pedagogical choices to promote overcoming individualistic self-promotion, solidarity instead of competition, assisting the weak instead of marginalization, responsible participation instead of indifference. (CCE, 2002, para. 46)

CCE (2007) explores further the cooperation between lay and consecrated persons within the same educational mission in another document tilted “Educating Together in Catholic Schools: A Shared Mission Between Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful.”
Catholic Education in Practice

The CCE has called on the bishops, religious superiors and those involved in the administration of Catholic schools to further reflect and study the documents it has written and consequently develop concrete guidelines and programs relevant to their situations and needs. To this end, researches have been conducted and articles and papers written by scholars and practitioners in the field of Catholic Education to concretize the special character of Catholic schools and their major role in the mission of the Church; more importantly, the Catholic schools’ vital contribution to the education and formation of young people.

Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) conducted an empirical research on Catholic secondary schools in the United States that covered almost 10 years. Their findings were based on (a) an in-depth study of 7 Catholic high schools, (b) statistical analysis of data from the High School and Beyond Survey by the National Center for Education Statistics, and (c) an exploration of the philosophical and historical roots of Catholic schools in the United States. A key contribution of Bryk et al. in the field of research is their explicit characterization of the organizational form of Catholic schools as communal and identification of the four essential features: “definition of the boundaries that constitute the community; the system of organizational beliefs that structures a shared purpose; the social activities that give life to these beliefs; and the formal organizational roles that facilitate this social dynamic” (p. 127). Their findings also showed the positive effects of the features of the organization on teacher commitment and student engagement.

The role of Catholic education in meeting the academic, emotional, social and spiritual needs of its students is suggested from the mission statements of Catholic
educational institutions (Merrit, 2008). As part of a larger study of Catholic schools in deprived urban areas, an analysis of the mission statements of 25 secondary schools in various parts of England showed that in addition to the academic performance indicators, other fundamental aspirations were also emphasized in the mission statements: (a) Primacy of the spiritual and moral life as realised in Catholic religious culture; (b) Focus on the dignity of the person; (c) Importance of community; and (d) Specific focus on social justice, common good and notions of service (Grace, 1998).

In the third millennium, the dominant purpose of the Catholic school may be the provision of an authentic educational environment where the value of the human person is affirmed, where knowledge is integrated for the sake of ultimate truths, and where the relationship of the human person with God is modeled as well as taught. Such a response is legitimately Catholic.

(McLaughlin, 2000, p. 289)

Based on the perceived effects of Catholic education on the lives of the alumni of Catholic colleges and universities in the Philippines, Gutierrez (2012) identified four hallmarks of Catholic institutions:

- Moral and character formation: education and formation in developing Christian critical moral judgment in order to discern morally right from wrong; emphasis on codes of conduct such as discipline, honour system, responsibility and integrity; focus on moral truth vis-a`-vis moral relativism; recognition of inspiring role models in the faith community and civil society;
• Professional competence: superior preparation for one’s career/profession in terms of knowledge and training for the job market/industry; stress on academic excellence and on skills towards teamwork and collaborative problem solving;

• Faith and religious formation: education and formation in the Catholic teachings on faith in God, Jesus Christ and the Church; nurturance of spiritual practices in the school campus through celebration of the sacraments of the Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, days of recollection and yearly retreats; guidance in discovering and respecting human life and human dignity; fostering appreciation for one’s religion and the Church; presence of theology/religion course as the core of the curriculum; recognition of the unique marks and contributions of Catholic education for one’s personal life and for society; and

• Social and civic responsibility: education towards social responsibility through awareness and involvement in actions for the common good such as preferential option for the marginalized and environmental stewardship; advocacy for human rights and social justice; combating political and social corruption; development of patriotism and appreciation for one’s cultural heritage; taking responsibility for one’s actions and contributing to social transformation. (p. 19)

The education and formation in the Catholic faith as a hallmark of Catholic institutions is emphasized by Groome (2014) in his work identifying the core convictions of Catholic faith for education. Groome asserts that “Catholic schools must continue to find and fulfill their warrant in their time-honoured purpose of educating both from a Catholic faith perspective and for the faith life of their students, however students choose to identify in faith. The Catholicism of our
schools is essential if they are to both serve the common good and foster the spiritual development of students” (p. 114).

**Catholic Education in the Benedictine Tradition**

Among the many different religious congregations who have dedicated themselves to apostolic and missionary work according to a specific charism are the Benedictines who follow the spirituality of Saint Benedict in his Rule.

**Saint Benedict of Nursia.**

Benedict (480-547) is a man known more for the Rule that he wrote for men of all ages who would like to follow Christ in community (McCann, 1958). Apart from the Rule, stories about Benedict’s life were written by Pope Gregory the Great (about 540-604), the first Benedictine Pope, in one of the four books of his *Dialogues* first published in 594. Book two of the Dialogues entitled “Life and Miracles of St. Benedict” (Gregory the Great, 1956) was identified as the only historical source of the life and character of Saint Benedict, the Patriarch of Western Monasticism. In a dialogue with his deacon Peter, Pope Gregory the Great (1956) credited the stories he was about to share with four men who personally knew Benedict: Constantine who succeeded Benedict as abbot; Valentinian who was superior of the monastery adjoining the Lateran Basilica; Simplicius who was Benedict’s second successor; and Honoratus who was then the abbot of the monastery in Subiaco (Gregory the Great, 1956). Centuries later, efforts were made to discover more details about the holy man Benedict by reading the RB and the Dialogues in the context of the historical events, important figures, canonical and imperial sources existing during Benedict’s time (see Fry et al., 1981; Lindsay, 1949; McCann, 1958; Schuster, 1953).
Pope Gregory the Great (1956) introduced Benedict as the founder and abbot of the monastery known as the Citadel of Campania (Abbey of Monte Cassino) and described him as a man blessed in name and in grace. Benedict was born around 480 in Nursia (presently known as Norcia, a town northeast of Rome, Italy) to distinguished parents Abundanta and Eupropius or Eutropius. He had a sister named Scholastica who is referred to by tradition as his twin. Benedict was sent to Rome for a liberal education accompanied by his nurse Cyrilla. After seeing the vices engaged in by the students, Benedict left Rome with his nurse (Lindsay, 1949). Passing through Enfide (now known as Affile) they were invited to stay at the town and were housed at a hospice attached to St. Peter Church. It was in this town that Benedict performed his first miracle of putting together a sieve, borrowed and broken by Cyrilla. When the crying Cyrilla brought the fragments of the sieve to Benedict, he took them into a room, knelt and prayed. After praying, Benedict saw the sieve whole on the table. As word of this incident spread, Benedict gained the reputation of being a wonder-worker (Schuster, 1953).

Desiring more the “the quiet service of God” (McCann, 1958, p. 45), Benedict fled Enfide, leaving Cyrilla behind, and went to Subiaco where he lived alone in a cave for three years. McCann (1958) marked this event as the beginning of Benedict’s monastic career, at the end of the 5th century, approximately in the year 500, when Benedict may have been 20 years of age. It was in Subiaco that Benedict met a monk named Romanus who gave the young man the monastic habit and provided for his needs. According to McCann (1958), it was during Benedict’s three years of solitude and prayer “that he acquired that profound attitude of the soul, that concentration of all upon the thought of God and His all-seeing eye, which was to be the pervading and transforming motive of
Thereafter, shepherds and people from different places and background came to seek Benedict’s blessing and counsel. Those interested in the monastic life stayed and followed Benedict’s ways of serving God. As more and more people settled near him, Benedict then founded 12 monasteries, each having 12 monks and an abbot as their superior. Around the year 529, Benedict moved with some of his monks and founded a monastery above Cassino (80 miles south of Rome on the way to Naples). This was prompted by the scheming acts of a neighboring priest (Florentius) who envied the holiness and work of Benedict. In order to get rid of Benedict, Florentius sent him a poisoned loaf of bread in the guise of Christian fellowship. Aware that it was poisoned, Benedict commanded a raven to take it away to a place where it could not be found. Unable to kill Benedict, Florentius then decided to poison the souls of Benedict’s disciples by sending seven women into the garden of the monastery who danced about half naked. It was in Monte Cassino that Benedict wrote a Rule that would guide his monks and those who desired to seek God in the same path (cf. Fry et al., 1981; Gregory the Great, 1956; Lindsay, 1949; McCann, 1958; Schuster, 1953). The Rule was completed in about 530 CE (Böckmann, 2015; Klassen et al., 2002, 2014).

In the Dialogues (Gregory the Great, 1956) we see a glimpse of the man Benedict, “blessed in name and in grace.” Benedict performed miracles: put together the broken sieve; young monk Maurus able to walk on water to save another monk (Placid) who fell into the lake; handle of a brush hook thrust into the water and the iron blade rose from the bottom of the lake and slipped into the handle; water poured forth from a place on the mountain marked by Benedict with three stones where he knelt and prayed; and brought
to life a dead monk and a boy. Benedict’s works of wonders showed his care and compassion for the people around him. He helped them in their need and told them not to be sad, upset or anxious. He understood the weaknesses of his monks (i.e. taking pleasure in the death of the priest Florentius who hated Benedict; disobeying the rules of the community). He chastised and reprimanded them of their wrongful ways but he always forgave them. He was hospitable and generous. He gave even at the cost of not having anything for himself and for his community and yet lived with complete trust in the providence of God.

Benedict was known for his power to thwart evil with the sign of the cross. Before the monasteries in Subiaco were established, Benedict was invited by the monks of Vicovaro to be their superior after their abbot died. After some time the monks started to murmur when they began to resent the strict discipline of Benedict. In order to get rid of him, the monks poisoned his drink and when the vessel was brought to Benedict for his blessing (as was the custom during that time), the glass broke into pieces when Benedict lifted his hand to make the sign of the cross. At Monte Cassino, the monks were being stopped from lifting the rocks that they needed for construction of a part of the abbey. After Benedict prayed and made a sign of the cross over the rocks, the devil who was sitting on the rocks left.

Benedict was likewise known for his prophecies. To test Benedict’s gift of prophecy, Totila had his sword-bearer disguised as the king and sent him to see Benedict. As soon as the sword-bearer and his attendants entered the monastery grounds, Benedict called out to him “Son, lay aside the robes that you are wearing . . . they do not belong to you” (Gregory the Great, 1956, p. 35). He confronted King Totila regarding his deception and
warned the king of his death on the tenth year of his rule. Benedict spoke of Rome being buried in ruins and the destruction of Monte Cassino by the barbarians. He confronted his monks about acts in which they engaged in his absence like eating and drinking outside the monastery, and accepting a handkerchief from a nun and hiding it in one’s habit (cf. Lindsay, 1949; McCann, 1958; Schuster, 1953). The miracles, prophecies and visions of Benedict not only showed that he was a man of God but they demonstrated Benedict’s teachings: the call for conversion, the power of prayer, the value of work, obedience and humility.

Pope Pius XII (1947), in his encyclical *Fulgens Radiature* written on the occasion of the centenary of Saint Benedict’s death, acknowledged Saint Benedict’s role in the renewal and restoration of civilization and the Church after the collapse of the Roman Empire. Pope Pius XII gave praise to the RB and acknowledged its use not only to the men and women who embraced the Benedictine life but to all the Christian faithful. He described how Saint Benedict wrote about the life of prayer, labor in the fields, appreciation of the arts and crafts, and love for study and learning that exists in a monastic community. And in all these, it was important that all were done for the love of Christ; a love that overflows to one’s neighbor, especially for the poor, the travelers, the strangers and the sick (Pius XII, 1947).

**The Rule of Saint Benedict (RB).**

Pope Gregory the Great (1956) writes:

With all the renown [Benedict] gained by his numerous miracles, the holy man was no less outstanding for the wisdom of his teaching. He wrote a Rule for Monks that is remarkable for its discretion and its clarity of language. Anyone who wishes to know
more about his life and character can discover in his Rule exactly what he was like as an abbot, for his life could not have differed from his teaching. (Chapter 36)

Benedict wrote a rule on monastic life, a way of seeking God in community under the leadership of an abbot. From the prologue of the RB, Benedict explicitly stated that what he is about to do is write a plan for cenobites who wish “to do battle for the true King, Christ the Lord” (RB Prol. 3). Cenobites refer to monks who belong to a monastery and serve under a rule and an abbot (RB 1.1). Benedict’s Rule is undoubtedly a product of his spiritual reflection on a monastic tradition that he has chosen to embrace; and deepened by the scriptural citations from the Old and New Testaments in almost all the chapters of the RB (Fry et al., 1981).

It has been established, however, that the RB is not an original work of Benedict. Majority of the prologue and first seven chapters of the RB are found in the Rule of the Master which is undeniably written earlier in the sixth century by an unknown author (Fry et al., 1981; de Vogüé, 1983; Kardong, 1996; Böckmann, 2005). Other sources and citations used by Benedict include the rule of St. Augustine and the rules of St. Caesarius; monastic writings of Eugippius and Ferrandus and the Institutes and Conferences of John Cassian. Benedict also cited from classical and Christian writers, fathers of the Church, letters and sermons of Popes and from the Sacramentaries (Schuster, 1953). Fry et al. (1981) likewise noted that modern editions of the RB have identified citations from monastic fathers Saint Basil the Great of Caesarea and Pachomius of Egypt. Although it was common for monastic writers to borrow from the rules of other writers, the RB is different in the way the different sources have been woven together. As Fry et al. (1981) aptly puts it, the RB constitutes “the most complete and masterful synthesis of monastic
tradition in its most catholic sense” (p. 90). Its richness lies in the instructions that came from listening to God in the Scriptures, from the wisdom of the Fathers who have lived and passed on the monastic tradition and from Benedict’s own experience of living monastic life both in solitude and in community (Fry et al., 1981; Frigge, 2003) which, according to Böckmann (2005), “have grown into a whole within Benedict’s heart” (p. 5).

Numerous editions, commentaries, translations, adaptations and reflections have been written on the RB. For purposes of this study, the English translation of RB 1980 (Fry et al., 1981) will be used as the main source in referring to the text of the RB. The RB begins with a prologue followed by 73 chapters. It can be divided into two main portions: the prologue and chapters 1-7 embody the spiritual doctrine; while chapters 8-73 comprise the regulations for the structure of and discipline in the monastery (Fry et al., 1981). The prologue starts with the invitation of Benedict to those who are ready to give up their own will and follow Christ to “listen carefully . . . to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of [their] heart” (RB Prol. 1) in the “school for the Lord’s service” (RB Prol. 45). Chapter 2 extensively discusses the qualities of the abbot being the representative of Christ in the monastery. Included in the spiritual doctrine portion of the RB are the “tools for good works” (chap. 4) and the values of obedience, silence and humility (chap. 5-7).

The second portion of the RB includes chapters 8-73. Although the chapters may be further grouped according to subject matter there are chapters that are distinct. The RB contains instructions on the Divine Office (chap. 8-20); faults, punishment, satisfaction and discipline of monks (chap. 23-30, 42-46); the offices or assignments that monks have in the monastery: deans (chap. 21), cellarer (chap. 31), kitchen server (chap. 35), reader
(chap. 38), and porter (chap. 66); material goods and distribution, private ownership, gifts and clothing (chap. 32-34, 54-55); care for the sick, elderly and children (chap. 36-37); meals (chap. 39-41); sleeping arrangements of monks (chap. 22); prayer, work and journey (chap. 47-52, 67); guests (chap. 55-56); reception of new members and rank in community (chap. 58-63); election of abbot and prior (chap. 64-65); assignment of impossible tasks (chap. 68); fraternal relationships and good zeal of monks (chap. 69-72).

The last chapter states that the rule is just the beginning and Benedict exhorts the monks to continue reading, learning and working towards perfection (chap. 73).

**Pedagogy of the RB.**

The RB is about a way of life, a certain lifestyle (Böckmann, 2005; Chittister, 2010; Frigge, 2003; Kardong, 1984). Benedict writes about monastic life as a way of seeking God (Böckmann, 2005) and the very “process of formation and education” that a monk goes through in the monastery is what Schutz (2009) deems as Benedict’s pedagogical concept. This concept resonates with the educational formative model that the CCE (2002) considers as the very mission of consecrated persons in schools: to educate and to form. In his exploration of the RB as a guide for a Benedictine school, Schutz (2009) claims that at the center of the RB is the monk, the cenobite (who belongs to a monastery and serve under a rule and an abbot; RB 1.1), the person who “is ready to give up [his] own will, once and for all, and armed with the strong and noble weapons of obedience to do battle for the true King, Christ the Lord” (RB Prol 3).
“Listen carefully, my son, to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart” (RB Prol 1).

Benedict addresses the person as “son”, a “son of God” or “son of Christ the Lord” and the use of “my” according to Böckmann (2005) “shows a fully convinced speaker who wants to win the heart of the other person” (p. 16). In Gaudium et Spes (Second Vatican Council, 1966), this person possesses human dignity in being called a child of God, created in God’s image and likeness. Schutz (2009) presents the idea that each person is precious because each possesses a unique likeness of God; and he contends that “the Rule of Benedict has this in mind when it entreats the abbot as the model educator of souls to take to heart that he must serve the individual uniqueness of many people” (Schutz, 2009, p. 161). This recognition of the uniqueness of each person, the differences in gifts and talents, needs and wants, weaknesses and strengths is evident in the instructions of Benedict not only to the abbot or superior, but also to the officers or servers and to every monk in the monastery (see Böckmann, 2005; Caveglia, 1999; de Vogüé, 1983; Frigge, 2003; Kardong, 1984; Klassen, Renner, & Reuter, 2002; Schutz, 2009).

There is no room for the abbot to play favorites in the monastery (RB 2.16); rather, he is to “show equal love to everyone and apply the same discipline to all according to their merits” (RB 2.22). As a teacher, he employs different approaches of teaching based on the personality of the monk (Fry et al., 1981): “threatening and coaxing by turns, stern as a taskmaster, devoted and tender as only a father can be. With the undisciplined and restless, he will use firm argument; with the obedient and docile and patient, he will
appeal for greater virtue; but as for the negligent and disdainful, [he will] use reproof and rebuke” (RB 2.24-25).

The cellarer is another official in the monastery whose qualities Benedict also emphasizes in his Rule (RB 31). He is a “surrogate for the abbot” (Kardong, 1996, p. 269) in the latter’s role as administrator of the monastery. In carrying out the cellarer’s responsibility of providing for the material needs of the brothers, Benedict instructs him to “show every care and concern for the sick, children, guests and the poor” (RB 31.9) for they are the ones who are in the most need (Kardong, 1996). With respect to the distribution of provisions in the monastery (i.e., clothing, footwear, beddings) it is according to the need of each one (RB 34.1) which in Kardong’s (1996) opinion balances Benedict’s concern for both the strong who needs less and the weak who needs more. Benedict’s sensitivity to the circumstances of each person is also manifested in excusing from kitchen service (a) the cellarer, if the community is large, (b) the sick, and (c) one who is engaged in another task in the monastery (RB 35.1, 5). When necessary, additional help should be given to the cellarer (RB 31.17), the kitchen server (RB 35.3, 4) and the guestmaster (RB 53.18) so that they may calmly perform their duties, not be in distress and unnecessarily burdened (Kardong, 1996). On the subject of meals and food, Benedict also takes into consideration individual circumstances: (a) two kinds of cooked food for daily meals so that one who cannot eat one kind can have the other (RB 39.1-2), (b) additional food or drink after a day’s hard work (RB 39.6, 40.5), (c) meals before the regular time of eating for the elderly and children (RB 37.3), and (d) meat for the sick who are very weak (RB 39.11).
Benedict also recognizes that part of the dignity of a human person is the freedom to make one’s own decisions in life, a principle enunciated in Gaudium et Spes (Second Vatican Council, 1966). The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2000) further defines this freedom as “the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one’s own responsibility. By free will one shapes one’s own life” (para. 1731). However, as observed in Gaudium et Spes (Second Vatican Council, 1966) the exercise of this freedom has not always been directed towards achieving what is good and of God. Cognizant of this human condition, Benedict begins the Rule with a premise: “this message of mine is for you, then, if you are ready to give up your own will, once and for all” (RB Prol 3).

Clearly, the concept of own will or self-will holds a crucial place in the RB. It is important, therefore, that the concept is understood in context. Self-determination and self-realization are words that will not be found in the text of the RB but Puzicha (2009) imports these concepts in her exploration of “propria voluntas” (“voluntatem proriam” in RB 1980), translated either as “own will” or “self-will”. The first word of the RB is “Listen” (Prol 1), “obedience” is in the second verse of the Prologue and “own will” on the third. Benedict initiates the dialogue by inviting the reader to get out of one’s self, be open to another and think about the kind of relationship one would like to have with one’s self, with others and with God. Although Benedict uses self-will in the first seven chapters of the RB in the negative sense (similar to how it is interpreted by its source, the Rule of the Master), Böckmann (2005) points out that subsequent chapters in the RB refers to self-will in the positive sense. “Benedict does not teach that we should do what we do not want (as does the Master), but we must renounce what is opposed to our
relationship with God and people” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 22). Yet, determining whether Benedict is using the positive or negative sense of “voluntatem proriam” in the RB may not be as simple as it seems according to Puzicha (2009). A comparison of the Latin text and the English translation of the RB (Fry et al., 1981) shows that both “self-will” and “own will” have been used to translate “voluntatem proriam”. An example would be “hate the urgings of self-will” on the chapter on tools for good works (RB 4.60) and “abandon their own will” on the chapter on obedience (RB 5.7).

Based on Puzicha’s (2009) investigation on the use of “propria voluntas” in the RB, she finds that Benedict uses it mostly in the negative sense of “self-will”. Self-will is more associated with the monk who is stubborn, arrogant, and disobedient (RB 2.28); the monk who refuses to amend even after many reproofs (RB in 28.1, 43.14-15); and the monk who murmurs and grumbles (RB 5.14-19, 34.6-7, 35.13, and 40-41). Puzicha asserts that self-promotion, self-delusion, false idea of self-realization and self-determination are all manifestations of self-will; the monk’s unwillingness to truthfully recognize one’s own situation and behavior. Alternatively, Puzicha likewise found that Benedict uses “propria voluntas” positively in the sense of “one’s own will” in RB 49 where the members of the monastic community chooses, of their own will, “to keep [their] manner of life most pure and to wash away in this holy season [of Lent] the negligences of other times” (RB 49.2-3). Thus, in a similar way, saying yes to monastic life is an expression of one’s own will (RB Prol 16). It is in this context that Puzicha presents how Benedict allows the monk to use “one’s own will” towards the achievement of a positive self-determination and self-realization. This matter will be further examined in the discussion on “The School of the Lord’s Service” for as Puzicha aptly puts it,
“Benedict connects [the will] to a spiritual place, *in monasterio*, in the monastery (see RB 3.1) and only in this context can his concept of will be interpreted and can we find the answers that the Rule of Benedict gives to the meaning of the will” (Puzicha, 2009, p. 244).

**Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord’s service** *(RB Prol 45).*

“Schola” as it is used in the RB refers to both a place (i.e., monastery) and a group of people “who have come together for the common purpose specified by the Rule: to seek God, to imitate Christ, to obey his commands, to persevere in his teaching” (Fry et al., 1981, p. 365). The establishment of a school for the Lord’s service would then be the “establishment of a ‘school’ in which one will ‘learn’ from Christ in person how he must be served” (de Vogüé, 1983, p. 17). Formation and education then happens in the monastery “where the monks both learn how to serve the Lord and actually do so” (Fry et al., 1981, p. 165). The school can also be called a “community which does a specific service for Christ” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 36) or the place where the Lord is the one who renders service to the community. In the latter sense, the RB then shows the community how it will serve the Lord in response to his service (Böckmann, 2005). “When Benedict speaks about the foot washing, his main concern is that we serve like Christ and serve Christ, the Lord, in another human person (cf. RB 35.9 and 53.13f.). By being obedient, we obey Christ (in the person in front of us), and obey as Christ obeyed (cf. RB 5.5-6, 13)” (Böckmann, 2015, p. 71).

*Centered on Christ.*

“For St. Benedict, Christ is primarily God: he is Father, King, Shepherd, and *Paterfamilias*” (Fry et al., 1981, p. 361). Christ (*Christus, Dominus, Deus*) is the central
figure of Benedict’s teaching and this is explicit in Benedict’s instructions and admonitions for those who want “to do battle for the true King, Christ the Lord” (RB Prol 3; Fry et al., 1981; Kardong, 1996; Klassen, 2002). Benedict devotes an entire chapter of a list of Christian virtues which he referred to as “The Tools for Good Works” (RB 4). Kardong (1996) observes that Benedict structured the chapter in such a way that it is consistent with the centrality of Christ (God) in the RB:

It is probably no coincidence that Benedict begins and ends (vv. 1 and 74) with a strong vertical reference: love God and hope in him. Furthermore, RB 4.41-43 at the center of the chapter dwell on this same theme, insisting that all the good we do is really the work of God. (p. 99)

The chapter is likewise replete with quotations from the Scripture which guides the monk’s formation and education towards a life in Christ.

At the onset, the monk is called to love God with his whole heart, whole soul and all his strength and to love his neighbor as himself (RB 4.1). “Christ must come before all else” (RB 4.21) in the monastery. One who would like to follow Christ will have to renounce one’s self (RB 4.10) and “imitate Christ when he said that I have come not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me” (RB 7.32). For Benedict,” obedience [will come] naturally to those who cherish Christ above all” (RB 5.1). Towards the end of the chapter on humility, Benedict emphasizes that it will be the love of Christ which will transform what was once done in anxiety or out of fear into “good habit and delight in virtue” (RB 7.69). It is to Christ that the monk should turn to for assistance in bringing to perfection the work that Christ himself has began in him (Prol 4). It is to Christ that wrongful thoughts in the heart should be dashed (Prol 4.50). The primacy of
prayer in the monastery is exhibited by the extensive chapters in the RB on the Divine Office, the Work of God (RB 8-20, 42-43, 45, and 47) for “nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God” (RB 43.3). God is believed to be present everywhere and so communal or private prayers before the Lord should always be characterized with awe, reverence and sincere devotion (RB 19-20; Kardong, 1996).

Not only is God believed to be present everywhere and at all times, God is likewise believed to be particularly “encountered in the weakest and most needy persons that one meets” (Kardong, 1996, p. 434). Therefore, monks are instructed to serve the sick as Christ (RB 36.1), welcome the guests as Christ (RB 53.1), and receive poor people and pilgrims with great care and concern “because in them more particularly Christ is received” (RB 53.15). The monks are to pray for their enemies “out of love for Christ” (RB 4.72). “Obedience to superiors is obedience to God” (RB 5.15). In faith, the monks recognize that the abbot holds the place of Christ in the monastery (RB 2.2) and is called lord “out of honor and love for Christ” (RB 63.13). The abbot listens to the Lord by calling for counsel both the young and old members of the community for it is to the young that the Lord often reveals what is better (RB 3.3). As representative of Christ in the monastery, the abbot is then expected not to teach anything that is contrary to Christ’s teachings (RB 2.2) and must teach “all that is good and holy more by example than by words” (RB 2.12). Finally, Benedict comes to chapter 72 on the good zeal of monks where they “prefer nothing whatever to Christ” (RB 72.11) which is “simply [the monks’] response to Christ’s love for [them]” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 70). Moreover, it is Christ himself who will “bring us all together to everlasting life” (RB 72.12).
Climate of joy, peace and love.

The spirit of joy, peace and love pervades in the RB (Schutz, 2009); similar to the spirit of charity that is characteristic of a Catholic school environment as pronounced in the Church documents. In the prologue, Benedict tells his monks to seek peace and pursue it (Prol 17d).

In daily life this may mean to try again and again to contribute to understanding, respect, and reconciliation, to see the positive aspects of life, to emphasize that which builds up (cf. for instance Benedict’s own way of proceeding in 34.3-5), and to pray time and again for the love of Christ so that we may again return to peace in our relationship with one another (cf. 4.73; 4.25). (Böckmann, 2015, p. 34)

Benedict also stresses in the prologue that “in drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love” (Prol 46-47). Schutz (2009) suggests that this “atmosphere of joy provides the framework for the health and healing work of pedagogy [and] Benedict states it rather cautiously, effectively and accurately when he repeatedly indicates that one should not make others, or one another, sick, gloomy or depressed” (p. 166). Benedict does not want the monks to have a reason to grumble. In order that “all the members will be at peace” (RB 34.5), goods in the monastery are distributed according to the need of each monk (RB 34) and given at the proper time (RB 31.19). The cellarer who is responsible for the distribution of the goods is even instructed not to annoy his brothers and “reasonably and humbly deny [their] improper request” (RB 31.7). The monks are to serve one another in love and obey one another (RB 71). To ensure that the monks serve with joy, help is given to
those who need it in carrying out their tasks (RB 31.17, 35.3) and kitchen servers eat their meals ahead of the community (35.13). Even the sick are reminded not to distress the brothers who are taking care of them by their excessive demands (RB 36.4). When a monk is assigned a task that is difficult for him, he is given the opportunity to “explain patiently to his superior the reasons why he cannot perform the task” (RB 68.2). As monks progress in monastic life, Benedict promises them that “[they] shall run on the path of God’s commandments, [their] hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love” (RB Prol 49). The spirit of joy, peace and love is felt throughout the monastery for it is within each monk; their expanded hearts described by Böckmann (2005) as “filled with love, with joy, with the sweetness of love” (p. 41).

**Education and formation in community.**

Benedict wrote the rule for the cenobites who belong to a monastery, a community of monks who serve one another under a rule and an abbot (RB 1.2, 13). According to Böckmann (2015) these are the four important aspects of community life:

1. The *monastery* or the “sheepfold” is a physical and a spiritual location, the monks are living in stability (both physically and spiritually) in contrast to the gyrovagues.

2. *Militia* – community life also entails struggle, but it is fighting in common. The monks are not soft as lead. The fight is certainly also directed against the devil but more directly against self-will, moodiness, and temptations! When everything is allowed, one becomes enslaved (like the sarabaites).

3. Under the *Rule* which is already a written Rule. It takes its direction from the Bible (Prol 2), refers to sound tradition, develops from experience; it is a mistress by
experience while the sarabaites have no Rule, or are making up their own. The true law, however, sets a person free (Gal 4-5).

4. Under the abbot as spiritual leader, as shepherd, who is in contact with each one and vouches for the community, who guarantees the vitality of the Rule and is at the same time subject to it; he also adapts the Rule to circumstances. (pp. 112-113)

It is in community that the monks will follow and serve Christ by living a certain way of life. In this school for the Lord’s service they will teach each other and learn from each other as they live daily the monastic life; and in the process be transformed into the image of Christ himself whom they seek and in the end share in the glory of God’s reign (RB Prol 50).

Reverence for each person and hospitality.

A community bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ will have to exist with respect for each individual regardless of age, economic and social status, intellectual capacity and abilities. Benedict is explicit in his Rule on how the community can practice reverence for the uniqueness of each person. Dumm (1980) connects the uniqueness of each member in the community with Benedict’s teaching on hospitality which is generally associated with chapter 53 of the RB on welcoming all guests in the monastery as Christ himself. For Dumm, hospitality is not confined to receiving guests or strangers but it is about respecting the mystery in each person; strangers in the sense that each one is unique with special gifts. Böckmann (2005), on the other hand, posits that the hospitality required to be extended to outsiders or strangers in chapter 53 is similarly expected among the community members themselves as indicated in the other
chapters of the RB. Honor, love, humility, peace, diligent care and concern associated with RB 53 are actually reflected in the entire RB (Böckmann, 2005).

Value of listening.

Benedict’s first invitation to the monk in his Rule is to “listen . . . to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of [his] heart” (RB Prol 1). According to de Vogüé (1983), “to listen in the full sense of the word means not only to hear and understand, but also to acquiesce and to obey” (p. 100). It is to listen with the heart for it is in the very core of a person’s heart that God speaks (Böckmann, 2005). Listening to Christ will require the engagement of “the whole person, the whole heart – the integrating center of thought, feeling, imagination, and will” (Klassen et al., 2002, p. 155).

By insisting that every member of the community bring a listening heart to all aspects of life, RB further implies that in the school for the Lord’s service, the one true teacher is Christ, and every monastic is both teacher and learner, listened to and listening. (Frigge, 2003, pp. 233-234)

The monk is called to listen to God in Scripture, in communal and personal prayer, in persons, events, circumstances and situations of the time (Böckmann, 2005; Frigge, 2003) for God is present everywhere and in every person (Klassen et al., 2002). The abbot, in particular, is instructed to listen to the community as he summons them for counsel (RB 3) and to the visiting monks’ reasonable criticisms and observations (RB 61; King, 2014). King (2014) points out that “one must keep listening to others, including those whom one might not expect, to bring God’s wisdom to the monastery” (p. 268).
Obedience and authority.

Obedience in the RB is “obedience to Christ, obedience to the Word of God, the Rule and the brothers” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 20). For Benedict, the “labor of obedience” will bring a person back to God (RB Prol 2). He addresses his Rule to the person who is ready to renounce his self-will and follow and serve Christ (RB Prol 3; Böckmann, 2005). Obedience rendered to God through the superior should be without hesitation, prompt, whole-hearted and cheerfully given (RB 5). However, Kardong (1996) argues that obedience under chapter 5 should be read together with the other chapters in the Rule: (a) RB 3 which requires the superior or abbot to consult the other members of the community, (b) RB 68 which allows the monk to express his concerns regarding an impossible task assigned to him, and (c) RB 71 which establishes that obedience is not only to the superior or abbot but to one another as brothers (Kardong, 1996). Obedience is “many-sided openness to God” (Kardong, 1984, p. 53); to the many ways God communicates God’s will for us.

King (2014) in his work explores the relation of obedience in the RB and the abbot’s exercise of authority in the monastery toward “forming monks in the love of God and others” (p. 258). King considers obedience as the monk’s service to the other monks and to the community and not as compliance to instructions of the superior or rules of the monastery. With respect to the abbot’s exercise of his authority, King contends that the authority of the abbot “is not for controlling people but guiding them toward God” (King, 2014, p. 258). This resonates with Benedict’s intention of establishing a monastery for the service of Christ (Böckmann, 2005; Fry et al., 1981). Moreover, “in serving others,
one discovers one’s abilities and talents as well as one’s limitations and thereby discerns God’s calling for oneself” (King, 2014, p. 264).

Silence.

Silence (RB 6) in the monastery does not mean physical silence alone but it also “refers to a person who is sufficiently serene and wise so that his words arise out of silence and his silence itself speaks eloquently” (Kardong, 1996, p. 126). To practice silence is to know what words to say at the right time and place (Kardong, 1996).

There are times when good words are to be left unsaid out of esteem for silence. For all the more reason, then, should evil speech be curbed so that punishment for sin may be avoided. . . . Any requests to a superior should be made with all humility and respectful submission. We absolutely condemn in all places any vulgarity and gossip and talk leading to laughter, and we do not permit a disciple to engage in words of that kind. (RB 6.2, 7-8).

De Vogüés (1983) categorizes silence under RB 6 into three: (a) silence because of humility, (b) silence of the disciple, and (c) silence to avoid sin (p. 115). He states that:

To recognize in silence a mark of humility is to attach it to the great effort of inner purification which leads to charity. To demand silence of the monk because he is a disciple is to make silence a religious attitude, the attitude of one who keeps himself alert to hear God. . . . And finally, silence as a flight from sin is also related to the divine word. If the monk abstains from speaking vainly or from laughing, he does so to obey the voice of Christ. (de Vogüés, 1983, p. 115)

Instructions on silence are also found in the other parts of the RB. Benedict specifically reminds the abbot (RB 2), the cellarer (RB 31) and the porter (RB 66) of their
words and manner of speaking as they carry out their tasks in the monastery. “Monks in sensitive jobs must know how to speak in such a way as to promote an atmosphere of love” (Kardong, 1996, p. 127). During the time of Lent, the monks are admonished to refrain from unnecessary talking and joking (RB 49.7). Silence should be observed at the dining room during table reading (RB 38.5) so that the monks can reverently listen to the word of God. After prayers in the oratory, the monks are to leave in complete silence so that those who wish to remain can pray in peace (RB 52.2-3; Kardong, 1996).

Humility.

Benedict has the image of a ladder in the chapter on humility (RB 7) where there are 12 steps. “Benedict hopes and expects to see progress and growth in the monks, and that generally means that they internalize monastic and Christian values to the point that they love them” (Kardong, 1996, p. 166). Kardong (1996) distinguishes between monks who have been humiliated or treated harshly and those monks who wish to make spiritual progress. Humiliation and humility are not the same. The chapter on humility refers to monks who “humble themselves before God and their neighbor so as to conform to the divine will and avoid the trap of self-will” (Kardong, 1996, p. 168).

The first step of humility in the RB is to “keep the fear of God always before [our] eyes” (RB 7.10) which is considered to be the same as to live in God’s presence (Böckmann, 2005; de Vogüé, 1983; Grün, 2006). As one remains in God, God reveals the true self of the person that God sees and knows.

- The second step of humility is that a man loves not his own will nor takes pleasure in the satisfaction of his desires . . . .
• The third step of humility is to submit to another person’s will in obedience that a man submits to his superior in all obedience for the love of God . . . .

• The fourth step of humility is that in this obedience under difficult, unfavorable, or even unjust conditions, his heart quietly embraces suffering and endures it without weakening or seeking escape . . . .

• The fifth step of humility is that a man does not conceal from his abbot any sinful thoughts entering his heart, or any wrongs committed in secret, but rather confesses them humbly . . . .

• The sixth step of humility is that a monk is content with the lowest and most menial treatment, and regards himself as a poor and worthless workman in whatever task he is given . . . .

• The seventh step of humility is that a man not only admits with his tongue but is also convinced in his heart that he is inferior to all and of less value . . . .

• The eighth step of humility is that a monk does only what is endorsed by the common rule of the monastery and the example set by his superiors . . . .

• The ninth step of humility is that a monk controls his tongue and remains silent, not speaking unless asked a question . . . .

• The tenth step of humility is that he is not given to ready laughter . . . .

• The eleventh step of humility is that a monk speaks gently and without laughter, seriously and with becoming modesty, briefly and reasonably, but without raising his voice . . . ; and

• The twelfth step of humility is that a monk always manifests humility in his bearing no less than in his heart. . . . (RB 7)
Service.

The monastery exists for the Lord’s service and the RB teaches and forms the monks towards carrying out this service. “Serving and service (servitium, servitus, servire) are used by Benedict to denote liturgical prayer [RB 18.24, 19.3, and 50.4], obedience, all practical work for the common good, service to brothers, the sick and the guests” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 35).

In the chapter on Kitchen Service (RB 35), Benedict exhorts all brothers to “serve one another” (RB 35.1) and to “serve one another in love” (RB 35.6). RB 35 “forbids the hoarding of personal talent and energy; each one must share himself in the form of mutual service. . . . RB 35 also insures communal peace by insisting that each monk serve the whole congregation to the best of his ability” (Kardong, 1996, p. 297). As they sit together for meals, “the brothers should by turn serve one another’s needs as they eat and drink, so that no one need ask for anything” (RB 38.6). “The fine art of being aware of the needs of others at table is symbolic of a life lived in service to the needs of the community” (Kardong, 1996, p. 315).

De Vogüé’s (1983) investigation and reflection on official service and mutual service in the Rule (RB 31-41) links service and obedience. According to de Vogüé, Christ is the one served in the sick, the guests, the poor, the elderly, the children and all the persons in need which necessarily includes the monks; at the same time, it is “Christ whom [the monks] imitate in his earthly life who came not to be served but to serve” (p. 206). A similar situation exists in obedience where to obey a superior or abbot is to obey Christ; in the same way that Christ obeyed the will of the Father. In both service and obedience,
the monks learn what it means to live a life directed to Christ and in the process be transformed into Christ himself (de Vogüé, 1983).

**Stewardship.**

All the utensils and goods in the monastery are the common possession of all the monks (RB 33.6) and are to be regarded as sacred vessels of the altar (RB 31.10). “Things are not ‘merely things’ but part of God’s creation to be reverenced and carefully maintained” (Kardong, 1996, p. 272). The cellarer of the monastery, who is in charge of the administration and distribution of the goods of the monastery, is particularly reminded to ensure that nothing is neglected (RB 31.11). The brothers are expected to keep the tools and goods of the monastery clean and to use them carefully (RB 32.4). The utensils used by the cooks and servers are to be washed and returned to the cellarer (RB 35.10). Anyone who breaks or loses something in the course of their work must immediately inform the abbot and the community (RB 46.2). Whenever new clothing or footwear is received, the old one should be returned (RB 55.9, 12). Clothes that are borrowed by a brother for his journey must be washed and returned to the wardrobe (RB 55.13, 14).

**Discipline.**

In establishing the school for the Lord’s service, Benedict was very clear that the regulations or rules that will be formulated will not be harsh and burdensome except when promotion of the good of the entire monastery will require that stricter rules be imposed in order to correct faults and preserve love (RB Prol 46-47). From this statement in the prologue, Böckmann (2005) contends that “Benedict seems to be a man
of balance, standing in the middle between strictness and laxity, a person of discretion, open to both sides and listening to the circumstances” (p. 37).

Discipline, peace and order in the monastery is then preserved through the observance of the rules on faults, satisfaction and excommunication of monks (RB 23-30, 43-46). De Vogüés (1983) observes that although the RB provides a lot of opportunities to correct the erring monk, Benedict’s penalties are also numerous. “Benedict loves to add preliminary warnings and subsequent sanctions” (de Vogüés, 1983, p. 191). Kardong (1996) raises the question of whether or not Benedict has a system of punishments. Based on observations of some commentators, Kardong concludes that “if there is any ‘system’ at all in the penal material, if there is a ‘penal code,’ it probably comes down to the abbot himself” (Kardong, 1996, p. 257). The authority to discipline and excommunicate is conferred by the RB on the abbot unless he delegates his authority to another monk (RB 70.2). “The abbot determines the gravity of faults” (RB 24.2). If the guilty monk is given the sanction of eating alone, it is the abbot who decides the amount of food and the time it should be taken (RB 25.5). “It is the abbot’s responsibility to have great concern and to act with all speed, discernment and diligence in order not to lose any of the sheep entrusted to him” (RB 27.5). The abbot must exhaust all possible means to reform a brother and only when all things fail, can the abbot ask the brother to leave the monastery (RB 28).

Benedict lays down certain principles that have to be observed in implementing discipline in the monastery. As previously mentioned, the RB provides a lot of opportunities to correct the erring monk (RB 23, 24, 28, 29, 43, and 44). Benedict also requires that there should be “due proportion between the seriousness of a fault and the
measure of excommunication or discipline” (RB 24.1). The abbot is like a physician who should exercise the utmost care and concern for the erring brothers who are sick (RB 27). The abbot should “always let mercy triumph over judgment” (RB 64.10) and must use “prudence and love as he sees best for each individual” (RB 64.14). Schutz (2009) avers that “healing and integration” is the priority in the correction of faults rather than “punishment and condemnation” (p. 155). This reinforces the view of Kardong (1996) in an earlier work where he stated that “[Benedict] knows that the real task of discipline is to change the thinking of the culprit [and] the challenge is to move the person to sorrow for the fault” (p. 253). Thus, Benedict instructs the abbot to discipline the monks according to their age, disposition, character, intelligence and level of understanding in order that they may be helped (RB 2.23-32, 30.1; Kardong, 1996). “Effective human discipline depends entirely on the understanding of the subject: to profit from discipline, people need to understand the meaning of what they are experiencing” (Kardong, 1996, p. 254).

It is quite obvious that there are disciplinary measures in the RB that are no longer acceptable in the present times. Nevertheless, the wisdom lies in the rationale behind the rule.

True pastoral care requires that authority care for those it must discipline (see note 27T). The temptation is to remove troublesome people from the scene, on the principle that out of sight is out of mind. This merely results in neglect, which is a very serious sin. (Kardong, 1996, p. 255)

Authority is to be exercised for the well-being of the monks. . . . It should be clear that the concern of the abbot is not about controlling behavior or action but rather
about fostering the love of God. His means should not harden opposition but express his love and be carried out in ways that create a better chance of reconciliation. (King, 2014, 261-262).

In Benedict’s pedagogy, the failure, the weak, the difficult, the outsider, the stubborn all receive an unusually generous chance and period of grace in which to change . . . Such an education does not speak the language of resignation or capitulation, but of care, of hope and of faith in the Good. (Schutz, 2009, p. 155).

**Education and formation of the whole person.**

Benedict addresses an individual person at the beginning of his prologue to the Rule; inviting him to a way of life in search of God (RB Prol 1-4; Böckmann, 2005). However, Benedict does not intend the individual to go through this path of life in isolation but instead with others similarly committed to walk on the same path in the school for the Lord’s service (RB Prol 45-50; Böckmann, 2005; Schütz, 2009). Benedict lays down a program that will educate and form the monks as individuals and as a community into integrated persons. It will be a life-time process of holistic growth and maturity, self-determination and self-realization, transformation and conversion, and discretion towards the goal of being worthy to share in the glory of God.

**Life of prayer, study and work.**

The RB presents a way of life characterized by activities intended to educate and form the monk’s spirit, mind and body. The daily *horarium* (schedule) in the monastery comprises of a balanced life of prayer, study and work (RB 48; de Waal, 2001; de Vogüé, 1983; Kardong, 1996; Taylor, 1989). De Waal (2001) gives a description on how these activities are integrated in the monastic life as laid down in the RB:
The days of St. Benedict’s monks were poised on the rhythmic succession of these three elements, prayer, study, work. Four hours of each day were devoted to liturgical prayer, four to spiritual reading, and six to manual work. The framework of the day was constituted by the opus Dei, the saying of the offices, the worship of God, which was at the centre of the monastic life. But since the intellect must be fed, and fed by learning and by study, there is room for lectio divina, that prayerful reading of the Scriptures and the Fathers, and since the work of the hands also has its place there is manual labour in domestic tasks and in the running of the estate. This was to be the school of the Lord’s service: a balanced life based on a recognition that each of these three elements demands attention if the totality of the human person is to be fully acknowledged. The good order of the monastery ensures that each element is given its due space so that the whole community shall work better: in daily living it will become clear that the right relation between the part ensures the good of the whole body. (p. 86)

Frigge (2003), on the other hand, refers to the three important features of daily monastic life as prayer in common (called the ‘work of God’), individual sacred reading (lectio divina), and communal living” (p. 234).

Daily immersion in scripture intends to shape the monastic’s awareness, understanding, desire, and moral behavior according to the word of God. No aspect of daily life is too mundane to accomplish such educational goals: receiving guests as Christ, cleaning clothing and garden tools carefully, treating kitchen utensils as sacred vessels, and cooking and serving meals are all intentional modes of teaching and learning what is contained in the scriptures. (Frigge, 2003, p. 234)
Self-determination and self-realization.

According to Puzicha (2009) Benedict uses “propria voluntas” positively in the sense of “one’s own will”. In understanding the operation of personal will, the freedom of a person to make one’s own decisions in life, in the context of monastic life, Puzicha argues that the exercise of a person’s freedom to make one’s own decision should go hand in hand with (a) discernment and maturity (ability to look at one’s situation and make own judgment), (b) a sense of personal responsibility for the demands that goes with making such a choice, (c) appreciation of one’s situation, and (d) the capacity to act out of one’s conviction and to offer everything to God (Puzicha, 2009).

Puzicha (2009) associates the positive use of free will with the concepts of self-determination and self-realization. Puzicha does not define the concepts in her work but she illustrates how Benedict applies these concepts in the Rule. Ryan and Deci’s (2000) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) supports Puzicha’s claim of self-determination in the RB. According to SDT, the satisfaction of innate psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy enhance intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and personal well-being. Benedict understands that there is one will that abides in all the monks in the monastery: “They serve one Lord, they do military service under one king and having been made the one body of Christ, [and] they adore the same one Redeemer” (Smaragdus, 2007, p. 154). For Benedict, self-determination happens in the context of community living. The monk who exercised his own will and chose to be in community must take personal responsibility for all the demands of the life. The choices he makes reflect his maturity and his capability (Puzicha, 2009). “Such independence and freedom is, in the opinion of [Benedict], the real understanding of self-determination. It is not
determined by what the ‘other’ needs, receives or does. The monk should not be observed or persuaded, but pursue a path of consent” (Puzicha, 2009, p. 250).

Evidently, the following actions in the RB would exemplify the capacity of the monk for self-determination: (a) saying yes to monastic life (RB Prol 16), (b) deciding what goods are necessary for him (RB 34), (c) confessing faults spontaneously (RB 46.3), (d) praying on one’s own while on a journey (RB 50.4), (e) doing more than what is expected during Lent out of one’s own will (RB 49.6), (f) having the initiative to do other work if one finds himself free (RB 53.18), and (g) deciding for himself if he is ready for a certain work or service (RB 68).

As regards self-realization, Eisenman and Tascione (2002) refer to it as a fundamental component of self-determination. In their study of high school students with disabilities and the students’ responses to an intervention intended to promote self-realization, Eisenman and Tascione cited the following definition of Wehmeyer, Agran, and Hughes:

Self-realization refers to the fact that people who are self-determined use a comprehensive and reasonably accurate knowledge of themselves and their strengths and limitations to act in such a manner as to capitalize on this knowledge. This self-knowledge and self-understanding forms through experience with and interpretation of one’s environment and is influenced by evaluations of significant others, reinforcement, and attributions of one’s own behavior. (p. 35)

The attributes mentioned in the definition of self-realization clearly correlates with the exercise of free will as described by Puzicha (2009). They intersect at the concepts of self-knowledge and self-awareness of strengths and limitations as well as their effect on the actions of an individual. Benedict recognizes the skills, gifts and competencies of the
monks and “sees true self-realization in devotion to service and in readiness to be made use of” (Puzicha, 2009, p. 251) for the good of the community. The artisans are given the opportunity to practice their craft (RB 57). Monks are assigned to do specific tasks because of their competence, skills and gifts: the cellarer (RB 31), the attendant who takes care of the sick (RB 36), the guestmaster (RB 53), the porter (RB 66), the deans (RB 21) the senpectae (RB 27), and readers and singers (RB 47).

**Transformation and conversion.**

According to Kardong (1984), RB is a way of life wherein anyone who decides to embrace such life will experience an on-going inner transformation towards the goal “described by ancient authors like Cassian as ‘purity of heart’ . . . [while] modern writer Merton speak of ‘personal integration’ (Kardong, 1984, p. 17). Monastic life is the “beginning of a number of conversions since, in this life, God calls [the monks] again and again to conversion” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 113). Quoting the prophet Ezekiel, Benedict assures the monk that God does not wish death for one who sins but rather his conversion; for him to improve (see Ezekiel 33: 11; RB Prol 38, 7.30; Schütz, 2009). This process of transformation and conversion happens in the daily living of the RB. Benedict asks the monks not to swerve from the instructions of God and faithfully observe God’s teachings in the monastery (RB Prol 50). He gives the monks the tools of good works (RB 4) as means to reach the goal of “salvation of the whole human person” (Kardong, 1996, p. 102). Benedict specifically admonishes the monks to change from their evil ways (RB 4.58); to live monastic life as a continuous Lent (49.1) and “wash away . . . the negligences of other times” (49.3). Benedict understands the weaknesses and frailties of the human mind and heart and so he instructs the monks: “What is not
possible to us by nature, let us ask the Lord to supply by the help of his grace” (RB Prol 41) and “never lose hope in God’s mercy” (RB 4.74).

The call to conversion in the RB is both for personal and communal change (Böckmann, 2005; Klassen et al., 2002). Benedict extends a personal invitation in the Prologue to one who would like to give up his own will and follow Christ (RB Prol 3). However, Benedict does not propose that one goes through the journey alone but it is a journey of seeking and following God with fellow seekers and followers. Benedict speaks about him and the monks together “[progressing] in this way of life and in faith . . . [running] on the path of God’s commandments” (RB Prol 49) and Christ “[bringing them] all together to everlasting life” (RB 72.12).

Böckmann (2005) pointed out that the monastery was open to all kinds of people, diverse in ages, physical conditions, social and economic status, attitudes and behavior. The RB speaks of the elderly and the young (RB 3, 4.70-71, and 37), artisans (RB 57), nobles and the poor (RB 59), and priests (RB 60). The abbot is admonished not to have favorites especially among slaves and freemen (RB 2:16, 18). The abbot’s flock will include men who are obedient, docile, patient, upright and receptive; as well as those who are disobedient, stubborn, restless, arrogant, undisciplined and negligent (RB 2). Amid this diversity, Benedict exhorts the monks to practice the good zeal that they may be transformed into a “community in Christ” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 51). In her extensive study of RB 72, Böckmann (2005) concludes that this chapter on the good zeal of monks is the “climax of Benedict’s Rule . . . that opens to us the depths of his Rule and lets us see his innermost concern” (p. 52). Böckmann states that Benedict considers love as the most important dimension of community life. De Vogüés (1983) likewise observes
charity or love as a unified theme in the conclusion of the RB together with mutual relationships: “From one end to the other, good zeal concerns the relations of the brothers among themselves and with their abbot, in a fervent love of God and Christ” (p. 308).

Just as there is a wicked zeal of bitterness which separates from God and leads to hell, so there is a good zeal which separates from evil and leads to God and everlasting life. This, then, is the good zeal which monks must foster with fervent love: They should each try to be the first to show respect to each other (Rom 12:10), supporting with the greatest patience one another’s weaknesses of body or behavior, and earnestly competing in obedience to one another. No one is to pursue what he judges better for himself, but instead, what he judges better for someone else. To their fellow monks they show the pure love of brothers; to God, loving fear; to their abbot, unfeigned and humble love. Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life.” (RB 72)

Discretion.

Benedict names discretion as the mother of virtues in the chapter on the election of the abbot where in its exercise, the “strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from” (RB 64.19). Through the practice of discretion both the weak and the strong are motivated and encouraged (Grün, 2006). Böckmann (2005) defines virtue as the “movement of the whole person toward God in the power of the Holy Spirit” (p. 89). Kardong (1996) defines discretion according to Cassian as “that gift of the Holy Spirit that enables one to read the ‘thoughts’ of oneself or another so as to understand and guide their direction” (p. 536; note for RB 64.19). Frigge (2003), on the other hand, refers to it as the “ability to acquire comprehensive knowledge and then, through
assessment and discrimination, set aside whatever is false and peripheral and discern what is true and essential” (p. 234). Discretion, in practical terms, is the ability to distinguish differences in persons, situations and circumstances (Kardong, 1996; note for RB 64.18) to be able to make wise decisions and ultimately direct one’s actions towards God. Benedict’s instruction on discretion to the abbot is found in RB 64.17-18:

[The abbot] must show forethought and consideration in his orders, and whether the task he assigns concerns God or the world, he should be discerning and moderate, bearing in mind the discretion of holy Jacob, who said: If I drive my flocks too hard, they will all die in a single day (Gen 33:13).

Hagan’s (2009) investigation of the virtue of discretion in the RB provides an understanding of discretion beyond RB 64. He argues that there are other words in the Rule that further illustrates how discretion is practiced in the monastery.

The word ‘measure’ both as a noun and a verb, appears fifteen times and provides the most pervasive concrete image of discretio – whether it be the measure of the clothes or the measured arrangement of work. Decisions should be made with consideratio, which is linked particularly to the consideration of the sick and the weak, to the very young and the very old; all of them need exception to the general rules whether for food or work. Similarly providus allows the abbot to see ahead and make timely decisions [RB 3.6]. . . . In RB 63.5-6, Benedict indicates that age, which should bear the fruit of wisdom, is no guarantee of discretion, and names David and Daniel as youths who ‘judged the priests.’ The verb judicare (‘to judge’) appears three times with utilis, meaning ‘useful, fit, profitable, serviceable’ . . . . In dealing with the excommunicated, the abbot is twice called to be a ‘wise physician’ who sends in
“wise’ senpectae (27.2; 28.2). Likewise the cellarer and the porter are to be chosen because they are wise (31.1; 66.1). . . . The ‘fear of the Lord’ motivates a person to keep God’s command and so to embrace the way of wisdom. . . . Benedict’s discretio shows itself also in his balanced approach to regulations [RB Prol 46-48]. (Hagan, 2009, pp. 387-389)

Böckmann (2005) further explains the link between discretion and “fear of God”.

According to her, the “fear of God” as the first step of humility (RB 7.10-13) is the same as “living in the presence of God” (Böckmann, 2005, p. 199). Consequently, the fear of God becomes important in deliberations and discernment since one who is constantly mindful of God’s presence at every moment and everywhere will be attentive to God’s voice and understand God’s will (Böckmann, 2005).

*Stability.*

In chapter 4 of the RB, Benedict lists what he considers as the tools or instruments for good works which are to be integrated into the spiritual life. They include the commandments of God from the Old and New Testaments and teachings of Cassian and St. Basil the Great, Catholic fathers of the Church (Heufelder, 1983). And “the workshop where [the monks] are to toil faithfully at all these tasks is the enclosure of the monastery and stability in the community” (RB 4.78). It is to accomplish the work by means of perseverance (Kardong, 1996).

According to de Waal (2001), “monastic stability means accepting this particular community, this place and these people, this and no other, as the way to God” (p. 57) with patient endurance, commitment and fidelity. Böckmann (2005) elaborates on this in looking at stability in five instances: stability of the heart as “remaining in the love of
Christ” (p. 135), stability of feet is accepting one’s self and loving the people around with God’s eyes, stability under obedience, stability under a Rule, and stability in community. It is important that the novices know and understand the “hardships and difficulties that will lead them to God” (RB 58.8). Obedience must be “free from any grumbling or any reaction of unwillingness” (RB 5.14). There must be no grumbling in the distribution of goods and food (RB 34.6, 40.8). A brother who finds a task burdensome must “choose the appropriate moment and explain patiently to his superior the reasons why he cannot perform the task” (RB 68.2).

**Benedictine Education**

Cardinal Basil Hume (1981), addressing the Benedictine family gathered at the abbey church of St. Benedict’s Ealing in London on the occasion of the 1500th birth anniversary of Saint Benedict, comments on the role of monasteries in the field of education:

It is this idea of ‘sharing the riches of the monastery’ and of ‘welcoming the stranger’ which explains the traditional role of monasteries in, say, the field of education. Our schools are, in a way, an extension of our hospitality. . . . Our Benedictine schools do not have special characteristics: the pursuit of excellence; the family spirit; the priority of the spiritual; ‘humanist’ in the proper sense, we aim to educate boys, and sometimes, happily, girls, into being good human beings with strong faith and ease of manner in the presence of God and in the adult world. (p. 36)

**Role of the RB and monasteries in education.**

An overview on the tradition of Benedictine education was presented during the Symposium of Benedictine Pedagogy held in Maredsous Abbey, Belgium (February 27-March 1, 1981). The proceedings were published in a book entitled *Benedictini Vivendi*
Praeceptores: Benedictine Teachers, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (as cited in Rippinger, 1985). According to Pierre Riché (as cited in Rippinger, 1985), at the time when the Church was the principal educator of Europe, the RB gave a foundation for the education of children. The “Benedictine schoolmasters” provided education not only to boys who were interested in entering monastic life but also to those who simply wanted to attend a monastic school usually attached to the monasteries (Rippinger, 1985, p. 160). During the ninth to eleventh centuries referred to as “Benedictine Centuries”, the RB was used in all the monasteries of the empire in Western Europe (see Fry et al., 1981, pp. 121-131; Kardong, 1990; Knowles, 1969).

Ludovic Wankenne, O.S.B. (as cited in Rippinger, 1985) gave the example of Sorèze, a Benedictine college of the Congregation of St. Maur, established in 17th century France, known for its exclusive education. Wankenne noted certain characteristics of the school that were still relevant in the 20th century: “modernization and adaptation of curriculum and teaching methods; individualized teaching and limits on class size; a flexible class schedule with a wide variety of electives; and a balance of intellectual, physical and spiritual training incorporated into the entire educational program” (Rippinger, 1985, p. 161). Dominique Julia (as cited in Rippinger, 1985), on the other hand, talked about the involvement of Benedictines as teachers in public schools in the second half of the eighteenth century in France.

The revival of monasticism in Europe in the 19th century not only saw the re-opening of Benedictine monasteries but also the founding of new communities. Some congregations became international orders and others were purposely founded for the foreign missions (Knowles, 1969, pp. 170-176). By mid-19th century, Benedictine
monks and nuns from Germany and Switzerland arrived in North America to open schools for the children of Catholic immigrants. Thereafter, they became involved with the education and evangelization of Native Americans and African-Americans (Hollermann, 2010). However, Frigge (2003) opined that the Benedictine missionaries were not merely concerned about establishing schools but also a way of life; witnessing to a “Benedictine intuition that education is not a single activity of schooling but an entire mode of living” (p. 237). More priories or abbeys were established in Asia, Australia and Africa during the twentieth century; and more educational institutions for secondary and higher education were established (Knowles, 1969, pp. 183-194).

**Characteristics of a Benedictine education.**

Father Winfried Kämpfer, headmaster of the Benedictine school of Meschede in Germany, after “tracing the roots of educational tradition in the Rule of St. Benedict, [claimed] that the central notion of Benedictine education has always been ‘to initiate into life” (as cited in Rippinger, 1985, p. 163). Using the RB as basis, Kämpfer identified “a number of peculiarly Benedictine traits in education: adaptability and openness, an integration of the secular and spiritual realms, instruction of the whole person, discernment, and personal contact between teacher and pupil” (as cited in Rippinger, 1985, p. 164). The Rector of the Maredsous Abbey School, Christian van Zeebroeck (as cited in Rippinger, 1985) presented the results of a questionnaire sent to over 280 Benedictine and Cistercian educational institutions worldwide. In his summary of van Zeebroeck’s presentation, Rippinger (1985) particularly emphasized the Benedictine communities’ responses on what they judged to be characteristics of a “Benedictine” education:
A common reference point recurring in all the responses was the Rule of Benedict, particularly in its distinctive monastic rhythm of life, its communitarian focus and its reverence for the whole of creation. In a strikingly similar way to the qualities of Benedictine education spelled out by Kämpfer, the responses underlined by Zeebroeck stress the values of balance, stewardship for the environment, personal contact in a relationship of trust between student and teacher and education of the whole person. (p. 166)

Scholar-practitioners of Benedictine education have studied their educational environments to come up with a deeper understanding of how Catholic Benedictine institutions can manifest the richness and depth of the Benedictine spirituality. Strange and Hagan (1998) identified six foundational values of communities living the Benedictine tradition and used these values to “define and focus the primary mission of functions, services and programs in institutions of higher education” (p. 11). The foundational values were *Tradition et Regula, Stabilitas, Conversatio, Ora et Labora, Obedientia, and Hospitalitas*. Wersal’s (1999) work focused primarily on the College of St. Benedict, a women’s college in St. Joseph, Minnesota, and how it has promoted the Benedictine ideals of living in community through its emerging leadership model. The leadership model “identifies four major categories of attributes related to leadership: Community Formation; Dialogue/Discernment; Personal Growth; and Action/Reflection” (p. 207). In relation to the said attributes, Wersal presented the Benedictine ideals of Community, Service, Leadership, Scholarship and Cultural promulgation and enrichment.

Klassen, Renner, and Reuter’s (2002) work on Catholic, Benedictine values in an educational environment contributed to Wersal’s (1999) research on the College of St.
Benedict’s living out of the Benedictine ideals. Klassen et al. came up with two major categories of Benedictine values, the sacramental view of the world and community life. They discussed the basis of the values in the RB and the Catholic tradition and then gave examples of its application not only to the educational environment of the College of St. Benedict but also to Saint John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Klassen et al. wrote that the world is “charged with the presence of God” (p. 150); thus God is encountered in persons, things, places, situations and circumstances. The integral education desired in a Christian environment is then influenced by a Benedictine framework referred to by Klassen et al. as balance. As observed in the two educational institutions, students have the opportunity to experience God intellectually, emotionally and spiritually not just in the classroom but also in the gym, library or canteen; not just in prayer or study, but also during relaxation or recreation; not just with teachers and peers, but with other members of the school community. Benedictine students learn academics and skills and discover more of their gifts and talents in an environment where there is reverence and respect for all the members of the school community for who they are as human beings (Klassen et al., 2002).

Klassen et al., (2002) further stated that as a community, the members seek the common good and at the same time has respect for the individuality of each person and commit to provide for each one’s needs. Members of the community are called together for counsel to make decisions (RB 3). Hospitality, practice of simplicity and frugality, practice of justice, commitment to stable community relationships and to a place, and conversatio are the Benedictine values that are lived in a Benedictine educational environment. Frigge (2003) also wrote about teaching and learning of Benedictine men
and women in the Great Plains. Frigge named “three major characteristics of Benedictine education: an attitude of listening, a habit of discretion and a holistic methodology” (p. 231).

Grün’s (2006) work did not specifically address the educational environment but he looked at some features of St. Benedict’s message that he (Grün) considered important during that time which were: (a) living in the presence of God; (b) Ora et Labora – Prayer and Work; (c) Discretio – The Gift of Discernment; (d) Pax Benedicta – Benedictine Peace; (e) Stabilitas and Order; and (f) Benedict’s understanding of community. In his discussion on discretio, Grün stated that in the Middle Ages, the Rule of St. Benedict was used as a textbook for the education of the sons of the nobility. He opined that the value of “discretio as the maxim of all education could also do more justice to young people today than many pedagogical theories oriented to abstract ideals and not to concrete people” (p. 41); for guidelines are made without listening to young people and their needs.

In contrast to Grün’s approach, Mohrman (2006) intentionally looked back at the various meetings of Benedictine educators all over the world from 1995-2005. Even so, what Mohrman identified as the “themes that have emerged as fundamental to many Benedictine schools” (Introduction, para. 7) are parallel to what Grün (2006) considered important and relevant in the message of St. Benedict from his Rule. The same can be said for some of the traits and characteristics of Benedictine education previously mentioned in the works of other Benedictine educators (cf. Frigge, 2003; Kämpfer, as cited in Rippenger, 1985; Klassen et al., 2202; Strange & Hagan, 1998; Wersal, 1999; Zeebroeck, as cited in Rippenger, 1985). Mohrman (2006) gives us an explanation for
the commonalities. He pointed out that in spite of the diversity of Benedictine Schools, they share a “common Benedictine heritage . . . enshrined in the [RB], which serves many of the Schools as a foundational document providing a vision of how the School should live” (Introduction, para. 6).

Mohrman (2006) gave seven main themes that emerged from his study: (a) evangelization, (b) listen, (c) humility, (d) excellence, (e) prayer, lectio, worship, (f) community life: obedience and the school of charity; and (g) contemplation. He contends that a Benedictine education focuses on evangelization “as a vehicle to bring the hearts of the young to greater faith” (Mohrman, 2006, Evangelization, para. 2). This is in line with “the whole purpose of the monastic life as Benedict envisioned it . . . to ‘seek God’ and to ‘encounter Christ’” (Mohrman, 2006, Evangelization, para. 2). Mohrman (2006) described listening as the “crucial theme throughout” (Listen, para. 2) his study. In his discussion on this theme, Mohrman linked the practice of “attentive listening” in the monastery to a Benedictine school “where teachers listened – always in a heartfelt way – to student, students to teachers, students to one another, parents to their children” (Listen, para. 3).

On the theme of humility, Mohrman (2006) stated that “a Benedictine School filled with [the RB’s] spirit of humility would instill in its students and faculty a proper sense of self-worth, a realistic sense of accountability, and a genuine sense of gratitude to God for what he has given” (Humility, para. 6). With respect to excellence the Benedictine way, Mohrman described it as one “driven not by competition, but by contemplation - the awareness of the indwelling presence of God in all [that one sees and does]” (Excellence, para. 2).
Excellence achieved in any aspect of human life is a reflection of that total excellence, which is the “fully actualized” human person. Such a one embodies directly a manifestation of the glory of God. So, excellence in a Benedictine School, becomes in itself, an encounter with the Divine. (Excellence, para. 3)

The Divine is likewise encountered in prayer and worship which are “at the heart of every Benedictine School” (Mohrman, 2006, Prayer, Lectio, Worship, para. 1).

For a Benedictine School to be centered on a vision of God, present in and among all its members, it must have an active and vibrant spiritual life. . . .

The days of St. Benedict’s monks were poised on the rhythmic succession of these three elements, prayer, study, work. Four hours of each day were devoted to liturgical prayer, four to spiritual reading, and six to manual work. The framework of the day was constituted by the opus Dei, the saying of the offices, the worship of God, which was at the centre of the monastic life. But since the intellect must be fed, and fed by learning and by study, there is room for lectio divina, that prayerful reading of the Scriptures and the Fathers, and since the work of the hands also has its place there is manual labour in domestic tasks and in the running of the estate. This was to be the school of the Lord’s service: a balanced life based on a recognition that each of these three elements demands attention if the totality of the human person is to be fully acknowledged. The good order of the monastery ensures that each element is given its due space so that the whole community shall work better: in daily living it will become clear that the right relation between the part ensures the good of the whole body. (p. 86)
The sixth theme discussed by Mohrman (2006) is Community Life: Obedience and the School of Charity. Mohrman averred that like a monastery, a school is composed of “diverse and sinful individuals who must learn to live together. [Thus], if a school genuinely aspires to be Benedictine, then the goal of this living together must be love . . . and the key to genuine charity in community is obedience” (Community Life, para. 1); and obedience is not only to a person in authority but obedience to every member of the school community. Lastly, the seventh theme considered by Mohrman (2006) as fundamental to Benedictine schools is the contemplation of God.

For a Benedictine school, the sole purpose of every aspect of its program, every segment of its day, every activity, project, or department, must be to encounter Christ. . . . To know God as the source and end of all things is the goal of the Christian life – it is at the heart of the Benedictine vision, and should be the ultimate purpose of a Benedictine school. (Contemplation of God, para. 1)

Since then Benedictine monasteries and educational institutions have deliberately identified and articulated the characteristics of a Benedictine education, particularly the values of the Benedictine life adopted in schools, colleges and universities.

**Hallmarks of Benedictine education.**

In 2007, the Executive Committee of the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities (ABCU) in North America endorsed ABCU’s statement on Benedictine education titled “Education within the Benedictine Wisdom Tradition”. According to ABCU (2007)

Like the most ancient of wisdom traditions, Benedictine education sets its sights on the transformation of the human mind and heart. Benedictine education stresses the
formation of the whole person rather than the intellect alone. At its best, it calls for a lively interplay between rigorous thinking and the development of practices for right living.

Three influences animate Benedictine education: Christ, who is encountered anew each day in Scripture and in the human person, the Rule of Benedict as it is lived in community, and the extensive and rich tradition of those who have pursued Christian and monastic holiness in the past. (p. 2)

The statement was the outcome of a process of reflection among the stakeholders of 14 member campuses and their sponsoring monasteries on the question “What in the Rule of St. Benedict could be relevant to the work of higher education in contemporary America?” (Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities [ABCU], 2010, p. 42; see note 8). ABCU (2007) stated 10 core values that “can be distilled from the Rule of Benedict: love, prayer, stability, conversation, obedience, discipline, humility, stewardship, hospitality and community” (p. 3) and called these values the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education.

To be sure, a school is a different social and cultural entity than a monastery. However, an institution of higher education founded and sponsored by a Benedictine monastery cannot help but be influenced by the fundamental concerns of the monastics. Therefore the core values that animate their life . . . find a home in Benedictine colleges and universities and can be seen as hallmarks of educational vitality and fidelity to their mission. (Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities, 2007, p. 3)
From the statement made in 2007, ABCU (2010) published an edited version of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education. Each value is first described according to the RB and its practice in monastic life followed by a general application of the values (by analogy) in Benedictine educational institutions. Thereafter, illustrative examples for some hallmarks from either of the three institutions: University of Mary, Bismarck, North Dakota, The College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota and Mount Marty College, Yankton, South Dakota.

Another organization which “exists to support schools which promote a Benedictine vision of education” is the International Commission on Benedictine Education (ICBE) established in 2002 in São Paulo, Brazil (Wolf, 2010). ICBE is a commission of the Abbot Primate Gregory J. Polan, O.S.B. in Sant’ Anselmo, Rome. The Abbot Primate who is elected by the Benedictine abbots, presides over the Benedictine Confederation which unites the independent Benedictine congregations and monasteries worldwide (Dysinger, n.d.). The Benedictine Confederation was created for the purpose of consolidating Benedictine monasteries for men gradually included Benedictine monasteries and congregations of women by association. In November 2001, Benedictine women from monasteries and congregations around the world decided to unite as one body all the Benedictine women’s communities consociated with the Benedictine Confederation and organized the Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum (n.d.).

One of the aims of ICBE is to organize an international symposium of the Benedictine Educators’ Network every three years for teachers and administrators of Benedictine schools. The website of ICBE (http://www.osb-icbe.org) will show that
discussions on the Benedictine vision of education and Benedictine leadership within
BENET schools and sharing of best practices regarding formation in Benedictine values
have been the agenda during the BENET symposia. There is no document similar to
Nevertheless, during the International Conference on Benedictine Education (BENET
2005) in St. Mary’s Abbey, Delbarton, New Jersey, Sister Mary Collins, O.S.B. of Mount
St. Scholastica, Atchison, Kansas described what constitutes a Benedictine school in an
era of globalization. Collins (2005) drew from what was then ABCU’s initial discussions
on the "ten hallmarks of any Benedictine institution" (p. 6) and added *justice* [emphasis
supplied] as the 11th hallmark based on her reflections on a project for the Conference of
Benedictine Prioresses.

Mohrman (n.d.), currently the Headmaster at Saint Louis Priory School, Missouri, has
expanded the seven themes he identified as fundamental to Benedictine schools and
developed the 12 Hallmarks of a Benedictine School. From ABCU’s Ten Hallmarks,
Mohrman put together community and stability and added three: *listening, moral and
spiritual development and work* [emphasis supplied]. Since Benedictine life according
to the RB has already been discussed, the following brief descriptions of each hallmark
will incorporate excerpts from ABCU’s (2010) general application of the value in the
context of higher education in colleges and universities and Collins’ (2005) and
Mohrman’s (n.d.) application of the said values in schools. ABCU’s Ten Hallmarks will
first be presented followed by the additional hallmarks of Collins and Mohrman.
1. **Love of Christ and neighbor.**

As Benedictines, we call all to pursue a rigorous and disciplined search for truth and to support one another when that quest becomes difficult. We recognize how easy it is for one to hold on to habits of mind and behavior which diminish one’s own potential or impede the development of others. Yet, we are confident in the capacity of all persons to grow and develop, to cultivate habits of mind and behavior that are life-giving and contribute to the good of all. (ABCU, 2010, p. 44)

*Love, mutual love.*

Mutual love in a Benedictine school is intergenerational and it is abiding. It forgives human weakness. It finds expression in patience with one another. The good humor of mutual love bridges disruptions in behavior and good order. The loving blind eye of the elders overlooks youthful foibles. Respectful conversations lead to the loving restoration of harmony is the school community. In a violent world, Benedictine institutions intentionally embrace the practice of non-violent relationships and teach skills for non-violent conflict resolution and peace-making. (Collins, 2005, p. 9)

*Love of God and neighbor.*

Every aspect of life in a Benedictine school should stem from and aim towards the love of God and neighbor. It should animate the entire program of the school and direct every encounter between students and faculty, among all the various constituencies of the school community and in all the ways in which the school relates to the wider community. (Mohrmann, n.d., Love of God, para. 2)

Benedictine educational institutions seek to create and to preserve a noticeable rhythm of public prayer and of private attention to the sources of religious inspiration. We strive to ensure that the design and life of the campus promotes a spirit of transcendence and mindfulness, encouraging all to cultivate lives of prayer appropriate to their own faith. (ABCU, 2010, p. 45)

Prayer.

Everyone connected with a Benedictine institution is someone who knows how to pray or who is learning the traditions of prayer. . . . . [In] this era of globalization, we will be learning from our students who are not Christian about mutually respectful ways of praying. Benedict had not hesitated to tell his followers that they are wise who listen discerningly to the young. In any case, because in Benedictine schools we have all met one another in the mystery of prayer to God, our schools will be places of attentiveness and mindfulness. (Collins, 2005, pp. 6-7)

Prayer and Worship.

In Benedictine schools, prayer should be present in a powerful way. A Benedictine school should provide regular opportunities for individuals to pray, both privately and communally. The Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, should be celebrated regularly, and the Liturgy of the Hours should feature prominently in the common life of the school. As a Benedictine school, the monastic tradition of lectio divina should be fostered. All students and faculty should have the opportunity to learn various forms of lectio. As a Benedictine school, we need to teach the value of silence and
reflection as integral components of the whole person. (Mohrmann, n.d., Prayer, para. 2)

3. **Stability: Commitment to the Daily Life of this Place, its Heritage and Tradition.**

   At Benedictine educational institutions, we put great energy into cultivating lasting relationships among students, faculty, and staff. We seek to embed a vigorous exchange of ideas within the pattern of life on campus, recognizing the shared human standing of all. (ABCU, 2010, p. 45)

   **Stability, especially stability in relationships.**

   For the young who live in a fragmented world, the alternative experience of a stable community where commitments and relationships are sure shows them a solid choice for their own lives. The stability of school relationships, where adults know about the world and the cosmos, but still value the local and the daily can be the foundation for strong personal identity development. (Collins, 2005, p. 7)

4. **Conversatio: The Way of Formation and Transformation.**

   In curricular and cocurricular programs, we seek to challenge realities we often take for granted: to foster intellectual and personal breakthroughs; and to cultivate habits of mind that will transform students, faculty, and staff alike, nurturing deep learning and generosity over a lifetime. (ABCU, 2010, p. 46)

   **Conversatio.**

   Intentional conversatio as a mark of our schools requires that in everything we do in our schools is intended as a means to [transform toward full humanity]. The distinctive way of living we pursue intentionally does not end when schooling is
completed. Rather, we intend the life long transformation of our students.

Distinctive rituals and symbols appropriate to each local institution typically enflesh that commitment to continuing transformation even beyond the schools years. School colors help sustain the commitment to a Benedictine way of being, as does a school song, or reunion rituals, or a love for the liturgy or for *lectio divina*. (Collins, 2005, pp. 9-10)

For Benedictine schools, conversatio sums up in one word the whole set of values and practices that establish the school’s culture as ‘Benedictine’. It comprises all those things which make us who we are. Saying “yes” to Delbarton means embracing this place, our beliefs, our values, our very way of being. It is conversatio which links us to other Benedictine schools around the country and throughout the world. It is that subtle ‘culture’ which one can immediately sense whenever one visits another Benedictine school. Conversatio is the name we might give to the enduring set of values which our graduates take with them when they leave, and which mark their identity long after graduation. (Mohrmann, n.d., Conversatio, para. 2)

5. **Obedience: A Commitment to Listening and Consequent Action.**

Teaching and learning are impossible without obedience, without listening to others with the awareness that no one possesses all truth or knows everything worth knowing. . . . All members of a Benedictine educational institution are encouraged to work to understand, to respect the viewpoints of others, and to adhere to standards of excellence in thinking and communicating. Learning to listen well and respond deeply to others and the world is a prerequisite for growing in wisdom that requires courage and perseverance. (ABCU, 2010, p. 47)
Obedience.

The young who are surrounded by the din, the cacophony and the over-stimulation that our modern societies often need help in learning to quiet themselves. Benedictine schools can offer them the alternative experience of a measure of silence and leisure that demands no activity or productivity from them - like retreat days and the benefits of association with praying communities. This environment allows growth in obedience that goes beyond compliance to coercion. In a Benedictine school the young who have been given room for interior growth can develop listening hearts. Becoming more present to themselves, they can become more present to the living God and more present and respectful of what is around them. Where mutual respect for other students and their teachers rises on the firm foundation of interior growth, thoughtful obedience is a gain for life. (Collins, 2005, p. 7)

In a Benedictine school, this kind of obedience should always be present. All members of the school community need to be open and responsive to the will of God being made manifest through the words and actions of others. This is particularly important in our relationships with those with authority over us. We must trust that when decisions are made, they come after sincere reflection and are intended for our good. Thus, the obedience that is required for the good order of the school should never be solely an imposition of power, but rather should gladly be given in an expression of trust and fraternal charity. Everyone in a Benedictine school should experience the great gift of being listened to attentively and treated with the utmost respect. While the adults in the community have been entrusted with the task of guiding the young, they should learn never to impose their will on others arbitrarily,
but rather to see their role as an opportunity to serve in love. Students, for their part, should accept the direction of their elders, trusting that they have the student’s best interest at heart. (Mohrmann, n.d., Obedience, para. 2)

6. **Discipline: A Way Toward Learning and Freedom.**

No true learning takes place without discipline and without the hard work of stretching beyond one’s comfort level to master complex practices and ideas within a variety of fields. . . . The goal is to move from a discipline imposed from the outside to a mature self-discipline in which a person possesses a robust love of learning and, in setting his or her own goals, is able to imagine and pursue the steps necessary to achieve those goals. (ABCU, 2010, pp. 47-48)

*Discipline.*

In the school of the Lord's service, we commit ourselves to the discipline of regular daily practice. As teachers of the young, we accept the responsibility of identifying for them what needs the discipline of practice. We do what we do in the classroom, in the chapel, on the playing fields in order to become proficient in living wisely. In the school of the Lord's service the discipline of steady practice serves students well academically. The discipline of daily practice academically and socially also tutors students in developing self-discipline and selflessness. Students formed by faithful response to daily tasks not only learn autonomy but are also able to develop relationships of genuine mutuality. (Collins, 2005, p. 7)

Self-discipline is a virtue whose merits are clear in any educational context. In a Benedictine school, however, the value of delaying gratification, putting the needs of others first, and choosing to deny oneself are particularly important, because they
unite the individual in a strong way to the saving mystery of Jesus Christ. All members of the school community need to cultivate these habits of discipline, in order to foster the common good. Self-discipline is also essential for the cultivation of ‘excellence’, whether academic, athletic, artistic, moral or spiritual. (Mohrmann, n.d., Discipline, para. 2)

7. Humility: Knowledge of Self in Relation to God, Others, and Creation.

Time and again, this simple and balanced perspective engages the self-understanding and pursuits of students, faculty, and staff in Benedictine educational institutions. Alone, none of us can learn what we most need to know, nor bring to completion what most needs to be done. We strive to engage the insights and expertise of a wide variety of persons in our educational mission so that each of us can discover what we are good at doing and what we need others’ help to achieve. (ABCU, 2010, p. 48)

Humility.

Humility means that we ourselves practice and then teach our young people to accept the demand for realism and for accountability. The realism and accountability of genuine humility are regularly trampled on in the current context of globalization. Governments and industries often aim to deceive and manipulate those they are called to serve. These same authorities deny all culpability for error and deception. By contrast, daily interaction in the Benedictine community of a secondary school guides all who participate both to acknowledge weaknesses and extend forgiveness while taking responsibility for the ways personal failings can harm the community. Such wise daily interaction will also encourage members to embrace their own strengths
and to recognize the gifts of other and to direct them all to the building up of the community. (Collins, 2005, p. 8)

In a Benedictine school, God must be at the center of all we do. The virtue of humility should be cultivated by fostering in all members of the community the lifelong habit of self-reflection. The climate of the school should be one that encourages everyone to “own up” to their mistakes. Adults in the community must model this behavior for the young. Teachers, coaches and administrators should cultivate in themselves a genuinely humble spirit, where they are not reluctant to admit when they have made a mistake, and apologize for their fault. Students should strive to be honest with themselves when facing their shortcomings and failure to live up to the standards of the school. (Mohrmann, n.d., Humility, para. 3)

8. **Stewardship: Responsible Use of Creation, Culture and Arts.**

In Benedictine educational institutions, we seek to foster awareness that we are part of a larger ecology and that the environment – human as well as nonhuman – has been given by God for the sake of all. We encourage the creative and sustainable use of resources and their just distribution for the good of all. . . . At every turn, we strive to promote the study and practice of the arts, aware of their capacity to bring all to a deeper recognition of the nature and purpose of life itself. (ABCU, 2010, p. 49)

**Stewardship.**

Awareness of and love for beauty, respect for the inherent properties of things, and delight in the goodness of creation are attitudes nurtured in the school of the Lord’s service. These sensibilities need intentional cultivation because the young are growing up in a throw-away consumer society where the virtual is displacing the
material. . . . Yet this awareness of the created world and natural beauty is the foundation of our Benedictine confidence about the sacramentality of the created world and their inherent capacity of the natural things to manifest the presence of God. Such appreciation is also the foundation for ecological responsibility. (Collins, 2005, pp. 7-8)

As an institution, a Benedictine school will aim both to shepherd all its resources with the same attitude of good stewardship. It will also seek to impart to all its members a sense of obligation to good stewardship, both at school and in their own personal lives. In particular, the program of a Benedictine school should be committed to forming its students in good stewardship and the responsible use of natural resources. Combined with stability, stewardship should foster the desire in the community to hand on to the next generation a school in good order. A Benedictine school should strive to meet the highest standards of sustainability in its daily operations. (Morhmann, n.d., Stewardship, para. 2)

9. **Hospitality: Openness to the Other.**

Within Benedictine educational institutions, we strive to extend hospitality to each member of the educational community, especially to those new to the community and/or coming from other traditions. More broadly, we seek to cultivate curricular and cocurricular ways to recognize the needs and to call forth the talents and gifts of persons of differing capacities and dispositions, of diverse races, cultures, and backgrounds. The educational community that can result breaks down any residual sense of insiders versus outsiders and manifests an openness to being transformed by
engaging deeply with the other be it an idea, a person, or an experience. (ABCU, 2010, p. 50)

Hospitality.

Our schools intentionally cultivate the spirit of hospitality in the young at a time when globalization is spawning fear and hostility because strangers we did not invite suddenly appear on the threshold. Our schools, like our monasteries, have traditionally been local in their commitment to people and place. Now, we, our schools, and our students are being stretched to extend our hospitality by the new migrations of peoples in our times and by new expectations about human rights. (Collins, 2005, p. 9)

In Benedictine schools, the practice of hospitality should reflect this key concept of encountering Christ in the stranger and the guest, in the poor and those who are ‘pilgrims’. All visitors to our schools -whether they be prospective students, visiting teams in competitions, guest speakers or workers - should experience the attention and concern, the warmth of welcome and sensitivity to any need that we would want shown to ourselves. Hospitality, however, is not just directed to the ‘outsider’. To the degree that every member of the community is a ‘pilgrim’ and a ‘stranger’ on this earth, we should also strive to see Christ in everyone and treat each person accordingly. Our community service projects are themselves an expression of St. Benedict’s injunction to “receive the poor”, even if it does not happen. (Mohrmann, n.d., Hospitality, p. 2)
10. Community: Call to Serve the Common Good.

We attempt to provide students with a tangible experience of community, deepened by curricular and cocurricular programs, to help them make the connection between the individual and the communal, the local and the global, the present and the past. In so doing, we seek to ensure that students develop the disposition to serve others, near and far, by meeting their most critical needs. (ABCU, 2010, p. 50)

Community.

We come to know ourselves in relationship with others, and our relationships with others are almost beyond number. . . . Because Benedictine community finds its best expression in mutual service and the service of the Gospel, your students who have participated in the recent meetings of youth are being readied wisely for the globalizing world. Having made friends from other places and cultures, they are learning to look at other peoples in the globalizing world not simply as economic levers but as brothers and sisters. Globalization needs global community building. (Collins, 2005, pp. 8-9)

Community and Stability.

Benedictine schools should likewise be characterized by stability and community. In a school setting, the sense of community should be so real as to be almost palpable. This experience of community is expressed most powerfully in worship — especially at the Eucharist. This sense of community should also permeate the whole culture of the school, and lend a particular sense to all those elements of school life which we call “school spirit.” Stability in Benedictine schools would be characterized by that sense each individual has of “having one’s place” — of being accepted and valued for
who one is in the community, and of being a vital part of it as long as one is in the community, and that “Here we belong.” This sense of stability and community transcends the finite time that one spends at the school to include all the members of the community past and present. This is particularly true of the school’s alumni, who, though they rightly and necessarily “move on” from their place as students, will never lose their place in the community. (Mohrmann, n.d., Community, para. 2)


The eleventh hallmark is a concern for establishing justice, what Benedict in the Rule calls the leaven of divine justice, in the face of the injustice and exploitation of others found everywhere in our globalizing world. (Collins, 2005, p. 10)

12. Listening.

In a Benedictine school, listening “with the ear of the heart” is to be practiced by everyone. We listen first and foremost to the Word of God and to the Rule as part of our daily experience, both in public and in private. We listen to each other in the classroom as part of the learning act, but also in all our interactions. Students listen to teachers and coaches not only to gain knowledge or skill, but also to gain wisdom from the lived experiences of their elders. Teachers and coaches listen attentively to their students to hear the questions, cares and concerns of the young. In all circumstances we listen with respect to the voice of the other. (Mohrmann, n.d., Listening, para. 2)

Saint Benedict makes clear in the chapter on the Tools for Good Works that a monastery is a place where virtue is practiced; all the members of the monastery should strive for virtue and for that love that casts out fear.

In Benedictine schools, the fostering of the moral and spiritual life should go hand-in-hand with the academic program as an essential part of the school’s mission. Indeed, the curricular and co-curricular life of the students and faculty form the context in which all members of the school can learn to live a more vibrant moral and spiritual life. The school’s discipline system is designed to challenge all to grow in a deeper awareness of the demands of a truly moral life. (Mohrmann, n.d., Moral, para. 1, 2)


Work is central to the mission of a Benedictine school, for its whole purpose is devoted to the ‘work’ of education and the formation of young people in the faith. Thus, the work of administrators, teachers, coaches and members of staff is to ensure that the activities proper to the mission are carried out. The ‘work’ of the students is to participate in the academic, athletic, community service and co-curricular programs of the school so as to achieve their purpose of growing in mind, body and spirit. It is especially important on our contemporary fast-paced culture, which puts such an emphasis on competition, to take to heart Benedict’s admonition to the Abbot to “so arrange everything that the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from” (RB 64, 19). Such a balanced approach to the demands of ‘excellence’ will require a particular attentiveness to each student, each teacher and member of
staff, so that “no one may be disquieted or distressed in the house of God” (RB 31, 19). (Mohrmann, n.d., Work, para. 2)

**Development and Use of the Student Handbook**

Parallel to the RB is the Student Handbook which actually captures the schooling experience of the students in their school-home. The Student Handbook contains information regarding the vision-mission of the school, its student officials, rights and responsibilities of students, academic policies, guidelines on decorum and behavior, rules and regulations, school discipline, student services, student activities and guidelines for parents.

Bordinsky (1980) defined a student handbook as an “indispensable instrument for the control, management and enhancement of student conduct” (p. 29). Various research show that rules and regulations/student conduct ranks highest among the contents found in a student handbook (Bailey & Ward, 1968; Purvis & Leonard, 1988; White, 1958). Clearly, control of the actions and behavior of the students has been the paramount consideration in the development of the student handbook.

Research shows the impact of the student conduct and discipline policies promulgated by the schools as manifested in the student handbooks. Suspensions or expulsions as disciplinary sanctions are linked to negative academic outcomes and subsequent behavior problems. Changes made in discipline policies actually put students in more trouble thus increasing the likelihood of severe punishment (Irby, 2013). Students by reason of race (Fan, Williams & Corkin, 2011; Shirley & Cornell, 2012; Thorson, 1996), gender, socio-economic status (Fan et al.; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004; Skiba, Chung, et al., 2014), parent’s educational level, family background (Fan et al.), sexual orientation (Skiba,
Arredondo, & Rausch, 2014), cultural inadequacies and disability (McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004), are those who may be placed at a greater risk for misbehavior and consequently punished. Gender, school level, and behavior role (i.e., offender) help to predict the chances of a student being suspended or expelled (Butler, Lewis, Moore & Scott, 2012). New research findings on discipline disparities (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014) show that students of color: (a) African American, (b) Hispanic/Latino, and (c) Native American students specially; students with disabilities; lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students experience high rates of suspensions or expulsion compared to their peers. Students who have been suspended once will most likely receive more suspensions over the school year (Burke & Nishioka, 2014).

Although student conduct and student discipline often seem to be the main focus of the student handbook, the idea of a student handbook as a guide for value formation was already presented by White (1958). He contends that the primary objective of the student handbook should be the development of certain attitudes towards the school, personnel and program like the “development of school spirit and motivation to succeed and participate actively in school life” and “friendliness and respect for the staff and school community” (White, 1958, p. 44). Thus, according to White (1958), the positive content and tone of the handbook will not only “create good will but also produce more mature behavior” (p. 44).

The existence of the student handbook had been a tradition, yet recognizing its importance there was a call for its systematic and careful evaluation (Myrick, Anthony, & Haldin, 1970). A recommendation was made by Bordinsky (1980) based on a survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators. Data were gathered
from the Critical Issues Survey and the review of the student handbooks by the participants of the survey. Bordinsky recommended that considerations be made in the development, design, dissemination and implementation of the student handbook. Although the report (Bordinsky, 1980) speaks of the involvement of the students and the parents in the development of the handbook, such strategy was identified by Bordinsky (1980) as a means to gain power as an instrument of student control.

In the guidelines proposed by Lescault (1988) he emphasized the importance of the participation of faculty, staff members, students and parents in developing a discipline code for an effective learning environment.

The need to provide opportunities for involvement by all faculty and staff members, students, and parents in the development or refinement of a written discipline code cannot be overstated. Involvement is critical to the development of the sense of ownership that is a prerequisite to receiving the support necessary for the discipline code to be a useful tool. . . .

[For students, in particular, they] must view a discipline code as a necessary means of creating and preserving a safe and orderly environment in which learning can take place, not as a list of rules and regulations created by and for the convenience of faculty and administration. (Lescault, 1988, p. 46)

Schimmel (1997), on the other hand, echoed White’s (1958) emphasis on development of values among the students. Schimmel suggested a collaborative, educational model for school rules that will result in students’ positive attitude towards rules and regulations and their wholehearted observance of them; and at the same time recognize the authority and responsibility of principals and teachers. As a result of the
participation of the students, Schimmel contends that the rules will then be positive, balanced and reasoned. Moreover, the students will understand the importance of the rules and laws, respect them and be responsible for the consequences of their choices and actions. The goal is for the students to develop self-regulation, self-discipline and self-control.

In the Philippines, educational policies have clearly stated the duty and responsibility of students to observe rules of discipline to promote and maintain the peace and tranquility of the school (Education Act of 1982). The 1992 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools already recognized the authority of the private schools to promulgate reasonable norms, rules and regulations to maintain good school discipline and class attendance. Measures for disciplinary actions were also laid out in the policy which included the concepts of minor and serious offenses, punishment, and the three sanctions of suspension, exclusion and expulsion. These measures were further strengthened in the 2010 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools by establishing that among the tasks of educational institutions is to “strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline” (Sec. 4.6). In order to carry out this task, each private school (including Catholic schools) is specifically granted the “authority and prerogative to promulgate such reasonable norms, rules and regulations as it may deem necessary for the maintenance of good discipline” (Sec. 132). The provisions on minor and serious offenses, reference to punishment and the sanctions of suspension, exclusion and expulsion for serious offenses or violation of school rules and regulations are reiterated. All these rules and regulations are embodied in the student handbook. However, it is unfortunate that the student handbook has functioned
primarily as a disciplinary tool to make students behave or merely as an aid for orientation of new students and as a reference guide. Like the RB, a student handbook especially in a Benedictine school, can actually serve as a powerful tool to educate and form the students.

Missionary Benedictine Sisters in the Philippines

On September 14, 1906, five sisters of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing arrived in the Philippines from Germany in response to the appeal of Msgr. Ambrosius Agius, O.S.B., the appointed Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines at that time. Msgr. Agius wrote to his superior, the Abbot of the Abbey of Ramsgate, England, stating that there were “hundreds of thousands of children [who] grow up without any instruction and thousands upon thousands have to die without the holy sacraments” (Barrion, 1982, p. 55). The Abbot of Ramsgate approached the Abbess of the contemplative nuns of St. Mary’s Abbey in Suffolk who in turn referred the petition to Abbot Ildefons Schober, former Superior General of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters. After some discussion, Mother M. Birgitta Korff, prioress of the motherhouse in Tutzing, her Council and the Chapter accepted the mission to the Philippines. With the arrival of Mother Ferdinanda Hoelzer as Sister Prioress, Sisters Petronilla Keller, Crescentia Veser, Winfrieds Mueller and Novice Alexia Ruedenauer, St. Scholastica’s Priory in Manila was founded.

The sisters’ mission field was Tondo, a poor district in the City of Manila. The Archbishop of Manila, Archbishop Jeremiah J. Harty, provided the sisters with a small house at Moriones Street which served as a convent and school. On December 3, 1906, the Sisters welcomed eight paying students (two boys and six girls), their first pupils for the first three grades. At the same time, the Sisters opened a “Free School” for some 50
boys and girls in a windowless wagon-shed adjoining the convent/school. As the school became known, well-to-do families from the provinces sent their daughters to the Sisters for their education and the Sisters had their first boarders in January 1907. The need for a bigger convent and school became apparent when additional Sisters came from the Motherhouse and more students applied as boarders.

Considering the circumstances of the Sisters and the changes happening in the Philippines (i.e., absence of religion in public schools; strong presence of Protestantism; adoption of the American way of dressing, speaking, etc. by the youth), Archbishop Harty presented a new call to the Missionary Benedictine Sisters: the instruction and education of young girls. The Archbishop saw this as an opportunity “to bring the alienated upper classes back to the Church” (Barrion, 1982, p. 68). A new property was then offered by the Archbishop to the Sisters, an old Spanish house formerly occupied by the army with a big stable and adjacent barracks located at San Marcelino Street in Manila. The stable became the chapel and the barracks converted into classrooms. The Sisters left Tondo and moved to San Marcelino on December 24, 1907. June 1908 was the first school year in San Marcelino with kindergarten and grades one to seven. Sisters’ application for government recognition of the school was granted with the title of “college” which referred to an institute of learning that accepted boarders. The first school of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters in the Philippines was then officially known as St. Scholastica’s College. Although many of the pupils came from affluent families, there were still “a number of poor girls taken in as boarders, who helped in the housework and were given elementary and religious instruction” (Barrion, 1982, p. 66).
Thereafter, at the end of 1914, St. Scholastica’s College moved to Singalong, Manila and has been in the same location for the past 102 years.

St. Scholastica’s Priory slowly expanded its mission to different parts of the country by establishing other schools. In the course of 110 years, there are schools that continue to exist since their original inception in the 1900’s while others had to be closed or turned over to the Diocese (Barrion, 1982). Currently, the Missionary Benedictine Sisters have 11 schools offering different levels of education.

The direction and thrust of the educational apostolate of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters is articulated by the Prioresses and delegates from different priories who gather together for the general chapter (which occurs every 6 years) under the leadership of the Prioress General and her council. Proposals, questions and concerns raised by the Sisters in the different priories are brought to the table as well as the needs of the Church and the world as discerned by the chapter delegates. From the delegates’ reflections and deliberations, the General Chapter documents express the direction of the congregation for the next six years and the recommendations for the different priories to consider. The individual priories, in turn, hold priory chapters every three years and after a general chapter in order to determine the implementing guidelines for the proposals of the general chapter.

One of the objectives of the Manila Priory stated in the chapter document of the 1973 Second Priory Chapter is to render service through the educational and health apostolates of the Sisters. “EDUCATION is the ‘formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate goal, [Christ], simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which, as a man, he is a member, and in whose responsibilities as an adult, he will share”
The Sisters’ objective was to provide an education that bring Filipinos to their goal “by leading [them] to experience [their] dignity as a human person and understand [their] basic yearnings in the light of Divine Revelation in Christ; and by creating an opportunity and atmosphere where [they] can grow as a person and a member of the community that celebrates its fellowship in Christ in the liturgy” (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007, p. 7). Thus, the educational apostolate of the Sisters took a new direction from a “highly academic orientation” to “an integral education” (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007, p.15).

Two years later, the priory chapter delegates continued to reflect on the orientations and new directions identified in 1973 and listened to the signs of the times. Consequently, the missionary task of the Sisters in the Philippines was defined at the Third Priory Chapter in 1975 (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007), revised in the Fifth Priory Chapter in 1980 and became popularly known as the “four-pronged thrust” (St. Scholastica’ Priory, 2007, p. 54) among the sisters of the Manila Priory. The document reads:

Our Missionary Task Today includes the following elements:

1. **That our institutional apostolate be socially oriented.** This means not only that our institutions engage in social action or have social action centers, but that they should be socially oriented in their objectives, thrust, curriculum and operations.

2. **That we foster non-institutional social apostolates.** This includes rural and urban missionary work, social action work, work for human development and other participatory activities.
3. **That we initiate direct missionary work in the Philippines.** This means educational, health or social work among non-Christian Filipinos.

4. **That we continue the sending of Filipino Sisters to FOREIGN MISSIONS.**

   Our Benedictine spirit shall characterize these endeavors by a continuous striving to build community not only among ourselves but also with the people we serve; and by developing a vibrant liturgical spirituality that will draw us all into one worshipping community. (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007, p. 64)

Thereafter, the definition of a “socially-oriented school” was approved by the Fourth Priory Chapter in 1978, included in the Missions ‘80 document, and revised by the Seventh Priory Chapter in 1986 (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007). A socially-oriented school is a school

- whose administration, faculty and students are conversant with the current economic, political, and socio-cultural conditions of the Philippines;
- where the academic community is actively involved in work with the marginalized of society towards self-reliance and total human liberation;
- where curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities foster the development of social awareness and involvement of the different sectors of the community with chosen programs of action that promote genuine democracy and nationalism;
- where the teaching methodology and approaches to learning and systems of evaluation recognize the uniqueness of every person and develop critical thinking and cultivate social responsibility;
• where policies of employment and inter-relationships reflect social values especially justice and equity and respect for human dignity; [and]

• where the various sectors participate in making decisions and policies which affect them. (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007, p. 105)

A reading of the Mission Statements in the subsequent Priory Chapter documents showed the Sisters’ desire to bring into their mission of evangelization in the Philippines the centrality of Christ in their lives, the primacy of prayer and the Work of God, and the witness of a Benedictine community “characterized by reverence, courtesy, sincerity and openness, warmth and affection, peace and joy” (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2007, p. 74).

The year 2009 was very significant for the Manila Priory for the theme of its Seventeenth Priory Chapter was “New Beginnings ‘09” which called for “an earnest re-visiting, re-claiming, re-visioning and reform, and a renewed appreciation of the basic essentials of [their] Missionary Benedictine life” (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2009). After the chapter, the priory committed themselves to a priory-wide renewal on the following areas of their Missionary Benedictine life: (a) centrality of God, (b) creation of a civilization of love, (c) revitalized witness to Christ, (d) humble service of authority, and (e) international solidarity (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2009, p. 3).

In the 12th General Chapter of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing in 2012, in Rome, the different priories, including the Manila Priory, committed to “awaken awareness on the issues of human/women’s rights and dignity, corporal and psychological punishments in educational institutions and physical and sexual abuse” (Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, 2012, p. 15). Subsequently, the different communities of the Manila Priory committed to work on new approaches in
evangelization for the youth and the elderly, families, migrants and victims of abuse, violence and others during the 20th Priory Chapter (St. Scholastica’s Priory, 2013, p. 11). The challenge to all the educational institutions of the Manila Priory and the Benedictine communities was to “rediscover, live and share our faith in Christ who is the ‘pioneer and perfecter of faith’ (Heb 12:2)” (St. Scholatica’s Priory, 2013, p. 4).

As members of a religious congregation whose primary apostolate is to educate and form the young (CCE, 2002), the Missionary Benedictine Sisters in the Philippines are likewise called and challenged to be authentic to the mission and identity of their schools as Catholic and Benedictine.
Chapter 3

Introduction

This study examined the present design of a Student Handbook for female high school students in a Benedictine school to determine its degree of alignment with the RB. Benedictine schools share a “common Benedictine heritage . . . enshrined in the Rule of St. Benedict, which serves many of the Schools as a foundational document providing a vision of how the School should live” (Mohrman, 2006, Introduction, para. 6). The study begins with a comparison of the values reflected in the RB and the values articulated in the context of a Benedictine educational institution. The common values are those that emerged from the literature review and were used to developing a framework against which the researcher could examine a High School Student Handbook of a Benedictine school. The common values as a whole depict a Benedictine education that is deeply rooted in the RB.

Research Questions

In examining the present design of a Student Handbook for high school students in a Benedictine school, two research questions guided the study:

1. How was the High School Student Handbook for a Benedictine school in the Philippines shaped mutually by the Benedictine formators and administrators and members of a Student Handbook Committee?

2. How reflective is the Student Handbook of the Rule of St. Benedict?
**Purpose of the Study**

The evaluation of the existing Student Handbook has the potential to contribute to a deeper understanding of the core values of a Benedictine education and might help institutions carry out their mission to form and educate young people in the Benedictine wisdom tradition. This study might also facilitate dialogue focused on whether or not there should be a common articulation of the core values of Benedictine Education among all the member-schools of the Association of Benedictine Schools (ABS) in the Philippines.

**Methodology and Research Design**

The study utilized two phases of data collection and analysis outlined in Figure 3.1. Phase one was dedicated to understanding the way the RB shaped the strategic orientation of the administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee in the formulation of the handbook as well as the tactical orientation of Benedictine Sisters/Nuns in the implementation of a student handbook for the formation and discipline of high school students. The goal of Phase one was to illuminate and situate an understanding of the current handbook in practice.
Figure 3.1 Research Design
The data for Phase One came from responses to email interviews with the administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee and from responses to a questionnaire by Benedictine Sisters/Nuns who are formators and/or educators. The researcher tabulated all participants’ responses to every question in the email interviews and questionnaire to facilitate the reading of the data. The researcher employed a close reading process to reveal common ideas; and further identified clusters or codes based on the common ideas and the frequency of topics or ideas presented (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011).

Phase Two of the study employed an examination of the actual RB, commentaries, studies, articles and reflections on the RB and literature on Benedictine Education and its characteristics and hallmarks, to create a Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework (Table 3.1). The resulting framework was then used to analyze a High School Student Handbook of a Benedictine school to illustrate how the framework might be used to guide both the strategic orientation of future administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee and the tactical orientation of Benedictine Sisters who are involved in the formation and education of students in Benedictine Schools.

Procedures

For the first phase of the study, data were collected from the school administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee through an email interview. A list of the Institutional Administrators and High School Unit Administrators in the past 10 years (2005-2015) was obtained from the Archives Office of St. Scholastica’s College, Manila. The names of the School Presidents, High School Principals, and Coordinators for Student Formation were taken from the list. The researcher emailed the possible
participants an invitation to participate in the study with the consent form (see Appendix A) and interview questions (see Appendix B) as an attachment. Follow-up questions based on the responses of those who participated were emailed subsequently. In addition, the Coordinator for Student Formation who is primarily responsible for the over-all development and supervision of the programs and activities related to student formation and discipline was asked to provide email contact information for the members of the Student Handbook Committee who were likewise possible participants.

The data from the religious members of Benedictine congregations in the Philippines, on the other hand, were obtained through the Prioresses/Abbesses/Abbots of the Benedictine Congregations in the Philippines. Individual letters were sent to them requesting the participation of some sisters, nuns or monks in the study. The consent form (see Appendix A) and questionnaire (see Appendix B) were attached to the letter. The forms were sent to the sisters, nuns or monks who are currently involved in formation work and past formators who are currently assigned in schools either by email or given in hard copy. The completed questionnaires were emailed to the researcher in the email address set up for the purpose of this research.

**Selection and Recruitment of Participants**

There were 11 religious and lay who participated in the email interview: five administrators and six who were members of the Student Handbook Committee. However, one data was eliminated because the participant did not meet the criteria of the period covered. The names of the school administrators were obtained by the researcher from the list of Institutional Administrators and High School Unit Administrators in the past 10 years (2005-2015) requested from the Archives Office of St. Scholastica’s
College, Manila. The names of the members of the Student Handbook Committee, on the other hand, were obtained from the Coordinator of Student Formation. An email was sent individually to the possible subjects and they were invited to participate in the study. Informed consent was obtained through the Consent Form (see Appendix A) that accompanied the Email Interview Questions (see Appendix B). The participants voluntarily consented to participate in the study by emailing their responses to the email interview questions and follow-up questions to the researcher. Their responses were de-identified and copied into a Microsoft word document and were given an identity code.

Fourteen formators and/or educators from two Benedictine congregations responded to the questionnaire: six contemplative nuns and eight missionary sisters. Individual letters through email were sent to the Prioresses/Abbesses/Abbots of the Benedictine Congregations in the Philippines requesting the participation of some sisters, nuns or monks in the research study. The Superiors themselves sent the questionnaire and consent forms to those who were presently involved with formation work or former formators now assigned in schools. Informed consent was obtained through the Consent Form (see Appendix A) that accompanied the Questionnaire (see Appendix B). The participants indicated their consent to participate in the study by emailing their responses to the questionnaire to the researcher. The responses were copied without identifying information and pasted into a Microsoft Word document and assigned a code number keeping the responses completely confidential.

**Instruments**

There were three instruments used in this study: (a) an email interview questionnaire for administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee, (b) a questionnaire
for Benedictine formators, (see Appendix B) and (c) the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework (Table 3.1) together with the Criteria that Describe Successful Attainment of the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework in Practice (Table 3.2).

The email interview questionnaire consisted of fifteen open-ended questions which asked the subjects on their employment (i.e. years of service and nature of work) with St. Scholastica’s College, Manila and their knowledge on the creation, evaluation and revision of the school’s High School Student Handbook. There were follow-up questions based on the responses of the subjects. The questionnaire for the formators (see Appendix B) consisted of four open-ended questions which asked the subjects to identify provisions in the RB that apply to the formation and discipline of high school students in a Benedictine school as articulated in the Student Handbook. Three other questions referred to demographic data (i.e. years as final professed, years in formation work and/or school apostolate).

Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework

Christ is the foundation of the existence of an educational institution that identifies itself as Catholic and Benedictine. Each individual who chooses to become a part of a Benedictine school commit to following a certain way of life in Christ: a way of thinking, speaking, doing, teaching and learning according to the spirit of Saint Benedict. Benedict wrote a rule about a way of seeking God and following Christ in the school for the Lord’s service. He was very much in touch with the reality of human nature, both its inherent goodness and frailty that he found it necessary to write a practical guide for the daily life of prayer, work and community living in the monastery. He likewise emphasized the
importance of listening, obedience and authority, humility, silence, mercy, compassion, hospitality, service, respect for each other, and care for all things.

The wisdom of the RB written in the 6th century lives on to this day and has permeated and shaped the very fabric of Benedictine communities and educational institutions. Scholars and educational practitioners have identified the characteristics and hallmarks of Benedictine education. One of the major categories in De Jesús’s (2007) study that described the vision of Benedictine education in the Philippines in the 21st century is Re-Imaging the Benedictine Way. This entails the “process of imbibing the Benedictine value system” (p. 108) for those who become part of a Benedictine educational institution. The researcher made a comparison of the values reflected in the RB and the values articulated in the context of a Benedictine educational institution. The common values that emerged from the literature were chosen in developing the framework which will be used to examine a High School Student Handbook of a Benedictine school. These common values depict a Benedictine education that is deeply rooted in the RB.

Table 3.1 presents the core values of a Benedictine Education that emerged from the literature review, offers an operational definition for each value and indicates the support from the literature for each value. The core values of a Benedictine Education rooted in the Rule of St. Benedict are (a) Christ-centeredness, (b) silence and restraint of speech, (c) listening, (d) humility, (e) obedience, (f) discretion, (g) stability, (h) community, (i) prayer, study and work, (j) discipline and order, (k) stewardship, (l) hospitality, (m) service, (n) justice, and (o) peace.
Table 3.1.

Core Values of Benedictine Education

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<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Support from the Literature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Christ-Centeredness</td>
<td>“The love of Christ must come before all else” (RB 4.21). Christ is the foundation of all things in a Benedictine school.</td>
<td>Rule of St. Benedict (RB 4); Fry et al. (1981); Kardong (1996); Klassen et al. (2002); Collins (2005); Grün (2006); Mohrman (2006); de Jesús (2007); Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities (ABCU; 2010)</td>
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<td>2. Silence and Restraint</td>
<td>In a Benedictine school, silence is the stillness from within that allows one to be attuned to the voice of God which flows into one’s words and actions. It is the peace and quiet that is essential for listening to one another and for preserving respect, order, and harmony in community.</td>
<td>RB 6, 53; de Vogüé (1983); Heufelder (1983); Kardong (1990, 1996); Barry (2004); Böckmann (2005)</td>
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<td>3. Listening</td>
<td>Listen “with the ear of your heart” (RB Prol 1). Education and formation in a Benedictine school begins with attentive and mindful listening to the omnipresent God who speaks to persons individually and collectively in various ways.</td>
<td>RB Prologue, 3, 61; de Waal (2001); Klassen et al. (2002); Frigge (2003); Böckmann (2005); Mohrman (2006); King (2014)</td>
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<td>4. Humility</td>
<td>In a Benedictine school, one should have the stance of humility in relation to God, to one’s self, to others and the rest of creation. Humility begins from an awareness of God’s greatness and holiness and one’s dependence on God; that one does not have anything to boast before God.</td>
<td>RB 7, 20.1-2; 53.6-14; de Vogüé (1983); Heufelder (1983); Kardong (1990, 1996); de Waal (2001); Böckmann (2005); Collins (2005); Mohrman (2006); de Jesús (2007); ABCU (2010)</td>
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<td><strong>5. Obedience</strong> (Interior Disposition)</td>
<td>“Listen carefully . . . to my instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart” (RB Prol 1). Obedience in a Benedictine school is listening and responding to the will of God revealed in Scripture, in prayer, persons, events, circumstances and situations. It is service to each other and to the community.</td>
<td>RB 5, 71; de Vogüé (1983); Kardong (1984, 1990, 1996); de Waal (2001); Klassen et al. (2002); Frigge (2003); Böckmann (1994, 2005, 2015); Collins (2005); Mohrman (2006); de Jesús (2007); ABCU (2010); King (2014)</td>
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<td><strong>6. Discretion</strong> (Interior Disposition)</td>
<td>Discretion in a Benedictine school is the ability to be able to distinguish and discern what is essential so that individual and communal actions and decisions are truly reflective of the will of God; that in all instances “the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from” (RB 64.19).</td>
<td>RB 2.30-32, 35, 48, 64.17-19; de Vogüé (1983); Heufelder (1983); Kardong (1996); Frigge (2003); Böckmann (2005, 2015); Grün (2006); de Jesús (2007)</td>
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<td><strong>7. Stability</strong> (Interior Disposition)</td>
<td>To embrace stability in a Benedictine school is to patiently endure its way of life. It is remaining in the love of Christ and faithfulness in following him.</td>
<td>RB 4.78, 7.35-42, 58.8-9; Kardong (1990, 1996); de Waal (2001); Klassen et al. (2002); Böckmann (2005); Collins (2005); Grün (2006); de Jesús (2007); ABCU (2010)</td>
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<td><strong>8. Community</strong> (Institutional Organization and Structure)</td>
<td>A Benedictine school is a community of persons bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ. It is in community that they teach each other and learn from each other how to live together in God’s love, peace and joy.</td>
<td>RB Prol 45 &amp; 50, 1.2, 72; Heufelder (1983); Rippinger (1985); Kardong (1996); Klassen et al. (2002); Barry (2004); Böckmann (2005, 2015); Collins (2005); Grün (2006); de Jesús (2007); Schutz (2009); ABCU (2010)</td>
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<td>9. Prayer, Study and Work (Institutional Organization and Structure)</td>
<td>Benedictine education aims to educate and form the whole person: mind, body and spirit. Towards this end, a Benedictine school offers a balanced and integrated life of prayer, study and work.</td>
<td>RB 8-20, 48; 57; de Vogüé (1983); Heufelder (1983); Rippinger (1985); Taylor (1989); Kardong (1996); de Waal (2001); Klassen et al., (2002); Collins (2005); Grün (2006); Mohrman (2006); de Jesús (2007); ABCU (2010)</td>
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<td>10. Discipline and Order (Institutional Organization and Structure)</td>
<td>Structures, systems and procedures are in place in a Benedictine school to allow all members of the community to focus on the essentials. “In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love” (RB Prol 46-47).</td>
<td>RB 23-30, 43-46, 64; Fry et al. (1981); de Vogüé (1983); Rippinger (1985); Kardong (1996); Collins (2005); Böckmann (2005, 2015); Grün (2006); de Jesús (2007); Schutz (2009); ABCU (2010); King (2014)</td>
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<td>11. Stewardship (Engaging the Outside World)</td>
<td>A Benedictine school commits to show reverence and care for human and natural resources, material possessions and things for God is believed to be present in all of creation.</td>
<td>RB 31-33, 35; Kardong (1996); Klassen et al. (2002); de Jesús (2007)</td>
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<td>12. Hospitality (Engaging the Outside World)</td>
<td>An encounter with every member of the Benedictine school community, guest, stranger, and poor is believed to be an encounter with Christ himself. Every person is regarded with love, respect, reverence, humility, peace, care and concern.</td>
<td>RB 53; Dumm (1980); Kardong (1996); Caveglia (1999); Klassen et al. (2002); Collins (2005); Böckmann (2005); de Jesus (2007); ABCU (2010)</td>
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Table 3.1. Continued

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<td>13. Service (Engaging the Outside World)</td>
<td>In the “school for the Lord’s service” (RB Prol 45), all members serve Christ by serving one another in love. A Benedictine education aims to form minds and hearts that embrace especially those who are most in need: the sick, the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalized, and the oppressed for service to them is an encounter with Christ.</td>
<td>RB 35-36, 53, 72.7; De Vogüé (1983); Kardong (1996); Caveglia (1999); Böckmann (2005); de Jesús (2007)</td>
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<td>14. Justice (Engaging the Outside World)</td>
<td>In a Benedictine school, the justice practiced is the justice of God. It is living in fairness, observing the commandments of God as individuals and as a community.</td>
<td>RB Prol 25 &amp; 47, 2, 3.6, 73; Kardong (1996); Klassen et al. (2002); Collins (2005); Böckmann (2005, 2015); Smaragdus (2007)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Peace (Engaging the Outside World)</td>
<td>“Let peace be your quest and aim” (Prol 17). Peace in a Benedictine school is founded on bringing God’s peace into the community and the outside world. It is openness to reconciliation, harmony and understanding among all peoples.</td>
<td>RB 27, 34; Fry et al. (1981); Kardong (1996); Grün (2006); de Jesús (2007); Smaragdus (2007); Böckmann (2015);</td>
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To further present the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework, Figure 3.2. shows the development of the values in a Benedictine school and the overlapping relationships that are fostered in the process.
Figure 3.2 Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework
Benedictine education is characterized by a way of life directed at developing certain values in every person and in the whole school community towards a transformation in Christ, and on sharing in the mission of the Church to build the reign of God on earth.

Christ is the very foundation of a Catholic, Benedictine education and the value of Christ-centeredness is the very basis of all the other Benedictine values. Towards the goal of a new life in Christ, a person’s education and formation should begin with acquiring the interior disposition of silence and restraint of speech, listening, humility, obedience, discretion and stability in imitation of Christ and for the love of God. These aforesaid values are taught, learned, shown, imbibed, and practiced in a Benedictine educational institution organized as a community with a daily schedule of prayer, study and work, and a structure of discipline and order. The other values of stewardship, hospitality, service, justice and peace that are woven into the daily life in a Benedictine school are also lived (or practiced) beyond the school walls, out to the society and the world.

What follows is an expanded definition of each of the values of Benedictine Education presented to further illustrate how the values are to be lived in the spirit of the RB. The researcher acknowledges that the definitions are by no means comprehensive and that continuous reflection on Saint Benedict’s pedagogy will lead to a deeper understanding on how the Benedictine educational community can grow and progress in faithfully practicing these values. Each value is presented and defined in turn.
Christ-Centeredness.

“The love of Christ must come before all else” (RB 4.21). Christ is at the core of a Benedictine education. Christ who is love and forgiveness, truth and justice, and genuine peace and joy. The life of each member of the school community and the community as a whole is oriented towards growing in faith and love of Christ and never losing hope in His mercy (RB 4.74). We embrace the other values (i.e., silence, listening, humility, etc.) wholeheartedly out of love for Christ. Relationships are fostered in imitation of Christ’s love for all. School rituals, activities and programs are designed to be opportunities for a personal encounter with Christ and Christ’s presence in each other. To live a life committed to loving and following Christ in community necessarily involves a daily process of personal and communal transformation and conversion.

Silence and Restraint of Speech.

As one enters a Benedictine school, there is a general atmosphere of peacefulness and calmness. Silence is essential to cultivate a reflective and contemplative spirit that will allow us to be attentive to the voice of God speaking from within one’s heart. At other times, we refrain from saying anything simply to cherish silence.

Silence also refers to thoughtful and responsible talking. Everyone should strive to exercise wisdom and prudence before one speaks that they may say the right words at the right time and place and manner. Words uttered should be life-giving, said out of love and care for the other. It is speaking in a manner that is respectful not only of the person spoken to but also the people nearby; that no one may be unnecessarily distressed or disturbed or have cause to murmur and grumble.
Listening.

In a world where we can easily shut ourselves off from everything around us, a Benedictine school extends the invitation for us to listen. We are present, body, mind and spirit to the people we meet each day, in the place where we are at, in the situation we find ourselves in. We learn to open our hearts and minds and listen to what other people have to say even from those whom we think cannot contribute anything of substance or whom we know will say something that we will find disagreeable, threatening or uncomfortable. We listen to ourselves, persons of authority, our elders, our peers and even those of a younger generation. We do not monopolize discussions and conversations. We listen to the “signs of the times” in order that our Benedictine education is relevant to the needs of the school community, the people whom we serve, our nation and the world. We listen because we know that God speaks to us in the words we read and hear, in the experiences and emotions we go through, in the world we see each day and even in the silence that engulfs us.

Humility.

In a Benedictine school we aim that our actions are directed to conform to God’s will and not self-will. It is putting on the mind of God in order that we think less of our own interests but of the well-being of others and the community. In our daily interactions, dialogues, or collaborative work, we strive to listen to one another and learn from each other. We allow ourselves to be vulnerable to others, prone not only to praises and affirmations but also to criticisms and corrections. In the process, we grow to accept the truth about ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses, abilities and limitations. A Benedictine school should also witness to a community whose members are encouraged
to admit their mistakes to themselves and to others and be accountable and responsible for the consequences of their actions. In every accomplishment and success, there should be no self-pride and arrogance but instead gratitude of the heart knowing that they are made possible only through God’s grace and the help and support of others.

**Obedience.**

Obedience in a Benedictine school is to listen to God’s will communicated in various ways and to respond in love. Silence and listening are important before we can obey. Silence is needed in order that we will be able to listen to God’s voice within ourselves, in others, in situations and events; and after we have heard and understood, we respond. Obedience should be whole-hearted, cheerfully given and without hesitation (RB 5).

Obedience is not only to persons of authority but also among peers and the other members of the community. Obedience is not about mere observance of rules and regulations but about nurturing relationships of love, care and concern in the school community. In stepping out of our comfort zone and allowing ourselves to be led by another, we unravel latent talents and skills and use them for the benefit and enjoyment of the community. Similarly, it also becomes an occasion for us to admit our limitations and weaknesses; and through mutual obedience, humility is fostered in accepting that no one has the monopoly of ideas and capacities, no one is self-sufficient. The school community truly becomes a place where each one of us experiences teaching and learning.

**Discretion.**

In a Benedictine school, we constantly ask for the gift of discretion in order that all our actions and dealings with one another are in accordance with God’s will. The
practice of discretion requires that we are first cognizant of the unique and distinct circumstances of persons and situations. We develop sensitivity to what is not seen and heard when confronted with issues that have to be resolved in our sphere of influence, in the classroom, in the offices or in the institutional level. We reserve our judgments after we have fully obtained knowledge and understanding of the events that are before us for consideration and decision. The exercise of discretion is indispensable in order to reach the ultimate goal of showing love to everyone.

**Stability.**

In a Benedictine school, there is a deep respect and appreciation for our Benedictine foremothers who opened their home to all those who would like to be educated in life and in faith; and for all the Benedictine sisters, lay mission partners, faculty, staff, students and parents who have continued this legacy through the years. All members of the school community are rooted in the vision and mission of the institution. We strive to remain faithful in our following of Christ in the way that Saint Benedict has instructed us. We patiently endure our weaknesses and frailties, accept ourselves for who we are and trust in the grace of God in our path of conversion. We stay with the tasks that we have to accomplish in spite of difficulties and hurdle the challenges.

As a community, we commit to persevere in loving and supporting one another. De Waal (2001) states that “one part of such persevering in any loving relationship is allowing the other person room to be themselves and to grow” (p. 59). As we open our minds and hearts to discovering the uniqueness and giftedness of the other person, we grow in our knowledge and understanding not only of the other but also of ourselves. We
mature in our relationships and establish life-giving and lasting friendships that are centered on our friendship with Christ.

**Community.**

A strong sense of belongingness and oneness pervades the walls of a Benedictine school. The students, administrators, faculty, staff and parents are bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ in one another. We all work together to live in peace, joy and love in the midst of conflicts and misunderstandings; and in spite of our differences in personalities, circumstances, needs and opinions. It is a community of dialogue, consultation and collaboration. How to live in community is eloquently described in the Rule’s exhortation on the good zeal (RB 72). Each member of the community “must try to be the first to show respect to the other” (RB 72.4), “[support] with the greatest patience one another’s weakness of body or behavior” (RB 72.5), “[compete] in obedience to one another” (RB 72.6) and “pursue what [one judges better for someone else rather than for one’s self] (RB 72.7). A Benedictine education ensures that the community spirit experienced in school flows into one’s relationship with the society and the world.

**Prayer, Study and Work.**

Benedictine education aims to educate and form the whole person: mind, body and spirit. Towards this end, a Benedictine school offers a balanced and integrated life of prayer, study and work “that in all things God may be glorified (1 Pt 4:11)” (RB 57.9). This balance is commonly referred to as the Benedictine motto of Ora et Labora, prayer and work. The school must offer a holistic approach to seeking a deeper understanding and appreciation of one’s faith towards an intimate relationship with God. Prayer should
be an integral part of each day such that every work or activity is a prayer in itself. Spiritual growth is nurtured through the celebration of the Sacraments, especially the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and the practice of recollections, retreats, prayer services for specific intentions, the Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office, and lectio divina.

The program of study and work done in a Benedictine school should be a channel for us to discover and celebrate our gifts, talents and abilities; and to encounter God who is the source of all good things. Our pursuit of excellence in a Benedictine school is a continuation of the creative work of God and the recognition of the greatness that is inherent in each person. We pray to God at the beginning of our work for God to bring it to perfection (RB Prol 4).

**Discipline and Order.**

As members of a school community we are expected to exhibit discipline in our external behavior as well as the interior attitude of self-responsibility, self-control, and self-regulation. Through practice and repetition, the proper ways and manner of doing things ultimately become part of our nature. The goal is not just a change in our external behavior but also a change in our attitude and thinking to develop discipline and order from within.

The rules and regulations in a Benedictine school serve as guide in our daily observance of God’s instructions and teachings. They exist for peace in and protection of the community and all its members. It is not about controlling behavior but fostering love and reconciliation in community. The manner of disciplining in a Benedictine school is carried out with compassion and mercy for those who have committed
infractions. It should reflect the “exercise of utmost care and concern” (RB 27.1) for the well-being of those who err. It is then necessary for those who have the authority and responsibility to discipline to know and understand the circumstances and situation of the individual subject of discipline. Healing and integration back into the community is the priority. The disciplinary process should include a reflection on the experience, an understanding of the wrong that has been committed and the consequences of one’s actions. Moreover, the one at fault should also repair the damage caused and ask forgiveness from the one harmed and injured. The sanctions should be commensurate to the seriousness of the faults (RB 24.1). Measures are employed, including seeking the assistance of those who have the abilities and skills that can be of help in the process of healing (RB 27.2-3). If all the efforts to help the individual restore one’s commitment to live in harmony with the community fail, then there is no recourse but to ask the individual to leave (RB 28.6-7).

**Stewardship.**

A Benedictine education ensures that gratitude and appreciation for God’s creation is inculcated in every member of the community. Given the privilege to enjoy the beauty of nature and the many resources in community, the responsible use and care of all resources is a concern of every member of the community. We work together to maintain the beauty and cleanliness of our campus grounds, buildings and structures. Materials and goods that are used in common are kept clean and in good condition like sacred vessels of the altar (RB 31.10).

As good stewards of the common home, we do our share in caring for the earth by practicing recycling and re-using of resources. There are policies for conservation of
electricity and water, simplicity in the use of materials for projects and decorations, and accountability in the requisition and use of school and office supplies.

**Hospitality.**

In a Benedictine school, there is a spirit of openness to receive each person as Christ himself, be a student, a teacher, a parent, a guest or a stranger. Every meeting is an occasion to show respect, reverence, love, peace, care and concern to the other regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, economic and social status, religious beliefs, capacities and aptitudes. There is a recognition that each one has distinct talents and gifts that can be contributed to the community. The school environment promotes a healthy exchange of opinions, ideas and insights.

Participation in community outreach and service projects is embedded in Benedictine education. The Catholic teaching on the preferential option for the poor is lived out in the school’s involvement and engagement with the marginalized groups in society since they are the ones who need hospitality the most (RB 53.15).

**Service.**

Established as a school for the Lord’s service (RB Prol 45), a Benedictine school is a place where all members of the community serve one another out of honor and love for God and do it in peace and in joy. Our service or help extended to one another is in imitation of Christ who came to serve. Mutual obedience is service. Sharing of talents, gifts, capacities and abilities for the common good is our service to the community. Caring for the campus grounds and the school’s material resources is service not only to the present community but also to the community of the future. Going beyond one’s own interests and responding to the needs of others is service.
A Benedictine education aims to form minds and hearts that embrace especially those who are most in need: the sick, the weak, the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalized, and the oppressed for service to them is an encounter with Christ (RB 53.15; 36.1-3). Service to those who are most in need begins in the school community and extends to those in the local communities, the country and the world.

**Justice.**

In a Benedictine school every member in the community is treated with the reverence and dignity they deserve as children of God. Each one is given according to what one needs. In cases of conflicts and disagreements, justice demands that the persons of authority obtain all knowledge that are necessary for a just resolution of the dispute. A Benedictine education commits to the formation of its members to be advocates for justice in the larger community especially for those who are voiceless in society: the weak, the poor, and the marginalized.

**Peace.**

The Benedictine motto of peace or PAX is the greeting that welcomes everyone to a Benedictine school. It is an invitation to a communion of love and faith in the one who calls all of us to peace. In the first commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict in the 9th century, Smaragdus (2007) writes on what it means to “seek peace and follow it”:

Peace is mind’s serenity, spirit’s tranquility, heart’s simplicity, love’s bond, charity’s fellowship. This it is that takes away secret hatreds, puts an end to wars, suppresses angry outbursts, treads down the proud, loves the humble, quietens those involved in discord, brings enemies to concord; it is pleasing to all, does not seek what belongs to others, regards nothing as its own, teaches how to love since it does not know how to
hate; it does not know what it is to be lifted up or puffed up. Let him who received
this hold on to it; let him who has lost it search for it again; let him who has let go of
it seek it out carefully, because he who is not found in peace is disowned by the
Father, disinherited by the Son, and no less made a stranger by the Holy Spirit.” (p. 85)

Criteria that Describe Successful Attainment of the Core Values of Benedictine
Education Framework in Practice

Based on the definitions of the values and the support found in the literature, Table 3.2 presents the criteria designed by the researcher and then applied to the high school student handbook. These criteria translate the values into educational practice and the formation of the students in particular. The process of applying the criteria revealed both areas of strength and areas of weakness in the alignment of the handbook to the core values of a Benedictine education.
## Criteria for Practice of the Core Values of Benedictine Education

<table>
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<th>Values</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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| Christ-centeredness            | • Christ is the basis for the mission and vision.  
  • Curriculum reflects the study of Christ and the Faith.  
  • Call for individual and communal conversion and transformation. |
| Silence and Restraint of Speech| • Creates an environment conducive for quiet and reflection.  
  • Promotes thoughtful, responsible and life-giving speech. |
| Listening                      | • Upholds the value of presence and mindful listening.  
  • Develops respect for others and their opinions.  
  • Dialogue and consultation promoted across levels of authority and generations. |
| Humility                       | • Recognition of God as the source of all good things so there is no reason for boast or pride.  
  • Acceptance of the truth about one’s self: strengths, weaknesses, abilities and limitations.  
  • Admission of one’s mistakes and accountability for the consequences of one’s actions.  
  • Openness to others with genuine acceptance that one necessarily grows and matures with the guidance and help of another person. |
| Obedience                      | • Listens and responds to what is heard from persons across levels of authority and generations.  
  • Acts on what one has learned from events, situations and experiences.  
  • Nurtures relationships of love, care and concern in the school community.  
  • Promotes obedience that is whole-hearted, cheerfully given and without hesitation. |
### Table 3.2. Continued

<table>
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| Discretion                    | • Considers distinct circumstances of persons and situations so that actions and decisions ultimately practice love and care.  
                                 • Focuses on the essentials and the practice of moderation.          |
| Stability                     | • Encourage fidelity and commitment to one’s relationships and work in spite of difficulties and challenges.  
                                 • Develops respect and deep appreciation for the Benedictine heritage and legacy of the founding sisters and all Sisters, lay mission partners, faculty, staff, students and parents who have been part of the institution. |
| Community                     | • Creates a strong sense of belongingness and oneness among all the members of the school community.  
                                 • Provides venues for dialogue and collaboration among the administrators, faculty, staff, students, and parents.  
                                 • Celebrates Church and Benedictine feasts, milestones in the school’s history, school accomplishments and other community events. |
| Prayer, Study and Work        | • Designs a balanced educational program that will foster physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth.  
                                 • Provides opportunities for students to discover, develop and hone their gifts, talents and abilities.  
                                 • Ensures that prayer is an integral part of each day such that every work or activity is a prayer in itself; “that in all things God may be glorified.”  
                                 • Integrates into the school life the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and the practice of recollections, retreats, prayer services for specific intentions, the Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office, and lectio divina. |
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<th>Values</th>
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| Discipline and Order | • Rules and regulations serve as a guide in the daily observance of God’s instructions and teachings.  
• Rules and regulations promote a change in attitude and thinking so that discipline and order comes from within to develop self-regulation, self-control, and self-responsibility in the student.  
• The disciplinary process reflects mercy and compassion for those who err and the “exercise of utmost care and concern” for their well-being to foster love and reconciliation.  
• The disciplinary process includes a reflection on the experience, an understanding of the wrong that has been committed and the consequences of one’s actions. The one at fault should repair the damage caused and ask forgiveness from the one harmed and injured.  
• Sanctions are commensurate to the seriousness of the faults.  
• Measures are employed, including seeking the assistance of those who have the abilities and skills that can be of help in the process of healing. |
| Stewardship | • Upholds the responsible use and care of all resources; and the maintenance of the beauty and cleanliness of campus grounds, buildings and structures.  
• Provides policies and procedures for the recycle and re-use of resources and conservation of electricity and water.  
• Promotes simplicity of lifestyle.  
• Offers guidelines for consumption of simple, creative yet inexpensive materials for projects and decorations. |
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| Hospitality | • Creates an atmosphere of openness to receive each person as Christ himself.  
• Admission policies reflect opportunities and possibilities for all regardless of religious beliefs, sexual orientation, economic and social status, family background and physical capacities.  
• Provides opportunities for participation in outreach and service projects; and other involvement and engagement with the marginalized groups in society. |
| Service  | • Takes delight in serving one another out of love and honor for God.  
• Places the needs of others before one’s own wants and needs.  
• Forms minds and hearts that embrace especially those who are most in need—the weak, the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed. |
| Justice   | • Promotes the belief that each person deserves to be treated with respect and reverence as children of God.  
• Procedures are in place to address financial difficulties of students who have the academic ability.  
• Mechanisms for evaluation of students are transparent and clear. |
| Peace    | • Encourages interactions with others in ways that promote harmony, good-will and reconciliation.  
• Mindful that persons are listened to and given their needs to avoid murmuring and grumbling in community.  
• Standard operating procedures are in place to avoid confusion, distress and anxiety when certain incidents or situations happen. |
**Method of Data Analysis**

The High School Student Handbook was analyzed against the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework and the look for criteria for each core value. Initial reading of the Student Handbook involved the search for explicit reference to “Benedictine education, spirituality, culture and values.” Thereafter the Student handbook was closely read to identify alignments to the core values in the Framework and the look for criteria for each core value. An item or guideline in the Handbook was considered strongly aligned to the core value when it (a) not only stated the expected behavior but also mentioned the value that was intended to be inculcated in the student, or (b) clearly stated an expected behavior that illustrated an application of the value even if it failed to educate the students of the purpose for such behavior in relation to the value. On the other hand, an item or guideline was considered weakly aligned to the core value when it neither mentioned the value nor clearly stated an expected behavior that illustrated an application of the value but the practice of the value could be inferred. Gaps were also identified in the Handbook where values should have been discussed but were not.
Chapter 4

A Look into a High School Student Handbook: Findings and Discussion

Phase one of the analysis dealt with the responses to the email-interview with 10 administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee and responses to a questionnaire by 14 Filipino Benedictine Sisters/Nuns who are formators and/or educators. The questions in the 15-item email-interview (see Appendix B) probed for insights on the creation, revision and evaluation of a student handbook. The questions in the 4-item questionnaire with questions on demographics (see Appendix B), on the other hand, sought the application of the RB to the formation and discipline of High School students in a Benedictine school as articulated in a student handbook. Each question was analyzed using close reading of the responses from the email-interview and the follow-up email-interview of some participants and the questionnaire. This section presents the findings from that analysis for each question of the email-interview and the questionnaire. The section concludes with a summary of the commonalities that emerged. In reporting the findings from the email-interview of the school administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee, the researcher used the code AM (Administrator/Member) followed by a number (01 to 10) for each participant. With respect to the findings from the questionnaire administered to the Benedictine Sisters/Nuns, the researcher used the code BSN (Benedictine Sister/Nun) followed by a number (01 to 14) for each participant.
Email-interview of School Administrators and Members of the Student Handbook Committee

Findings.

Questions 1 and 2 asked about the participants’ number of years of employment with the institution, the nature of their work and their involvement in the creation of the Student Handbook. Six out of the 10 participants have worked at St. Scholastica’s College (SSC), Manila between two and eight years and the other four, between 17 to 35 years. The participants’ were either administrators tasked to form the Student Handbook Committee and approve the changes made by it or members of the committee themselves.

Question 3: What do you know about the creation of the High School Student Handbook?

The question was understood by the 10 participants in two different ways: one, in the context of the student handbook’s initial formulation, and the other, in the context of periodical evaluations, reviews or revisions of the student handbook. Four of the 10 participants (40%) answered in the context of the initial creation of the student handbook. Three out of the four participants stated that they did not have any idea how the student handbook was first formulated while the other one (AM06) gave a reason for its creation: “formulated to preserve order and harmony within the community and to develop self-discipline.”

Majority of the participants (60%) answered the question in the context of evaluations, reviews or revisions. Three of the six participants said that evaluations, reviews and revisions were done “to ensure that updated program and policies are those that are served” (AM03). According to one participant (AM01), the revisions are based
on actual experiences and needs of the stakeholders” while another (AM05) mentioned
the need to revise the student handbook specifically as a result of new cases like cyber
bullying and drug pushing. Four of the six participants referred to the persons involved
in the creation of the student handbook. One participant said that it was created by “unit
officials in collaboration w/faculty, unit administrators, parents and student
representatives” (AM01); while another participant only had the “High school faculty,
admin and students” (AM07) in the list of persons. Two of the four mentioned a
committee with one of them referring to it as the Student Handbook Committee. The
other one gave more information with respect to the formation of the committee, its
composition and the revision process summarized as follows:

Formation of a 5-6 committee members composed of faculty from the different grade
levels, administrators, and student and parent representatives; initiated by the
Coordinator for Student Formation with the approval of the High School Unit Head
(Principal who acts as adviser). Members are nominated and appointed by the High
School Principal Council. The draft is presented to the general assembly of faculty
together with administrators then submitted to the Vice-President for Academic
Affairs. The Chair of the Committee facilitates the presentation at the faculty, parents
and students assembly at the start of every school year. The President has the option
to give comments and remarks prior to final publication. (AM04)

Question 4: What was the purpose of writing the student handbook?

Majority of the participants (70%) responded that the student handbook serves as a
“guide” since it contains the history, vision-mission, policies, programs, services and
rules of the school. However, their responses differ with respect to whom the student
handbook is addressed: whether it guides the (a) students alone, (b) students with parents or guardians, (c) students, parents, teachers and administrators, or (d) all stakeholders.

Two participants referred to students and parents or guardians; one enumerated students, parents, teachers and administrators and one referred to them collectively as stakeholders. Three participants (AM07, AM08 and AM10) said that the handbook guides the students in their high school life; particularly, “for a better high school life” (AM08), and the “living out of the Benedictine values (the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education) . . . and [grounding] the students in the Scholastican identity” (AM10).

Two of the 10 participants (20%) saw the student handbook as a way to communicate and disseminate information to the stakeholders. There were 4 among the 10 (40%) who stated as purpose, specific effects of having a handbook: “peace and order in the day to day routine” (AM05), “safeguard rights and preserve order and harmony within the community” (AM06), “protect the rights of students” (AM09), and “implements the thrust of the school” (AM10). A participant (AM02) answered the question in the context of student handbook revision; thus, stating that the purpose of writing the student handbook is to “revise the sections pertaining to student discipline, procedures, offenses and sanction.”

Question 5: What had to be written down in the student handbook?

Seven out of 10 participants (70%) said that topics related to the Academic Matters or Program had to be written down in the student handbook. One of the seven (AM05) specifically mentioned “Co-curricular and extra-curricular program, homeroom and enrichment.” Participants AM05 and AM06 said “academic policies.” Participant AM05 also wrote “grades and awards” with participants AM09 and AM10; and the latter two
adding “honors” to the list. Another category was “policies on attendance, uniform, and subjects” (AM05).

The next major response was Services identified by six out of 10 participants (60%): one merely stated “services” (AM01), another one “student personnel and auxiliary services” (AM06), and four said “student services” (AM03, AM05, AM08, and AM10). Four out of 10 participants (40%), on the other hand, answered Student Activity Program. Three of the four stated something about student activities which each participant referred to differently: “SOP’s for student activities” (AM07), “SOP’s for out-of-school activities” (AM05) and “Policies on school-sanctioned activities (in and out-of-campus)” (AM09). One of the four participants (AM05) added “election and impeachment of student leaders.”

Another answer that was mentioned by four of the 10 participants (40%) is School Discipline. Related to this answer was Offenses/Infractions and Sanctions mentioned by three out of 10 (30%) and two of the three included the procedure for disciplinary actions. One of the three, however, used the term Student Formation to refer to both the offenses and sanctions and the procedure for disciplinary actions. The other answer related to School Discipline was Decorum and Behavior, mentioned by 2 out of 10 participants (20%).

The other responses referred to the entire institution and some general subjects and were each answered by three of the 10 participants (30%): General Information about the school, School mission-vision, and Facilities/Physical Plant. The following answers were each given by two out of 10 participants (20%): Philosophy; School objectives; General Policies; School’s history; Benedictine Stamp, Scholastican Heritage and Hallmarks of
Benedictine Education; Student rights and responsibilities; and Other Guidelines.

Individual answers include: Strategies; Rules and Regulations; and Activities. One participant listed objectives of the High School; Organizational Chart, School Officials and Personnel; Student Officials; and the Student and Parents’ Handbook agreement as an appendix.

The answer of one participant (AM10) provides valuable information and insight on the question:

There are no hard and fast rules as to what should be written in the student handbook. First, it begins with the purpose – what is the handbook for? The present handbook is a product of over a hundred years of reflection (the school is nearly 110 years old). It was not written yesterday. Administrators, faculty, staff, parents and teachers, even the legal counsel have given their suggestions based on the experiences in SSC . . . .

During my time, I remember the handbook was divided into sections – a section that regards their Scholastican identity (history of the school, the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education or the Benedictine values, the mission-vision of the school and of the unit, the school hymns, cheers, logo, colors, motto, school themes in other handbooks), a section on the academic life of the student (policies, grading system, honors and awards, etc), a section on student discipline (code of conduct), a section on student services, a special section on sexual harassment code (I think this is in the handbook of the college unit).

**Question 6:** Who determines what should be included in the handbook?

The responses to this question were predominantly unrelated to each other. Three out of the 10 participants (30%) answered that a Committee determines what should be
included in the student handbook. One of the three participants (AM05) further described the committee as the one “assigned to make the handbook [and] who gets the suggestions of the faculty, a parent representative and student representative” Two out of 10 participants (20%), on the other hand, said that the administration (school or high school) makes the determination. Another 20% of the participants said that it is a collaboration between administrators, faculty, students, and parents. However, one participant from the 10 (AM04) wrote that it is the Principal Council (composed of the Unit Head, Assistant Principal, Coordinator of Student Activities and Services, and Coordinator of Student Formation and Discipline) in consultation with the faculty, student council members and parent representative that determines what should be in the handbook. The participant further stated that the consultation is done “during the presentation to the stakeholders at the start of the school year.”

Another participant said that it is the Administrative Council who determines what has to be included subject to the final approval of the School President upon the recommendation of the principal. There were two of the 10 participants (20%), however, whose answers pertained to the source of the content of the student handbook. One said that the “contents are common in all schools, especially among the Benedictine schools in the Philippines” (AM03). The other one said that “parts of the handbook are based on the requirement of the DepEd and also the Manual of Regulations for Private Schools” (AM06).

One of the participants (AM10) described the process of the formulation, review and revision of the handbook coming from the ground up.
The Principal’s Council discuss [what is to be included in the handbook] with the faculty, the Asst. Principals with their respective student leaders or representatives, the student leaders with their classmates. Then this goes the round of further discussions with the Unit Heads with the VP for Academic Affairs and then the President’s Council. There are, likewise, consultants – guidance counselors, campus minister, [and] legal counsel. At other times, we consult other schools in the consortia that SSC belongs to. We benchmark with other schools what works best.

A President’s Forum was also mentioned as a “feedback loop and mechanism to incorporate what is of importance to be included in the handbook.” It is the venue “where the President and the 3 Vice-Presidents meet with the presidents of the students council of the three units – grade school, high school and college to discuss concerns from both sides – the administration and the students” (AM10).

**Question 7a: Who were involved in writing the student handbook?**

Majority of the participants (80%) said that representatives from different sectors were involved in the writing of the student handbook. Five out of the eight participants identified the different sectors namely: students, teachers, administrators and parents. Three of the eight specified that the student representatives were members of the Student Council and the parent representatives were members of the High School Parents Association. One of them further said that the teachers were mostly class advisers and year level formators; and another one specified the administrators: Coordinator of Student Activities and Services, the Coordinator of Student Formation. Two out of the eight, however, said that only the administrators and faculty were involved.
Two of the 10 participants (20%) were of the opinion that there is a Committee assigned to write the handbook. One participant of the 10 (AM10) provided more information and wrote that the offices involved in the writing of the part on Student Formation were: “the Office of Student Formation, the Office of the Assistant Principal for Academics, the Office of Student Activities, the Guidance Office, the Campus Ministry Office and even at times the Outreach (Social Action) Office (because of community service that was part of the disciplinary action.”

Question 7b: Were committees created in writing specific sections of the student handbook?

Eight out of 10 participants (80%) answered that there were committees created in writing specific sections of the student handbook; of the eight, 3 simply replied YES and the remaining 5 participants elaborated in their answers. The other two of the 10 participants (20%) had no answer (20%). From the individual answers of the participants, the committees that were created to write specific sections of the student handbook included:

- Committee for Offenses and Sanctions composed of the Coordinator of Student Formation, selected class advisers, year level formators, guidance counselors, student council and Parent council representatives (AM03);
- Committee for Academic Program composed of the Assistant Principal and subject area coordinators (AM03);
- Committee on Facilities (AM07);
- Committee for Uniform Policies (AM09);
- Committee for Grades (AM09); and
- Restorative Justice Committee composed of the Coordinator of the Student Formation, Campus Ministers, Guidance Counselors, and chosen advisers from each grade level (AM08).

Some of the answers of the participants provided information on the revision process undertaken by the Student Handbook Committee (SHC). In summary, the SHC identifies certain provisions of the student handbook that have to be revised and the members are assigned into sub-committees to work on different sections of the handbook. The SHC meets and discusses the changes made by the sub-committees. After the SHC agrees on the changes, they are submitted to the Principal for initial approval; then presented in plenary session to the faculty for suggestions and revisions to the handbook are made accordingly. The Office of the Coordinator of Student Activities and Services takes charge of encoding, styling and formatting the revisions.

Question 8a: Are you familiar with the Manual of Regulation of Private Schools?

Majority of the participants (80%) replied YES, they were familiar with the Manual of Regulation of Private Schools; one participant answered “No idea” and another had no answer.

Question 8b: Are there provisions in the Manual that were adopted in the writing of the student handbook?

Only four out of 10 participants (40%) answered this question and all of them replied that provisions of the Manual of Regulations of Private Schools were adopted or incorporated in the handbook. One of the four participants emphasized that “the policies in the handbook have to be in line with the provisions in the Manual” (AM03).
Question 8c: What are the provisions, if any?

The provisions of the Manual of Regulations of Private Schools that were adopted by the handbook include:

- School Vision- Mission- Objectives, School Organization Chart, School Facilities and Services, School admissions, discipline, grading system, honors, graduation & or promotions (AM01);
- Allowable number of absences as mandated by law (AM02);
- Student Discipline (particularly in following due process), Student’s rights and duties (AM04 and AM06); and
- Usually the ones directly related to issues that have a wider scope, like bullying, anti-harassment, publication laws (including internet, blogs, etc) sanctions for students (AM09).

Question 9: Who gets a copy of the student handbook?

Obviously, all the participants (100%) were in agreement that all the students get a copy of the student handbook. Four out of 10 participants (40%), however, included the faculty and administrators as recipients of the student handbook; and three out of 10 participants (30%) said faculty also get a copy together with the students. From the three participants who said that only the students get a copy of the handbook, one mentioned that class advisers get a copy “since they meet the students regularly [and the handbook] serve as their guide as the need arises” (AM08). The other faculty members, on the other hand, have access to the copies in the faculty room and the library.
Question 10a: How often is the student handbook disseminated?

The student handbook is disseminated regularly to all the students at the start of the school year. Two out of the 10 participants said that first year students and newcomers are given copies of the student handbook.

Question 10b: How is it disseminated?

Four out of the 10 (40%) participants stated that the contents of the student handbook are discussed in an Orientation assembly at the beginning of the school year. The same number of participants further stated that discussions are also held during the class orientations on the first day of classes or when the need arises. Two participants answered that all student and faculty receive a copy of a new handbook and thereafter, only the first year students and newcomers will receive a copy of the handbook. One participant commented that “should there be changes or updates within the year, the students are met and these changes or updates are discussed to them” (AM09). However, a participant stated that for the last seven or eight years, the students have been given planners which contain the revisions.

Question 11a: Have there been evaluations of the handbook?

All participants replied that there have been evaluations of the handbook. However, there are different answers as to the frequency of the evaluations: one participant said that it was done every year, another one said during the summer and another, every three years. The answers also varied with regard to how the evaluation is conducted. A participant stated that it is “more on feedback and comments rather than formal evaluation” (AM09). This is somewhat similar to how another participant described the process whereby “reports [are] given by the different class advisers and students to the
Coordinator of Student Formation who then reports [them] to the Administrative Council in evaluation meetings” (AM03). One participant pointed out that the since the school is accredited “all handbooks and manuals undergo periodic evaluation and review” and this “does not automatically mean revision of the whole manual or handbook” (AM10). According to another participant, “the different sections on policies, offenses and sanctions are the matters which are usually evaluated” (AM03).

Question 11b: What were the criteria?

Only eight of the 10 (80%) participants responded to this question. Out of the eight, three participants gave relevance and effectiveness as the criteria for the evaluation and one said that the “criteria came from the cases that happened during the school year that ended” (AM05). Two of the eight participants said that they did not use any criteria. Changes would be made base “on the need and if certain policies are no longer working” (AM06). The last two of the eight participants were not aware if there was a criteria.

Question 12: Who evaluates the student handbook?

The 10 participants had varied answers to this question but it is clear that the teachers, students, parents and administrators are involved to a certain degree and manner in the evaluation of the student handbook. Based on their answers, it would seem that the participants had different experiences of the evaluation process. A brief description of the answers given is as follows:

- Every mid-year and year-end evaluations of the High School Unit, provisions in the student handbook are discussed and suggestions are given for further improvement. The Class advisers then schedule a review of the handbook with their students prior to the evaluation meetings. Thereafter, the class advisers submit a
report of their class evaluation to the Coordinator of Student Formation (CSF). The CSF submits a report of all class evaluations to the Administrative Council in the mid-year and year-end evaluation meetings. Teachers and parents also review the handbook on dates designated by the administrators (AM03).

• A committee of faculty and students are assigned to evaluate together with the school administrators (AM05).

• Faculty representatives (class advisers or area coordinators) and an administrator, usually the Coordinator of Student Formation (AM06).

• The students were consulted through their year level representatives and/or the Student Council officers. The parents, on the other hand, were consulted through the High School Parents Association and the circular letters (AM09).

• Members of the Student Handbook Committee are the ones who evaluate, update and revise the student handbook (AM07).

• No formal evaluation is conducted. However, faculty, class advisers, subject area coordinators, administrators and even students and parents may give feedback. The feedback is then discussed in the Principal’s Council or the Body of Coordinators or Class Advisers or Club Moderators’ meeting. Feedback may also come from these sectors. Should there be a need to revise any section, it is discussed and revision is done again in the Student Handbook Committee initiated by the Office of the Coordinator of Student Activities and Services; then the Principal's Council or Administrative Council for final approval (AM02).

Question 13a: How many times was it evaluated during your time?
Only seven out of the 10 participants (70%) answered this question. The responses varied as to the frequency of the evaluation. Some participants (AM03, AM06, and AM10) said that the student handbook was evaluated twice a year (for the mid-year and year-end evaluation meetings), while one participant (AM04) said once a year. Three of the participants (AM05, AM07, and AM08) only experienced one evaluation of the student handbook and they all had the evaluation in preparation for a special event in the high school (i.e., accreditation visit).

Question 13b: Is there a regular time frame for evaluating the handbook?

Only 6 out of the 10 (60%) participants answered this question. Out of the six, three (AM01, AM04, and AM10) stated that the student handbook should be evaluated or reviewed every year. One of them (AM08) specified an evaluation to be done in preparation for the coming school year. Evaluation is done during the year-end evaluation of the different stakeholders (e.g. Members of the Administrative Council of the Unit, Subject area, Coordinator of Student Formation with class advisers, Coordinator with Student Activities and Services with club moderators and the officers of the Student Council). Another one of the four participants (AM10) distinguished between a yearly periodic review of the handbook and its major revision every two or three years. This explains the comment of the two participants (AM06 and AM09) who both gave a time frame of every three years. One of them (AM09) stated that the Student Handbook is evaluated when new laws are promulgated by the government (i.e., anti-bullying and anti-sexual harassment). It would seem that the participant was referring more to a revision rather than a periodic review of the handbook. On follow-up, the participant
(AM09) commented that the data from the evaluation is used to form the objectives of the Student Handbook Committee when it is organized to revise the handbook.

Question 14: What changes have been made? Additions, deletions?

A summary of the changes that have been made in the student handbook based on the responses of the participants:

- Updates about the Vision-Mission, objectives, programs, policies and corresponding sanctions (AM03).
- New Student Formation and Discipline Program with the framework and approach of Restorative Discipline based on the principles of Restorative Justice (AM01, AM04, and AM10). Emphasis was added on student formation and not student discipline. CARE was formulated (AM03 and AM04). Table of offenses and sanctions were updated as a result of the new cases of cyber bullying and drug pushing (AM05 and AM06). Additional sanctions for cheating (AM05) and cellphone use (AM09). Changes in the terms of offenses and sanctions given to the students are no longer punitive but restorative (AM01, AM03, AM04, AM05, AM06, AM08, and AM09).

On follow-up regarding the emphasis on student formation, the participant (AM03) commented that in the implementation of due process, “emphasis [should be] on using the heart and not just [basing] on rules and regulations; on “what would be most helpful to the students.”

- Course offerings and content, Program on Religion Extension, program, Curriculum, contact hours, among others to align to K to 12; grades and grading system, computation of grades of honor students (AM04); when does an honor
student gets disqualified, some procedure for disciplinary course; content, computations of grades of honor students, when does an honor student gets disqualified, some procedure for disciplinary actions (AM05);

- Student Activities and Services: Clubs and Organization – additional clubs (AM04); and also certain parts in the student activity particularly with giving of service awards and other year-end awards (AM06).

- Policies and guidelines of different facilities (AM07).

- Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education (core values) to be reflected in all manuals and documents – “from the classroom to the hallways, in the activities as well as in the celebrations, in the sanctions as well as in the awards and honors that the school gives” (AM10).

Question 15: Is there a particular section of the handbook that is usually revised?

Six of the 10 participants identified the Table of Offenses and Sanctions as the section usually revised. Major and minor sanctions were revised to align them to Restorative Discipline. Other participants mentioned academic policies and policies and guidelines of different facilities.

Additional Comments of Participants based on Follow-up Questions:

The table of offenses and sanctions would be the section which is usually revised because the relevance and appropriateness of the offenses and sanctions vis-à-vis the formation sanctions. Student formation is likewise addressed in the topic on Benedictine Spirituality (AM03).

The revision of the Table of Offenses and Sanctions serves the purpose for which the student handbook has been written “since it is to guide the students to develop
self-discipline and to understand the importance of having peace and order in school” (AM06).

The revision of the minor and major offenses and sanctions to align them with Restorative Justice achieve the purpose of the student handbook in “providing guidelines to the students for a better high school life” (EI08). The students will have a better motivation in changing their attitude or behavior since Restorative Justice is a response to wrongdoing that emphasizes healing the wounds of victims, offenders and communities (AM09).

**Over-all summary of the findings and discussion.**

The 10 participants of this study were involved with the institution within the period of School Year 2005-2006 until School Year 2014-2015. They have participated in the evaluation, review and revision of the student handbook either as advisers or members of the Student Handbook Committee. The formation of the Student Handbook Committee (SHC) is now initiated by the Coordinator for Student Formation (CSF) with the approval of the High School Principal who acts as the adviser. In the past, it was the Coordinator for Student Activities and Services (CSAS) who had the responsibility to organize the SHC. Members are nominated and appointed by the High School Principal Council. The draft of the revisions to the handbook are presented to the Faculty General Assembly together with administrators then submitted to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs for comments and final approval. The President has the option to give comments and remarks prior to final publication.

The student handbook serves as a “guide” since it contains the history, vision and mission, policies, programs, services and rules of the school. The handbook guides the
students in their high school life; particularly, “for a better high school life” and the “living out of the Benedictine values (the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education).”

Other purposes of the handbook mentioned across the questions include “to preserve order and harmony within the community and to develop self-discipline,” “peace and order in the day to day routine,” “safeguard rights and preserve order and harmony within the community,” “protect rights of students,” “implement the thrust of the school,” and “revise the sections pertaining to student discipline, procedures, offenses and sanction.”

The following topics that have to be written in the handbook are the General Information about the school, its Vision and Mission, Academic Matters, Services, Student Activity Program, Facilities and School Discipline. The participants gave other examples that were basically describing the contents of the handbook that was analyzed for this study. Parts of the handbook are based on the requirement of the Department of Education and also the Manual of Regulations for Private Schools. Some of the provisions of the Manual of Regulations of Private Schools that were adopted by the handbook include: School Vision and Mission and Objectives, School Organization Chart, School Facilities and Services, School Admissions, Student rights and duties, Student Discipline (particularly in following due process), allowable number of absences as mandated by law, grading system, honors, graduation & or promotions.,

Based on the varied answers of the participants, it is clear that all the stakeholders participate in the determination of what should be included in the Handbook; whether as a committee or in collaboration or consultation among the different stakeholders as initiated by the Principal Council (composed of the Principal, Assistant Principal, CSAS, and CSF). Then discussions happen with the Unit Heads (Grade School, High School
and College), then with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and then to the
President’s Council. A President’s Forum was also mentioned as a “feedback loop and
mechanism to incorporate what is of importance to be included in the handbook.” It is
the venue “where the President and the three Vice-Presidents meet with the presidents of
the students council of the three units – grade school, high school and college to discuss
concerns from both sides – the administration and the students.”

Representatives from all sectors are involved in the writing of the student handbook:
teachers, administrators, parents and students, the latter two through their representatives.
Sub-committees were created in the SHC during the revision process to write specific
sections of the handbook which include Committee for Offenses and Sanctions,
Academic Programs, Facilities, Grades, Restorative Justice, etc. The students get a copy
of the student handbook. It is unclear whether all faculty members receive a copy but
they can have access to the copies in the faculty room and in the library. The content of
the student handbook is discussed in an orientation assembly at the beginning of the
school year. A discussion is also held during class orientations on the first day of class or
when the need arises.

The teachers, students, administrators and parents are involved to a certain degree and
manner in the evaluation of the student handbook. Every mid-year and year-end
evaluations of the High School Unit, provisions in the student handbook are discussed
and suggestions are given for further improvement. The Class advisers then schedule a
review of the handbook with their students every year. Although, one participant
administrator said that the handbook was reviewed twice a year during her time.
Significantly, the usual criteria used for the evaluation of the handbook were relevance
and effectiveness. Other participants mentioned that they evaluated the handbook based on the need of the stakeholders at that time and “if certain policies are no longer working.” Thereafter, the class advisers submit a report of their class evaluation to the CSF who in turn submits a report of all class evaluations to the Administrative Council in the mid-year and year-end evaluation meetings. Teachers and parents also review the handbook on dates designated by the administrators.

The other answers of the participants show that there were other venues where the student handbook was reviewed: class advisers or area coordinators with the CSF and students consulted through their year level representatives and/or the Student Council officers. The parents, on the other hand, were consulted through the High School Parents Association and the circular letters. Should there be a need to revise any section, it is discussed and revision is done in the SHC.

Evaluations, reviews and revisions on the student handbook were done “based on actual experiences and needs of the stakeholders” and “to ensure that updated programs and policies are those that are served.” Revisions were made as a result of new government laws like anti-bullying and anti-sexual harassment and school cases like cyber bullying and drug pushing. Major revisions to the handbook are usually done every two or three years.

Some of the changes that have been made in the student handbook within the period of 2005-2015 include: updates about the vision-mission, objectives, programs, policies and corresponding sanctions; course offerings and content, curriculum and other policies to align with K to 12 education; student activities and services; and new Student Formation and Discipline Program with the framework and approach of Restorative
Discipline based on the principles of Restorative Justice. Under the new Student Formation and Discipline Program, CARE (Confront-Accept-Reflect-Empower) was formulated. Changes in the terms of offenses and sanctions given to the students are no longer punitive but restorative. One of the participants made a comment that in the implementation of due process, emphasis should be on using the heart and not just on rules and regulations; on “what would be most helpful to the students.” Another major change was the adoption of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education (core values) and the decision to reflect them in all manuals and documents – “from the classroom to the hallways, in the activities as well as in the celebrations, in the sanctions as well as in the awards and honors that the school gives.”

From the responses of the participants across the email interviews, there were only two instances where reference was made to something related to the RB: the purpose of the student handbook and the changes that have been made. There was a response that the student handbook guides the students in the “living out of the Benedictine values (the Ten Hallmarks of the Benedictine Education).” And as previously stated, the adoption of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education was a major change in the institution and it was included in the student handbook. Beyond that, there is no express indication in the responses of the participants that reflects the application of the RB in the creation, revision and evaluation of the student handbook. However, the responses explicitly show the “living out” of certain Benedictine values in their activities related to the student handbook.

Other purposes of the handbook mentioned across the questions include: “to preserve order and harmony within the community and to develop self-discipline,” “peace and
order in the day to day routine,” and “safeguard rights and preserve order and harmony within the community.” The responses undoubtedly reflect the values of Peace, Discipline and Order, and Community. The discussions, evaluations, reviews of the student handbook among all the members of the community either through class discussions, consultations, collaborations and committee works all promote the values of Listening, Humility, Community, Discipline and Order, and Service. The practice of Discretion can be implied in the decisions or deliberations made by the SHC on the revisions that have to be studied and written. The interaction between the administration and the student leaders in the President’s Forum is similar to chapter 3 of the RB on “Summoning the Community for Counsel.” The value of Stewardship is promoted when revisions are made in the student handbook “based on the needs of the stakeholders,” and “to ensure that updated programs and policies are those that are served.” Care is shown to the students when the implementation of due process in the disposition of disciplinary cases considers “what would be most helpful to the students” and is done “with the heart.” The values of Restraint of Speech, Justice and Peace were promoted when the SHC responded to issues of sexual harassment and cyber-bullying.

The Table of Offenses and Sanctions is the section in the handbook that is usually revised. Major and minor sanctions were revised last year to align them to Restorative Discipline. The responses of three participants on follow-up questions regarding the effect of the revisions on this section reflect an application of the Core Values of Benedictine Education:

The section of Table of Offenses and Sanctions is usually revised because formation of the students is the "topmost consideration" in determining the relevance and
appropriateness of the offenses and sanctions [emphasis supplied]. Student formation is likewise addressed in the topic on Benedictine Spirituality.

The revision of the Table of Offenses and Sanctions serves the purpose for which the student handbook has been written “since it is to **guide the students to develop self-discipline and to understand the importance of having peace and order in school** [emphasis supplied].”

The revision of the minor and major offenses and sanctions to align them with Restorative Justice achieve the purpose of the student handbook in “providing guidelines to the students for a better high school life.” **The students will have a better motivation in changing their attitude or behavior since Restorative Justice is a response to wrongdoing that emphasizes healing the wounds of victims, offenders and communities** [emphasis supplied].

The shift of emphasis from student discipline to student formation is very much reflective of the RB which is a guide for forming people towards a discipleship and transformation in Christ. Moreover, the application of the principles of care, healing, justice, and restoration back to the community are Saint Benedict’s way of discipline under the Rule. However, what seems to be missing is a manifestation of the value of Silence and the integration of Prayer, Study and Work. How intentional are the stakeholders in integrating reflection and prayer into their work, most especially the members of the SHC and the administrators actively involved in the revisions of the student handbook?

Moreover, there is no evaluation tool used for the evaluation and review of the handbook although the usual criteria used are relevance, effectiveness or need. The question that
lingers is: how does the institution make sure that the student handbook is able to inculcate in the students the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education?

**Questionnaire Administered to Benedictine Sisters/Nuns who are Formators and/or Educators in the Philippines**

**Findings.**

Question 1: What did Saint Benedict see as the essential parts/elements in community living that should be in a Student Handbook?

Majority of the participants (57%) referred to Chapter 72 of the RB on the Good Zeal to describe the essential elements of community living that should be found in a student handbook. According to one participant (BSN08), it “expresses a vision of community which is the essence of the [RB] – prefer nothing to the love of Christ.”

They should each try to be the first to show respect to the other (Rom 12:10), supporting with the greatest patience one another’s weaknesses of body or behavior, and earnestly competing in obedience to one another. No one is to pursue what he judges better for himself, but instead, what he judges better for someone else. To their fellow monks they show pure love of brothers; to God, loving fear; to their abbot, unfeigned and humble love. Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life. (RB 72.4-12)

Moreover, the same participant (BSN08) also suggested that the handbook should have a “corporate statement addressing the student body about the school’s vision of creating a school community for Catholic students.”

Six out of 14 (43%) participants recognize the need for authority and structure in a school setting. One (BSN06) answered that they are essential to “protect and facilitate
community life that is geared towards the growth of each member.” Thus, persons of authority in a school setting were likened to an abbot who “must be a true shepherd to all with no favorites” (BSN13), “shows equal love to everyone and [applies] same discipline to all according to merits” (RB 2.22; BSN07 and BSN09) but at the same time makes allowances for individual differences (RB 2.22; BSN07 and BSN09). One participant (BSN06), however, pointed out that the “responsibility for caring for the welfare of the students rests on the shoulders of [all] those who are involved in the educative process.”

According to one participant (BSN14), a “Benedictine community is safeguarded by a clear structure and sense of order” and this is reflected in the second chapter of the RB on the Qualities of the Abbot. Like the abbot, persons of authority should be guided on how to resolve differences and conflicts and how to deal with various temperaments and personalities (RB 2.23-36). In the same way that the abbot is instructed to summon the community for counsel (RB 3) on certain matters, “the student body, staff, faculty, and parents” should also be represented in the school council “to reflect [on] policies, objectives, and disciplinary measures with the administrative body” (BSN08). Parallel to the RB’s tools for good works (RB 4), “duties should [then] be laid down clearly” in the handbook so that the students will know what is expected of them and there will be no confusion (BSN11).

A number of participants also mentioned the attitudes essential in community living that must be reflected in the handbook: humility under RB 7 (36%), mutual obedience under RB 71 (36%) and obedience under RB 5 (29%). As stated by one participant (BSN12), obedience to rules and guidelines is necessary for harmony and order in community. Other individual answers referred to the values of silence (BSN06),
hospitality and prayer and work; while one participant (BSN10) specifically mentioned the inclusion of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education adopted by the ABCU and SSC.

Question 2: The Student Handbook provides sanctions or penalties for offenses committed by students. What instructions of Saint Benedict on disciplining monks should be followed in dealing with students who do not follow the rules and regulations of the school?

The chapter on the qualities of the abbot is again quoted by eight of the 14 participants (57%). So the disciplining authority must be guided by the following principles: “apply same discipline to all according to merit” (RB 2.22; BSN13); “there will be no distinction of persons; all offenders are treated equally (BSN11)” “show no favoritism” (RB 2.16; BSN12). As pointed out by one participant (BSN06), “it is important that when the vice is just beginning, it has to be cut down right away to avoid getting into a worst situation [cf. RB 2.26, 64.14]. Vigilance and immediate intervention are important.” The same participant also referred to the chapter on summoning the community for counsel (RB 3), describing it as a “process of coming up with a decision on serious matters [which] entails the abbot’s consultation with the community. It is a process that sifts information to arrive at the truth and a discernment that is prudent, cautious, discrete and well reflected” (BSN06). One participant wrote that “the reign of LOVE . . . is exactly what St. Benedict exhorts his Abbots to do in relation to their erring monasties” (BSN13).

“Students must be made to understand the purpose of the school’s system of discipline” (BSN02). And according to one participant (BSN13),
the goal of the corrections given by [Saint] Benedict is to bring back the erring monk into the stream of life in community. [Saint] Benedict wants to bring about a change in the monk that is growth-enhancing. He wants the conversion of the monk. So he does not stop with the giving of the punishments.

Another participant is of the same mind in saying that “the rules of [Saint] Benedict are more formative than punitive, designed to bring the erring member to realize his mistake” (BSN07). The supposedly penal code of the RB is actually “towards healing and reformation” (BSN08) and not a strict imposition of the law. Thus, an “offender will be given all the chances to amend” (BSN14) and “all the chances to be humble and repent” (BSN10). As commented by one participant, both the victim’s and offender’s dignity as a human person should be respected. They must both feel that they are “loved despite the misdeeds, guilty or not” (BSN12).

Eleven out of 14 participants (78%) commented on Saint Benedict’s different ways of correcting a fault (cf. RB2.23-29, RB 23-29) while, 50% of the participants, specifically mentioned that sanctions must be given according to the gravity of the offense (RB 24.1). The age and circumstances of the erring individual should also be taken into consideration in disciplining a person (RB 2.23-28, 30; BSN03, BSN05, BSN06, BSN09, BSN11, and BSN13). Some of the instructions of Saint Benedict on how to discipline one’s members emphasized by the participants are quoted herein:

- In reproving the young, [we] must use every tool: listening, counsel, confrontation, love, prayer but in the end . . . when all things fail . . . amputation. (BSN11)
• Utmost care and concern for the wayward; seek the one who goes astray. Love and compassion for the weakness of the brothers. (RB 27.1, 8-9; BSN13)

• Compassion [and] full understanding of individual offender is a heavy task. Great care [is] indeed required in dealing with the sick [who needs healing]. (BSN05)

• [It is a] wise doctor who cures the sick with positive measures, a type of correction that stems from concern. It is done with prudence, justice and charity. (BSN06)

• It is the abbot’s responsibility to have great concern and to act with speed, discernment and diligence in order not to lose any of the sheep entrusted to him. (RB 27.5; BSN08)

• In the spirit of the Good Shepherd, Saint Benedict goes after the erring member with compassion. (BSN07)

Three out of the 14 participants (21%) took note that the abbot is instructed to discipline the monks with mercy, prudence and love (RB 64), in order that he does not “crush the bruised reed” (RB 64.13). A participant beautifully pointed out that “we don’t simply punish in such a way that we destroy the person, but we work towards enabling the erring one to grow, to change for the better” (BSN13).

In RB 27.2-3, Saint Benedict sends in a senpectae, “that is, mature and wise members who, under the cloak of secrecy, may support the wavering brother, urge him to be humble as a way of making satisfaction, and console him lest he be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow (2 Cor 2:7).” Two participants (BSN12 and BSN14) commented that a guidance counselor, professional helper, campus minister and student formation director can serve as senpectae in an educational setting. Forty-three percent of the
participants included the instruction of Saint Benedict on monks who refuse to amend after frequent reproofs (RB 28). If after all the measures have been done to save the erring monk, he still refuses to amend, the abbot will have no choice but to “use the knife and amputate” (RB 28.6). In a school setting, the amputation of a monk would refer to the expulsion of a student (BSN13). Moreover, “the disciplinary measures are also for the benefit of the entire community whose well being has to be safeguarded” (BSN07).

Some participants made specific references to the application of the RB to an existing student handbook. One participant (BSN07) observed that certain measures in a particular student handbook are similar to the RB where an “erring student is given chances for explaining her side and is sanctioned according to the level of the infraction.” In the said handbook, “the CARE program is the formative response which is very much in line with Benedict’s care for his erring member which is designed to help rather than just to punish” (BSN07). Another participant (BSN14) gave the example of an item in the student handbook where a student does community service as a means of correcting an offense. In applying the restorative justice approach, the participant said, the offender restores the original relationship with the offended community.

Question 3: The Philippines has adopted the K-12 basic education system which means that students will now have 6 years of high school education. The high school community will then have students of different ages, personalities, stages of personal development, socio-economic status and family backgrounds. What does Saint Benedict say about formation work involving a diverse group of formandees that applies to students? In what situations is it important to consider the differences among them?
Except for RB 2, on the qualities of the abbot, referred to by 50% of the participants (seven out of 14), the participants basically used different chapters to talk about the formation of diverse individuals. Fourteen chapters between RB 21 to 68 were used by the participants: either mentioned by only one, two or three participants out of 14. This just shows how Saint Benedict tried to answer all the different needs of all the members of the community in order “that the strong find something to strive for and the weak are not discouraged” (RB 64.19). A participant (BSN02) commented that “Benedict emphasizes moderation in order to deal kindly with diverse characters and human weaknesses. . . Benedict’s discretion is of great use in dealing with students who need more attention, more guidance, more understanding and compassion/consideration.”

Under RB 2, Saint Benedict instructs the abbot to “adapt his style of leadership to suit the personalities, needs and behavior of [the] monks” (BSN06). The following statements of the participants show their application of chapter 2 on formation of diverse individuals in community:

- Everyone shall be treated equally as to dignity, and given equal opportunities. (BSN09)
- Respect the dignity of every human being which goes beyond age, culture, race, economic status among others. Consider the uniqueness of every individual person. Treat everyone equal according to the need of the individual. (BSN12)
- Each individual is unique and different ways of assisting may differ from person to person. While there is no discrimination of persons because of age, color, economic status, individual characteristics may require a more gentle approach or a firmer, direct approach to “correcting a person”. (BSN10)
• Rules of the school are to [be] applied equally to all such that a misdemeanor committed by a student regardless of socio-economic background is meted the same sanction after due consideration for circumstance. (BSN07)

The other chapters quoted by the participants emphasized the special care that must be shown to the weak, sick, elderly, children, poor and pilgrims (see RB 21, 36, 37, and 53). Those who are in charge of the care of others should remember that “those who need more should receive more” (BSN11). A participant (BSN04) stated that principles in psychology should be applied in dealing with a diverse group of students. The aptitudes, perceptions, capabilities, and abilities of students must be determined. There are those who are high in chronological age but low in mental capacities, abilities, and understanding. This becomes relevant in an example given by another participant (BSN07) “where misbehavior is due to serious family conditions.” The participant (BSN07) stated that “more care has to be taken to help the student, especially in the kind of sanction that will be meted out, so that she can begin to realize why she has behaved in a certain way. After the psychological aspect has been attended to, the matter of faith and relation to Christ is to be strengthened.” However, it is also important to “emphasize the positive aspect of differences” according to one participant (BSN05). “Differences are a source of richness in community. . . . Contribution of different talents of individuals in community for common goal is fruitful” (BSN05). At the same time, “different services that cater to the different needs of the students should [also] be provided” (BSN06). Two participants (BSN06 and BSN14) mentioned the need for accompaniment of students. One said that “accompaniment of students by those who can listen attentively to their concerns and help them walk the road to maturity and fullness of being is essential”
The other participant (BSN14) pointed out that “in SSC, the student has only one guidance counselor that accompanies her in her entire student life. Counselor is consulted about the student and the parents are also called in. These are practices that may not be written in the handbook.” Another participant made a suggestion that “principals, assistant principals in various levels and departments [must be] created with clear distinction and clarity of function to take care of different units” (BSN08) and this must be stated in a particular handbook.

Question 4: St. Scholastica’s College, Manila has come up with its Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education (adopted from the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities of North America) as the values that students should have. One of the hallmarks is DISCIPLINE and it is described as discipline “towards learning and freedom.” According to the RB, how can formandees or students develop this kind of discipline?

Based on the responses of the participants, there is no particular chapter in the RB that stands out as a response to how students can develop discipline “toward learning and freedom.” The participants made reference collectively to a total of 19 chapters in the RB from the Prologue to chapter 73. The wisdom of the participants is reflected in their responses based on their own experience of formation work and in living the RB in their monastic calling.

A significant point was made by one of the participants regarding formandees “making meaning of what is transmitted to them” in order that discipline may be done with total freedom.
A climate of meaning must be established; that they (those engaged in the ministry of teaching) are able to help the formandees understand the meaning of what is transmitted to them. This enables the beliefs and values flourish naturally and eventually become the personal convictions of each formandee (internalization of values). Discipline then becomes more personal, it is not imposed but done with total freedom. (BSN06)

This insight is related to the response of another participant (BSN07) who wrote about the importance of having a “sense of purpose.”

For Benedict discipline is necessary; there has to be some order in running the life of the members, activities done within certain set parameters; members go about with a high degree of certainty on the objectives for assigned tasks. There is a kind of freedom from knowing what one is doing has a purpose. One doing the task grows and develops as a person and in his faith-spiritual life.

The student has to have a similar sense that what is often strict or difficult is actually aimed to form her character, to strengthen her sense of purpose, to ensure that she does not wander into behaviors that will keep her from developing into the best person she could be. Student is oriented quite early to the purpose of the rules and regulations; reminded often enough on the advantages of following the rules. Very culture of the school supports discipline so that students learn the attitudes and traits that help them to be free.

Having established a sense of meaning and purpose, it will then be easy for the formandees or students to make the right kind of choices which one participant emphasized is the thrust of formation.
As a formator, our thrust in formation was growing in inner freedom, freedom from being “driven” by our excessive needs and wants, destructive behaviors, and all that hinder us from growing in the life of faith. The inner self is where true freedom lies. Our conception of freedom is not external (to do what I want) or a “stand-alone” concept but it has a horizon of meaning – a “freedom for”. The Gospel values are the horizon. This is why in formation, our thrust in growing in inner freedom was simultaneously a formation in one’s CHOICES. . . . to lead the students to be self-directed and make choices that matter. (BSN14)

Some of the suggestions given by the participants on how to develop among students discipline “towards learning and freedom” were:

- Cutting the misbehavior at once from the roots can mean the student is to be shown his/her readiness to understand what actually underlies his/her behavior.

  Guiding the person and distinguishing levels of gravity of offenses and corresponding ways of dealing with them will help put things in perspective. Slowly the student can be helped to be self-propelled and self-disciplined from within. (RB 2.26; BSN10)

- By cultivating and following diligently the discipline of *Opus Dei*, lectio divina, work, study, leisure in community will enable the person to learn freely to choose to be responsible, obedient, and humble to serve in the school of the Lord’s service. (BSN12)

- The life of a student is a Lenten observance; do more that favors learning and lessen habits that impede it. (RB 49; BSN08)

- To study, reflect and do the RB will help and enhance effective development of discipline towards learning and freedom in the life of the students. (BSN03)
• Give individuals a responsibility for a certain task. (BSN04)

• Discipline is necessary for learning to take place. Example, requirement of meeting deadlines, a form of discipline that helps the student [to] finish learning tasks. Although the freedom aspect of discipline is not easy to understand, the student who disciplines herself enjoys more freedom and maturity than the student who gives in to behaviors that cater to her present feelings and whims. (BSN07)

• Students need to be stimulated and helped to develop good study habits. Discipline is needed to cultivate intelligence, love for learning, [acquire] skills [for] growth and [the] good use of faculties [for self-actualization] to be more of benefit to humanity. (BSN08)

**Over-all summary of the findings and discussion.**

Majority of the participants (57%) referred to Chapter 72 of the RB on the Good Zeal to describe the essential elements of community living that should be found in a student handbook. “It expresses a vision of community which is the essence of the [RB] – prefer nothing to the love of Christ.” Thus, a student handbook should have a “corporate statement addressing the student body [on] the school’s vision of creating a school community for Catholic students.”

Some of the participants responded that authority and structure are needed in order to “protect and facilitate community life that is geared towards the growth of each member.” It is important that all persons of authority know how to exercise their responsibilities and duties and at the same time the students must understand the purpose of having a structure of rules and regulations. In order that the students grow in self-discipline and in freedom, they must be able to “make meaning of what is transmitted to them” and have a
“sense of purpose.” Only then will they be able to internalize the attitudes and values and actually act in freedom and not out of compulsion. A participant said that the thrust of formation of the students is growing in inner freedom to be able to make the right choices and be self-directed.

The goal in disciplining students is healing, conversion, and of keeping the erring student in community. Love is suppose to reign in community; compassion and care for the wayward. According to one participant, “the goal of the corrections given by St. Benedict is to bring back the erring monk into the stream of life in community. [Saint Benedict] wants to bring about a change in the monk that is growth-enhancing. He wants the conversion of the monk. So he does not stop with the giving of the punishments.”

Authority must be exercised with prudence, justice and charity (RB 64) in order “not to crush a bruised reed” (RB 64.13). One participant beautifully pointed out that “we don’t simply punish in such a way that we destroy the person, but we work towards enabling the erring one to grow, to change for the better.”

The participants recognize Saint Benedict’s sensitivity to provide for the needs of all the members of the community in order “that the strong find something to strive for and the weak are not discouraged” (RB 64.19). A participant commented that “Benedict emphasizes moderation in order to deal kindly with diverse characters and human weaknesses. . . Benedict’s discretion is of great use in dealing with students who need more attention, more guidance, more understanding and compassion/consideration.” The participants particularly referred to certain instructions of Saint Benedict on how to take care of diverse individuals in community:
Respect the dignity of every human being which goes beyond age, culture, race, economic status among others. Consider the uniqueness of every individual person. Treat everyone equal according to the need of the individual. (see RB 2.16-22, 2.32, 31.7-9, 34, 36, and 37)

Each individual is unique and different ways of assisting may differ from person to person. While there is no discrimination of persons because of age, color, economic status, individual characteristics may require a more gentle approach or a firmer, direct approach to “correcting a person”. (see RB 2.23-29, 23, and 30)

A participant stated that principles in psychology should be applied in dealing with a diverse group of students. The aptitudes, perceptions, capabilities, and abilities of students must be determined. There are those who are high in chronological age but low in mental capacities, abilities, and understanding. The students have to be helped to understand the reasons for their behavior in order that they may be helped towards greater freedom. At the same time, “different services cater to the different needs of the students.” That is why two participants mentioned the need for accompaniment of students. One said that “accompaniment of students by those who can listen attentively to their concerns and help them walk the road to maturity and fullness of being is essential.” The other participant pointed out that “in SSC, the student has only one guidance counselor that accompanies her in her entire student life. [The] counselor is consulted about the student and the parents are also called in. These are practices that may not be written in the handbook.” The participants support the role of the senpectae under the RB in the person of the counselor, professional helper, campus minister, or student formation director in a school setting.
Analysis of a High School Student Handbook against the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework

Phase two is an analysis of a High School Student Handbook (titled Student-Parent Handbook) against the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework and the look for criteria for each core value. Each analysis begins with a summary of the overall findings in regard to the application of the value throughout the Handbook. An item or guideline in the Handbook was considered strongly aligned to the core value when it (a) not only stated the expected behavior but also mentioned the value that was intended to be inculcated in the student, or (b) clearly stated an expected behavior that illustrated an application of the value even if it failed to educate the students of the purpose for such behavior in relation to the value. On the other hand, an item or guideline was considered weakly aligned to the core value when it neither mentioned the value nor clearly stated an expected behavior that illustrated an application of the value but the practice of the value could be inferred. Gaps were also identified in the Handbook where values should have been discussed but were not. Following these illustrative examples, the analysis concludes with an example of how a value can be used to improve a section of the Handbook where the value was not discussed to make the Handbook more formative for students. The application of the framework for improvement of a section in the Handbook is identified for every core value as Figure 4.1 onwards.
Christ-centeredness.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Christ is the very foundation of a Catholic school’s existence (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977); and for a Catholic school whose charism and tradition is Benedictine in character, Christ-centeredness as a value is at the core of a Benedictine Education. It is the basis for all the other values of Benedictine Education (Klassen et al., 2002). All things, our ways, works, relationships, and decisions should emanate from our love of Christ (RB 4.21) and our love of God. Christ-centeredness is one of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education listed in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014). However, the Handbook does not define or explain these hallmarks. Nevertheless, there are statements in the Handbook that are clearly aligned with the Framework’s definition of Christ-centeredness.

The Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) is divided into six main sections and each section is preceded by a quote from the RB or a statement pertinent to the section. The following quotes associated to Christ-centeredness are for the sections on General Guidelines and Student Activity Program respectively:

Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way. The love of Christ must come before all else. Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 4:20-21. (p. 66)

Now the challenge is for you to place all your talents and your creative abilities in the service of Christ to help build up His kingdom. (p. 96)

As stated in the objectives of the High School Unit, the institution aims to form students to be a “Christian Filipino woman who is an agent for social transformation” who, among others, “is Christ-centered in her spirituality that is expressed in the

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Benedictine sense of community and service” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 23). This value of Christ-centeredness is further described in the piece on Benedictine Spirituality in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) which reads: “Living in a world that is driven to seek material wealth and power, the Scholastican is trained to seek the essentials in life knowing that true joy is rooted in Christ and in the Gospel values” (p. 24). While some academic programs and student organizations include in their descriptions the formation of students as Christians, manifestation of Christian values and the development of a Christian community, the programs and activities should concretely show how an education for faith will be fostered among the students (Groome, 2014).

A Benedictine education offers a way of growing in faith and love of Christ towards the goal of being transformed in a new life in Christ. This is the very essence of a Benedictine education which must be conveyed expressly to the students. Although portions of the Handbook have made reference to Christ, the articulation of the value of Christ-centeredness is crucial in establishing the purpose and relevance of the guidelines, rules and regulations set in the Handbook. More than stating that the “school rules and policies are formulated and implemented not as tools of control but as a means to safeguard [their] rights and to preserve order and harmony within [the] community,” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 2) an introduction to the Handbook can focus on the way of life the students have chosen to embrace in the school for the Lord’s service.

Examples of strong alignment.

The description on the Christian Living Education (CLE) academic program states that “the contents of the different year-level programs are grounded on significant human
experiences, Sacred Scriptures and Church teachings” and where “integration of doctrine, moral and worship dimensions of the faith is given focus” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 40). Clearly, the curriculum provides for the education and formation of the students on the faith and discipleship in Christ. Another example of strong alignment to the value of Christ-centeredness is the general description of Spiritual Formation Clubs, one of the major categories of co-curricular student organizations presented in the Handbook; and the description of one of the clubs that belongs to this group, the Benedictine Circle.

Spiritual Formation Clubs is the arm of the Campus Ministry Office which hopes to bring God into the hearts of every Scholastican and to bear witness to the Gospel and Benedictine values enriched by spiritual formation, prayers and celebration of sacraments. It aims to help the High School community realize its thrust of forming each Scholastican into a Christian Filipino woman who is an agent for social transformation by knowing, loving and following the life and teachings of Jesus, imbuing the values of St. Benedict; and imitating the life and virtue of Mary as Christ-centered leaders in renewing our culture, revitalizing our community and restoring the integrity of Mother Earth with Joy and Hope. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 98)

The Benedictine Circle specifically described the school community it belongs to as a “Christ-centered community where everyone is aware of God’s presence within her and in the community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 98).
Examples of weak alignment.

Among the academic programs described in the Handbook, only the CLE and the Social Studies program made reference to Christian formation. However, unlike CLE, the description of the Social Studies program merely mentioned that it aims to develop students who “demonstrate a Christian/Benedictine stand regarding issues,” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 42) among others. We can only infer that the value of Christ-centeredness will also be promoted since it is one of the hallmarks of Benedictine education adopted by the institution.

A similar situation applies with respect to the Homeroom Program. As stated in the Handbook, the Homeroom Program “seeks to provide students with opportunities to deepen their values and develop intrapersonal and interpersonal skills” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45) through activities that will meet the “articulated and observed needs of the students” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45). We can then infer that the Homeroom Period can also be a venue for faith-enriching activities.

Gaps.

One of the students’ rights written in the Handbook is to “benefit from [a] Benedictine education that is characterized by excellence, relevant curricular programs and one aimed at developing one’s full human potentials” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 37). The description of Benedictine education should also include that it is an integration of faith and life. It involves the formation of values that will lead one to grow in one’s faith and be transformed in the newness of life in Christ.
**Application of framework on Christ-centeredness for improvement of a section in the Handbook.**

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<td>These rules lay the foundation within which the high school body stands firm and whole and it is through this foundation that a true Scholastican is molded. It is in this spirit that we present to you the Student Handbook. We ask for your full and valued cooperation in ensuring the betterment of our High School Community. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 2)</td>
<td>Saint Benedict wrote a rule on a way of seeking God and following Christ in the “school for the Lord’s service”. It is in the same spirit that we have written this Student Handbook. As members of this Benedictine school community, we commit to following a certain way of life in Christ: a way of thinking, speaking, doing, teaching and learning according to the spirit of Saint Benedict. This Student Handbook will be our guide as individuals and as a community towards transforming in Christ, and on sharing in the mission of the Church to build the reign of God on earth. “As we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God’s commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love” (Rule of St. Benedict, Prol 49).</td>
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Figure 4.1 *Introductory Letter*

**Silence and restraint of speech.**

*Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.*

In a world where there is so much noise within and without, we cultivate the value of Silence and Restraint of Speech in a Benedictine school. It is in silence that we are able to make room for God and listen to God who speaks to us in our hearts (Heufelder, 1983; Kardong, 1990; Barry, 2004; Bockmann, 2005). We create a space to reflect on what we experience through all our senses which eventually influences our words and actions.

To understand, appreciate and ultimately imbibe this interior disposition of Silence and Restraint of Speech, it is important that the Handbook expressly defines and explains...
the meaning of the value. It is not enough that students are told not to make noise, not to use foul language, refrain from boisterous laughter, be polite and observe proper decorum. Students must be told about the importance of cultivating Silence and Restraint of Speech to create an environment that will be conducive to teaching and learning. To practice silence is to know when to be quiet and when to speak, what words to say at the right time and place (Kardong, 1996). Students are able to think freely and speak and participate confidently in class when they hear words that are welcoming, encouraging and affirming. According to Böckmann (2005), “silence as listening, reasonable and thoughtful speaking” (p. 185) becomes the foundation for dialogue. As we come to terms with our very person, we then open ourselves to listen to others, accept their own realities and embrace them with compassion and love.

Based on the findings, the Benedictine value of Silence and Restraint of Speech is not effectively fostered by the Handbook. The specific guidelines and norms in the Handbook will remain as actions carried out by mere compliance in the absence of measures to educate and form the students as to the purpose for such behaviors. The school has actually listed Silence and Good Speech (in place of Restraint of Speech) as one of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education in the Handbook. All the more the students have to fully grasp the purpose for requiring them not to be noisy nor use foul language in order that they may internalize and integrate the regulation and value into their own selves (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The section on the Prayer Room is a perfect example of framing the Handbook in alignment with the Benedictine value of Silence and Restraint of Speech. The following
quote from the RB on the very nature of a prayer room and the statement on what it is for, lays down the very purpose of the guidelines set in the Handbook:

The Prayer Room ought to be what it is called, and nothing else is to be done or stored there. After the prayer, all should leave in complete silence and with reverence for God, so that anyone who may wish to pray alone will not be disturbed . . .” (Rule of St. Benedict 52.1-3)

1. It is a place for prayer, silence, reflection and other religious activities; it is not used for meetings.

2. Silence is to be maintained at all times to create an atmosphere conducive for prayer and reflection. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 84)

**Examples of strong alignment.**

Certain guidelines in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) not only state the expected behavior but also mention the value that is intended to be inculcated in the student. “Strict silence and order are expected while the examinations are ongoing to help create an atmosphere ideal for test taking. During breaks, students should leave the room in a quiet and orderly manner” (p. 52). Silence is likewise mandated in the High School Library and in the Prayer Room. Being a “venue for learning”, “idle chatting and uncontrolled group discussions that disturb others are not allowed” (p. 83) in the library. The Prayer Room, on the other hand, is “a place for prayer, silence, reflection and other religious activities” thus “silence is to be maintained at all times to create an atmosphere conducive for prayer and reflection” (p. 84).

There are also guidelines that clearly state an expected behavior that illustrates an application of the value of Silence and Restraint of Speech even if they fail to educate the
students of the purpose for such behavior in relation to the value. As stated in the general
guidelines on Decorum and Behavior, students must not “make noise, engage in
disruptive behavior, use foul language . . . and the like at all times” (Student-Parent
Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). Neither should they “create noise or manifest unruly
behavior while inside the classrooms regardless of whether the teacher is present or not”
(Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 68). Among the general guidelines on the
Use of facilities, students are prohibited from playing in the High School Library and the
Audio Visual Center. “Unruly behavior, unnecessary noise, playing, eating, drinking,
etc. are [also] not allowed in the classroom” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014,
p. 85) during official practices and meetings outside class hours. Students are to “refrain
from boisterous conversations and laughter” in the Computer Laboratories and to
“moderate the volume of sounds being played from the PC” (Student-Parent Handbook,
Revised 2014p. 86). During performances in certain halls, “electronic
beepers/transceivers and cellular phones of all types should be turned off” (Student-Parent

The School Code of Conduct (formerly School Discipline) is another section of the
Handbook that shows a strong alignment to the value of Silence through the
implementation of the CARE (Confront-Accept-Restore-Empower) system in the
resolution of disciplinary cases. The sanctions or consequences for the commission of
offenses stated in the Handbook are no longer called “penalties” but are now referred to
as CARE Actions/Consequences. During CARE days, the student is helped to “be more
aware of herself” and “realize the consequences of her actions” (Student-Parent
Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 8) through a process of reflection. A more thorough
discussion of the CARE system will be presented in the analysis on the value of Discipline and Order.

*Examples of weak alignment.*

Under the guidelines on Decorum and Behavior, a student is “expected to act as a mature and socially responsible Christian woman at all times and in all places. “She is likewise expected to show respect for proper authority and for the rights of others within the school community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). Thus, students must observe “politeness and etiquette in all dealings with various members of the academic community” and “proper decorum during flag ceremony, morning praise, religious celebrations and other assemblies” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). Although the practice of Silence and Restraint of Speech is not expressly mentioned, we can infer that being respectful during conversations and observing silence during assemblies are included in the acts expected of the students.

*Gaps.*

The General Guidelines on Classroom Procedure and Management have rules on Attendance, Punctuality and Tardiness, Bells, Permission to Leave the Classroom, Going to the Clinic, Going to the Washrooms, and Calling out Students from Class. However, there is no guideline that facilitates the creation of a classroom environment that will be conducive to learning; an environment that will allow students not only to listen and reflect but also to show respect and care for their peers and teachers in their words and deeds. Similarly, the guidelines on the Morning Praise, Out-of-School Activities like retreats and overnight recollections focus on logistics (i.e., schedule, what to bring, where to assemble, travel, etc.) and does not mention the importance of cultivating the spirit of
quiet and reflection. The Handbook also mentioned out-of-school activities like field trips, exposure trips and special events. Considering that these activities are venues for interaction, dialogue and/or collaboration with people other than the school community, there should be specific guidelines that will promote thoughtful, responsible and life-giving speech among the students; and not just a general statement that “students are expected to observe all rules and regulations stipulated in the Student Handbook” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 90).

The organizational guidelines and policies of student organizations and clubs under the section on Student Activity Program is also silent on how the members should conduct themselves during the Club Hour and in carrying out their activities. Since membership covers different levels in the high school, it is important to promote Silence and Restraint of Speech especially in decision-making. Furthermore, the club members should also listen to the needs and concerns of the outside communities that they serve.
Application of framework on Silence and restraint of speech for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<tr>
<td>SILENCE must be observed. Idle chatting and uncontrolled group discussions that disturb others are not allowed. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 83)</td>
<td>A library is a place for learning. SILENCE must be observed to create an atmosphere conducive for studying and understanding the materials being read, for organizing one’s thoughts and accomplishing whatever task that needs to be done. In consideration for all the users of the library, conversations and actions should be carried out in a manner that no one will be disturbed or distracted from one’s work.</td>
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Figure 4.2 Use of the High School Library

Listening.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

The Congregation for Catholic Education (2002) recognizes the efforts of religious congregations to ensure that their schools are “structured as places of encounter, listening, [and] communication” (p. 46). This is very true in a Benedictine school where Listening is valued as an interior disposition which must be developed in a person. Listening is the RB’s “essential approach for both teaching and learning in the school for the Lord’s service” (Frigge, 2003, p. 233).

Listening is not one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook. However, in the piece on Benedictine Spirituality, there is a statement which refers to the value of Listening: “Through obedient listening with the ear of her heart, [the student] embraces the sorrows and pains of people” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24). It is in the very core of our hearts that God speaks (Böckmann, 2005). As we allow ourselves to be silent, we
develop the interior disposition of being mindful of the presence of God, the God who speaks to us directly in our prayers and in the Scriptures, or through other persons, the community, situations, events and even in nature (Böckmann, 2005, 2015; Frigge, 2003; Grün, 2006; Klassen et al., 2002). We listen with our whole person that we may truly understand what is being asked of us and ultimately respond according to God’s will (Klassen et al., 2002; de Waal, 2001).

Saint Benedict begins his Rule with the word “listen” and the Student Handbook Committee appropriately placed the following quote before the first section of the handbook:

Listen carefully, my child, to my instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from someone who loves you; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice. Rule of St. Benedict Prologue v.1 (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 8)

With this quote, it sets forth the invitation for the students to read the Handbook with a listening heart, to be attentive to what is being “said” and thereafter to act on what was “heard” (de Waal, 2001).

The guidelines that promote dialogue and consultation among all the members of the school community recognize the importance of listening to all the voices in community including that of the younger generation. According to Böckmann (2015), however, not only do we have to listen to our own communities or the ones beyond the school but to actually “have the ear of our heart on the pulse of the world, [to] incline it toward the human beings in the entire world as a complement to our listening to the Lord” (p. 6). This is actually the urgent call for us today as we witness suffering, poverty, destruction,
displacement and loss of innocent lives caused by the struggle for power and control, terrorism and war, and the violence committed to our environment.

Examples of strong alignment.

The provision for a Student Council Organization (SCO) as the governing body of the high school students strongly promotes the value of Listening. As stated in one of its aims, the SCO shall “facilitate communication between the students and the administration, faculty, fellow students and the rest of the Scholastican community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 26). The SCO Core as the “administrative, implementing and coordinating body of the SCO” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27) participates in the decision-making of the school through the Expanded Administrative Council, and presents concerns, cases and proposals on behalf of the student body. In “[promoting] awareness of social issues, and commitment to, involvement in solidarity with communities within and beyond” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27), the SCO Core leads the student body to listen most especially to the cries of the poor and the marginalized.

Some of the rights of the students expressly stated in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) uphold the value of presence and mindful listening among the members of the school community. The students have the right to: (a) seek advice and guidance from any administrator, faculty and/or student, (b) express their views and opinions on matters that affect them, and (c) present/air their grievances and concerns to school authorities and to expect prompt resolution on said grievances/concerns (p. 38). Another item in the Handbook that further upholds the value of Listening is the use of the Homeroom period as a venue for “discussion of school rules and policies, class concerns
and resolutions, announcement about activities and schedules and other pertinent matters” (p. 45).

The School Code of Conduct is another section of the Handbook that shows a strong alignment to the value of Listening. In disciplinary actions involving serious or major offenses, listening plays a vital role in two instances: the observance of due process which allows all persons concerned to be heard, and the implementation of a CARE (Confront-Accept-Restore-Empower) system. In changing the term “penalties” to “CARE Actions/Consequences,” the sanctions or consequences are now anchored on the principles of Restorative Justice one of which “focuses on understanding the conflict/misbehavior, and listening and responding to the needs of both the offender and the offended” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 6).

**Examples of weak alignment.**

There are a number of items under the different sections of the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) that may be associated to the practice of the value of Listening. Among the list of students’ responsibilities, the duty to “respect the educational process and learning environment of others” (p. 38) necessarily includes the openness to listen to what others have to say so as to learn from each other. In the General Guidelines on Decorum and Behavior, the students are “expected to show respect for proper authority and for the rights of others within the school community” (p. 67). They must observe “politeness and etiquette in all dealings with various members of the academic community” and “proper decorum during flag ceremony, morning praise, religious celebrations and other assemblies” (p. 67). One of the programs described in the section on Academic Matters aim to make the students “critical thinkers, confident,
conversant and responsive to economic, political, environmental and cultural issues that involve them and their community” (p. 40) which entails being mindful of the needs of the present world. The section on Student Services presents the different offices and services provided by the school to meet the needs and requirements of the students (i.e., Guidance Office, Campus Ministry Office, Medical and Dental Services, Food Services).

**Gaps.**

The guidelines on Classroom Procedure and Management and Organizational Policies must necessarily include a statement to remind the students of the importance of being fully present in class/club meetings and of listening attentively to the teacher/moderator and to one another. Open and healthy communication among the members is essential in dialogue, collaboration and community building.
Application of framework on Listening for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<td>Parents are welcome to confer with faculty members and administrators provided that opportunities have been scheduled and confirmed. (SPH, Revised 2014, p. 91)</td>
<td>Open and healthy communication among the members of a Benedictine school community is essential in cultivating the spirit of dialogue, collaboration and community building. Opportunities for conversations between the parents and the administrators/faculty members may be set and agreed upon.</td>
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Figure 4.3 General Guideline for Appointment with Parents

Humility.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Humility is the “constant awareness of the holiness of God and [God’s] creation” (Kardong, 1990, p. 84) as we live daily in the presence of God. We learn to be silent, to listen and to obey. Our eyes are fixed on the God who sees and knows what is in the deepest recesses of our heart. According to Böckmann (2005), “being poor in spirit is a fundamental condition for hospitality, for receiving, giving, sharing, and serving” (p. 191). As we sincerely accept the truth about ourselves, we recognize our dependence on God and on each other. The following quote from the RB which precedes the section on Academic Matters reminds everyone that we do not rely on our own strength in completing whatever work; but rather, “every time [we] begin a good work, [we] must pray to [the Lord] most earnestly to bring it to perfection” (RB Prol 4).

Self-awareness and self-acceptance leads to understanding the frailties and weaknesses of others and consequently respecting others for who they are. We let go of our self-centeredness, pride, vanity and arrogance (Chittister, 2010; de Waal, 2001;
Heufelder, 1983). There are three other quotes that precede different sections in the Handbook which are invitations or challenges for the students with regard to the motives of their actions: “love of Christ must come before all else,” “place all your talents and your creative abilities in the service of Christ to help build up His Kingdom,” and “I have not come to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 66, 96, 114).

The value of Humility is included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education stated in the Handbook. However, this is the sole instance where “Humility” is mentioned in the Handbook. Nevertheless, it can be presumed that the value of Humility is one of the bases for conduct grades and awards when the Handbook makes reference to “Benedictine values” that students must manifest. In the same way, the value of Humility is expected to be imbibed by the students in certain special programs (i.e., Honors Programs and Leadership Capability Building Program) and student organizations (i.e., Spiritual Formation Clubs, Socio Civic Clubs and Academic Clubs) which aim to instill the “Benedictine values” among their participants and members.

The Handbook contains policies, guidelines, and expected behaviors that clearly illustrate the practice of Humility or from which it can be inferred. Students who exercise their right to “seek advice and guidance from any administrator, faculty and/or student” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38) humble themselves by learning from the directions and insights of others (even among peers), surrendering to their judgments (especially from those who are responsible for their care), and believing that the will of God is revealed through them (Böckmann, 2015; Chittister, 2010; de Waal, 2001; Heufelder, 1983). The application of the CARE system as a disciplinary measure
concretely calls for Humility on the part of the student who has committed the offense. However, in spite of the aforesaid policies and guidelines, there is nothing written in the Handbook that educates the students on the very essence of Humility as a Benedictine value. Considering that Humility is the fundamental attitude we should have in our relationship with God, with ourselves, with others in community and with the world (Chittister, 2010; de Waal, 2001; Böckmann, 2005), a definition or discussion of the value in its piece on the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education or in an appropriate section will facilitate the students’ interiorization of the value.

*Examples of strong alignment.*

The value of Humility is an essential component of the CARE (Confront-Accept-Restore-Empower) system presented in the section on School Code of Conduct.

The CARE Actions are accorded to:

- Assist the student to be more aware of herself;
- Help the student realize the consequences of her actions;
- Make the student recognize the significance of rules and regulations in the character formation of a person, and in upholding PEACE in the Scholastican community;
- Guide the student to restore herself despite of the weakness/es she has shown; and
- Empower the student to reintegrate herself to be the best person she could be in the Scholastican Community. (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 7-8)
The CARE Actions/Consequences is a humble “journey of reflection, service, restoration and empowerment” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 9). In this journey, the student grows in self-acceptance, learns to value the wisdom and guidance of others, and transcends weaknesses and frailties.

One of the appendices of the Handbook is the Grading System for the Clubs. The criteria across the clusters are attendance, personality trait, and participation or performance. There are different rubrics for participation/performance in each cluster of the co-curricular student organizations. In the rubric for Athletics, the category Working with Others describes a behavior that is strongly aligned to the practice of Humility: “Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Students can feel safe volunteering in this student’s presence” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 35). This is in keeping with the instruction of Saint Benedict that “no one is to pursue what [one] judges better for [one’s self], but instead, what one judges better for someone else” (RB 72.7).

**Examples of weak alignment.**

The Handbook provides for a Homeroom period which is a venue for discussion of class concerns and resolutions (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45). It can be inferred that as the students address their class issues, they would necessarily be practicing Humility in sincerely acknowledging conflicts and difficulties that they personally experience. Accepting the rules and regulations of the school and all student organizations as one of the student responsibilities (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38) can also be implied as an act of Humility.
Gaps.

The section on the Guidelines for Parents missed the opportunity to emphasize the practice of Humility in the interactions between the parents and the students, teachers and school personnel (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 138-139). To do so will ensure that their conversations will not be controlled by self-interests but will be a collective effort towards an authentic dialogue. Another section which is a perfect place to educate and form the students on the value of Humility is the one on Competitions of Students (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 112). We acknowledge that the good we are able to do, our accomplishments and successes are not of our own making but comes from the Lord (RB Prol 29, 4.42). We receive with grateful hearts the outpouring of God’s graces through the instruction, guidance and support of the people around us. At the same time, we patiently endure failures and defeats.
Application of framework on Humility for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<td>The Homeroom period is also used for discussion of school rules and policies, class concerns and resolutions, announcements about activities and schedules and other pertinent matters. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45)</td>
<td>The Homeroom period is for the nourishment of the mind, body and spirit of the students. As a class or year level community, the students will have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of their Benedictine education and grow in deeper appreciation of the Benedictine way of life. The students will be called to humbly listen to and learn not only from each other but also from their teachers, administrators, and other people who will come to share with them their wisdom, experience and expertise. The Homeroom period is also a sacred space where students can help build together a community characterized by relationships of care, respect and trust.</td>
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Figure 4.4 Description of the Homeroom Period

Obedience.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

The chapter on Obedience in the RB is also referred to by Böckmann (1994) as a chapter on Listening. The relationship between listening and obedience is explicit in the first verse of the Prologue of the RB which is quoted prior to the first section of the Handbook: “Listen carefully, my child, to my instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from someone who loves you; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 8). Thus, obedience involves two acts: listening and putting into practice what was heard. A statement in the Handbook’s piece on Benedictine Spirituality shows what a student is able to do as a result of the application of the two acts: “Through obedient listening with the ear of her
heart, [the student] embraces the sorrows and pains of people” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24). This statement beautifully captures the meaning of obedience as a Benedictine value. Obedience is all about love; our love of Christ impels us to show our love and concern for our community and the outside world (Böckmann, 2015). And for Saint Benedict, “a lack of love and concern for others and the community” is disobedience (King, 2014, p. 263). Another quote in the Handbook from Chapter 5 verse 13 of the RB likewise gives an instruction on the kind of obedience that we desire to imitate: “I have not come to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me (John 6:38)” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 114). The obedience rendered in the school community is ultimately following Christ in his obedience to the will of God (RB 5; Böckmann, 1994, 2005; Kardong, 1984). It is “giving over of self to others in trust” (Strange & Hagan, 1998, p. 9).

Obedience in a Benedictine school is not just to persons of authority but it is obedience to one another. “Obedience is a blessing to be shown by all . . . to one another, since we know that it is by this way of obedience that we go to God” (RB 71.1). As we obey one another, we nurture relationships of love, care and concern in the school community. This is exemplified when core members of the Student Council Organization (SCO) come together with the high school administration to “plan, coordinate, and implement a formation/development program for student leaders” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27). Mutual listening and obedience also happens when class concerns and resolutions are discussed during Homeroom period (p. 45); and during the process of investigations, hearings and deliberations of disciplinary cases (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed.).
Obedience is one of the values in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education and as mentioned in the previous discussions on the other values, the Handbook merely identifies the hallmarks and does not present a guide towards understanding the hallmarks in the context of a Benedictine way of life. Even though there are obvious alignments of the Handbook to the Framework, much can still be done in order that the Handbook can effectively foster the practice of the core values. An overview of Benedictine spirituality and quotes from the RB are not sufficient to convey to the students the very essence of the values that the institution aims to instill in the students.

The very structure of the Handbook with its policies, procedures, and guidelines necessarily involves a corresponding obligation on the students to “[know] and [comply] with the rules and regulations stated in the Student Handbook” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 1). The students are expected to “observe,” “follow,” and “comply” with certain norms and rules. And the Handbook is clear as to the consequences for failure to comply. Sadly, a big gap in the Handbook is its failure to shift the notion of obedience from mere compliance with rules and regulations to service to the school community (King, 2014). The rules and regulations exist not as an imposition or a burden but as guides for living and learning in the school community (Strange & Hagan, 1998).

**Examples of strong alignment.**

As stated in the section on the School Code of Conduct, one of the reasons for giving the CARE Actions is to “make the student recognize the significance of rules and regulations in the character formation of a person, and in upholding PEACE in the
Scholastican community” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 8). This clearly promotes the practice of the value of Obedience not as mere compliance of the rules but as a blessing to one’s self and to the community. Another example of strong alignment to the value of Obedience can be found in the Grading System for the Clubs. The rubric for participation/performance in the Communication/Literary Cluster includes the following criterion that promotes the kind of obedience that is desired in RB 5: “performs given tasks wholeheartedly and efficiently” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 25).

**Example of weak alignment.**

As the representative of the student body, the SCO Core is the voice of the students on matters that affect them. It is supposed to promote and protect the rights and welfare of the students (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27). Consequently, the student leaders have the obligation to listen to the students whom they represent and act on what they hear and learn from them. Although not explicitly listed among the functions of the SCO, we can infer that the value of Mutual Obedience is practiced between the SCO and the student body and the class and club officers with their class and club members respectively.

**Gaps.**

The section on General Guidelines is the most significant section for the students for it contains the do’s and don’ts, the acceptable and unacceptable, the expectations and prohibitions. The section covers Decorum and Behavior, Uniform, Classroom Procedures and Management, Lost and Found Articles, and Off Limits Area, among others. It is primarily because of this section that a student handbook is defined as an
“indispensable instrument for the control, management and enhancement of student conduct” (Bordinsky, 1980, p. 29). As a result, earlier research shows that regulations and student conduct ranks highest among the contents found in a student handbook (Bailey & Ward, 1968; Purvis & Leonard, 1988; White, 1958). This remains true today as shown in the Handbook under study.

The students are responsible to “abide by the rules and regulations of the school and all student organizations” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38). However, the school’s mission to educate and form the students demands that they genuinely grasp the rationale for the existence of the rules and regulations and their obligation to comply. Thus, an explanatory paragraph at the beginning of the section is imperative not only to accomplish this task but also to educate the students on the institution’s Benedictine way of life.
**Application of framework on Obedience for improvement of a section in the Handbook.**

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<td>Note: There is no explanatory paragraph at the beginning of this section other than the following quote prior to the section: “Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way. The love of Christ must come before all else. Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 4.20-21” (SPH, Revised 2014, p. 66)</td>
<td>“We intend to establish a school for the Lord’s service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in or to amend faults and to safeguard love” (Rule of St. Benedict Prol 45-47). Our School for the Lord’s Service is a community whose way of life is centered on Christ. We are a community of unique individuals bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ. We strive to live in peace, joy and love in spite of our differences in personalities, circumstances, needs and opinions. Together we build a welcoming and caring community; and create a safe and supportive environment that is conducive for teaching and learning. As we live our life of prayer, work and study, our Ora et Labora, we are guided by certain policies, procedures, rules, and regulations that direct us in our Benedictine way of living, teaching and learning in this school community. In humility, we “listen” and “act” on what we “hear”. Our obedience is our response to God and our service to one other and to the outside world “that in all things God may be glorified (1 Pt 4:11)” (Rule of St. Benedict 57.9).</td>
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Figure 4.5 General Guidelines: An Explanatory Paragraph
Discretion.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Discretion is not one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook. Nevertheless, there are principles and guidelines in the Handbook that uphold its practice. Discretion is lived out as one “discerns the best course of action in a particular set of circumstances” (Frigge, 2003, p. 234). In looking at situations, one distinguishes between what is essential and non-essential (Heufelder, 1983; Kardong, 1996) in order that one’s judgments are “not clouded by one’s own ego, one’s own desires and needs” (Grün, 2006, p. 38) but are enlightened by the Spirit of God. The same is true in making decisions as a class, club, student body or school community, dialogue with and consultation among the different members are instrumental in order that decisions are not based on the will of one person or those with influence but on God’s will (Böckmann, 2015). The following statement in the piece on Benedictine Spirituality perfectly illustrates the practice of Discretion:

“Living in a world that is driven to seek material wealth and power, the Scholastican is trained to seek the essentials in life knowing that true joy is rooted in Christ and in the Gospel values” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24).

The practice of Discretion is very relevant in resolving issues on discipline. Benedictine Discretion calls for persons with authority to discipline, to always take into consideration the uniqueness and present circumstances of each individual and to “constantly [inquire] about the will of God in each concrete situation” (Grün, 2006, p. 40). The section on School Code of Conduct in the Student-Parent Handbook Addendum (2015 ed.) presents the procedure for disciplinary actions. The procedure
appears to be straightforward and legalistic presumably with the intent to ensure compliance with the requirements of due process. Instead of receiving a “penalty” or “sanction”, a student found to have committed an offense is given a “CARE Action/Consequence” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed.). The Care Actions/Consequences “focuses on understanding the conflict/misbehavior, and listening and responding to the needs of both the offender and the offended” (p. 7). In both instances, the practice of Discretion is crucial in order that all decisions promote love and care for students.

**Examples of strong alignment.**

The section on Student Activity Program of the Handbook provides examples on how the students, through their participation in co-curricular student organizations, develop the habit of being able to distinguish between what is important and what is not; and to make decisions for the benefit of others and not for their personal interest and gain. In choosing what products to invent, the members of the Young Entrepreneurs’ Society (YES), one of the socio-civic clubs, consider the needs of the environment and the community in order to contribute to the society (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 102). The editors and writers of Blue Flame, the official student publication, print “relevant and balanced news reports and accurate information about the current events and features concerning the school and the nation” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 104). Similarly, the members of the drama and theater club, Curtain Call, commit to “honest, relevant and meaningful theater productions” which include those that “promote social awareness and inculcate Christian values” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 105).
**Examples of weak alignment.**

Although the guidelines do not mention anything about the observance of Discretion in the exercise of the following rights, it can be inferred that the students may use these opportunities to practice Discretion: “share in the decision-making process through the Student Council Organization (SCO),” “express their views on matters that affect them,” and “present/air their grievances and concerns to school authorities” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38). In evaluating the performance of the class and club officers (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27), the SCO Core can learn how to transcend prejudices or biases and other personal issues.

**Gaps.**

There are certain guidelines in the Handbook that present an opportunity for the students to be educated on the value of Discretion. One of the general guidelines on Decorum and Behavior prohibits “stuffed toys, any electronic gadget, pillows, magazines, among others” to be brought in school because they “distract students from their academic responsibilities” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 68). The inclusion of this guideline could have been a fitting time to teach the students on how to focus on the essential things in life and consider what would help them to be more present and attentive in class. For students appearing in advertisements, the guidelines should not just be a list of what not to wear, of prohibited poses, and of prohibited language and background music. The guidelines should also remind them to be discerning in their choices and actions in order that they will be in accordance with God’s will. In this case, maintaining one’s self-respect and dignity as a child of God is more important than the glamour and prestige of being in an advertisement.
Application of framework on Discretion for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<td>The following items are not allowed in campus because they distract students from their academic responsibilities. These items are stuffed toys, any electronic gadget, pillows, magazines, among others. Only when these items are required in class may students bring them to school. Otherwise, these items will be confiscated. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 68)</td>
<td>Learning demands attentive listening and presence. Students must help themselves to remain focused. They should be aware of what will prevent them from giving their full attention to the learning opportunities that will come their way throughout the day. The school, on its part, sees that stuffed toys, electronic gadgets, pillows, magazines, and other similar items will only be a distraction to the students and therefore should remain at home. However, these items may be allowed on campus if required for a class activity. Otherwise, these items will be confiscated.</td>
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Figure 4.6 Items Not Allowed on Campus

Stability.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Stability is another core value in the Framework which is not included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook. Even so, like the value of Discretion, there are items in the Handbook that illustrate alignment to this core value. Stability in a Benedictine school means commitment to the community and a way of life oriented towards growing in faith and love of Christ (Böckmann, 2005; de Jesus, 2007; de Waal, 2001; Kardong, 1996; Klassen et al., 2002; Strange & Hagan, 1998). Grün (2006) remarks that stability “invites us to pay attention to our roots, and its purpose is to encourage us to decide, to commit ourselves, [and] to accept ties” (p. 50). It is about building a community with long-term relationships and accountability (Bouchard, 2005).
The first section of the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) is titled General Information. It has 3 main headings: The School, Student Officials and Rights and Responsibilities of Students. From the list of titles under “The School”, the reader is already introduced to the Benedictine character of the institution: Missionary Statement of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters, Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education, Benedictine Spirituality, and Medal or Cross of St. Benedict. Found on the last few pages of the Handbook are “The Life of St. Benedict” and a “Brief Biography of St. Scholastica, Twin of St. Benedict” (pp. 186-188). After the Student Handbook Contract is a text on the Coat of Arms of the institution. Described as the unifying emblem of SSC, it has the image of the Benedictine cross, and the Benedictine mottos Ora et Labora (Prayer and Work), and “Ut In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus (That in all things God may be glorified!)” (p. 90). From all these literature, a person who has just joined the school community will already have an idea of what lies ahead. The Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education (p. 18) gives a list of the values of Benedictine education. The Benedictine Spirituality (p. 24) describes the way of life in a Benedictine school as inspired by the life of Saint Benedict. Quotes from the RB are adopted by the Handbook as guides for living the Benedictine way of life.

The narrative on the history of the institution found in the Handbook strongly establishes appreciation for the roots and heritage of the school and inspires the continuity of the school’s Benedictine tradition. The desire of the first Benedictine Sisters who came in 1906 “to work among the poor” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 10) is carried on in the school’s commitment to Education for Justice in 1975: establishment of an Institute of Women’s Studies, integration of religion with
social action, Night Secondary School for less privileged women and scholarships to develop musically talented young girls and boys from disadvantaged backgrounds, among others (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 13-14). In the piece on “Legacy of Academic Excellence,” it is written that the “Core of Benedictine Education remains rooted in the tradition of **academic excellence as social responsibility**” ((Student-Parent Handbook SHP, Revised 2014, p. 14). The Handbook mentions accreditation of all the school’s programs, good performance in board examinations, graduate degrees offered, and extension programs, among others (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 14-15).

With the value of stability, members of the school community experience a sense of ownership and pride in what the school has accomplished and at the same time, feel responsible and committed to continue the legacy of academic excellence that has been passed on through generations (Strange & Hagan, 1998). Unfortunately, there is no mention of the legacy of the High School Unit, in particular, considering that the Handbook is intended for the high school community. Acknowledging the contributions and accomplishments of the students, faculty, administrators, staff and parents in the High School Unit which have given honor and recognition to the institution will be an encouragement for the students, especially the new ones, to identify and strengthen their ties with the school community.

Students exhibit the value of Stability when they carry out their responsibilities to “respect SSC’s good name including that of the members of its academic community,” “abide by the rules and regulations of the school and all student organizations,” and to “take active interest in student affairs through the SCO” (Student-Parent Handbook,
Revised 2014, p. 38). On the guidelines for the School Uniform, the Handbook states that the uniform “aptly serves as an identification of a high school Scholastican” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 69). To uphold the value of stability, the guidelines should not just focus on the details of the proper uniform and on grooming but also emphasize the importance of one’s over-all appearance and posture. All members of the community, most especially in their official uniforms, carry not only their own selves but also the “person” of the school. It reflects one’s respect for and pride in being a part of the school community or lack thereof. One who carries one’s self with grace and dignity, bring the same grace and dignity to the school.

Students who have found a “home” in the school will manifest this attachment or commitment to the community in their academic performance, and active participation and involvement in both curricular and co-curricular activities. They will also show stability in their attitude of perseverance, of patient endurance especially in times of conflicts and difficult situations (de Jesus, 2007; Kardong, 1996; Klassen et al., 2002). Regular attendance in classes and club meetings (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 71, 109) and long-term membership in co-curricular organizations (pp. 59-62) may be indicators of the value of Stability. Academic honors, deportment awards, and awards recognizing commitment and dedicated service to the school or to specific co-curricular organizations (pp. 57-62) further strengthen the value of Stability in the students. Recognition given to graduates who have been in the school from grade 1 to high school or belongs to a family with 3 or 4 generations of graduates (p. 64) strongly promotes strong ties with the school and long-term relationships.
**Examples of strong alignment.**

An excerpt of the literature on the Benedictine Spirituality found in the Handbook illustrates an invitation to be grounded on the roots of a Benedictine education:

Important in the education of a young Scholastican is an awareness and appreciation of the Gospel values that [Saint] Benedict, the twin brother of [Saint] Scholastica, lived. As a young man, he was sent to Rome for his studies, but seeing the moral degradation especially among the young, he fled and sought solitude in the cave of Subiaco. This part of the life of [Saint] Benedict should have an impact on the life of every Scholastican. Living in a world that is driven to seek material wealth and power, the Scholastican is trained to seek the essentials in life knowing that true joy is rooted in Christ and in the Gospel values. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24)

The following is an example of an award mentioned in the Handbook that also promotes the value of Stability:

The Benedictine Award is given to the graduate who has perseverance and dedication in building a truly Christian community and has been able to imbibe and implement the school’s social orientation thrust. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 61)

**Examples of weak alignment.**

In the following guidelines, the promotion of Stability can be inferred in having a residency requirement to be entitled for awards of recognition:

**The Scholastican Award** is given to the graduate who has achieved the High School’s educational objectives, and has demonstrated sincere service to others, a
Christian concern for social justice, skill in decision-making, competence in both verbal and non-verbal communication. She must have been a student of SSC for all four (4) years of high school. . . .

**Mother Ferdinanda Hoelzer Award** is given to the graduate who has shown dedicated and consistent service in her co-curricular organization. She must have been an active member of the club for three continuous years. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 61)

*Gap.*

Commitment to the observance of the school rules and regulations can be fostered if the reasons for such rules are effectively conveyed. To better appreciate the guidelines on the use of certain facilities like the St. Cecilia’s Hall and likewise promote the value of Stability, users should be informed of the history of the place. St. Cecilia’s Hall has been named a National Historical Landmark and is part of the legacy of the institution. It has witnessed numerous community celebrations of gifts, talents and accomplishments in love and support for one another (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 88).
Application of framework on Stability for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<tr>
<td>The SSC High School Uniform aptly serves as an identification of a high school Scholastican. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 69)</td>
<td>The SSC High School Uniform is a symbol of one’s membership to the high school unit and the entire school community. All members of the community, most especially in their official uniforms, carry not only their own selves but also the “person” of the school. It reflects one’s respect for and pride in being a part of the school community. One who carries one’s self with grace and dignity, bring the same grace and dignity to the school and all its members. Thus, one’s appearance and posture in wearing the high school uniform is as important as being in complete and proper uniform.</td>
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Figure 4.7 Guidelines on the School Uniform

Community.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Community is not only one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook but also one of the words/terms most visible and commonly referred to in the entire Handbook. In the Second Vatican Council’s *Gravissimum Educationis* (Flannery, 1996), a Catholic school is referred to as a school community. Therefore, it is not surprising that the following phrases appear in the Handbook: “school community,” “SSC community,” “Scholastican community,” “High School community,” and “academic community.” However, the aforesaid terms were mostly used in the Handbook to identify the group and did not really convey the meaning of Community as a core value in a Benedictine institution. There are two other terms that appear in the Handbook: Benedictine community and Christ-centered
community. The Glee Club, a performing arts club, aims to “render services to the other sectors of the Benedictine community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 106). The Benedictine Circle, a spiritual formation club, “aims to be a part of and help the High School Unit in a Christ-centered community where everyone is aware of God’s presence within her and in the community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 98). In both instances, the community is linked with other core values like service and Christ-centeredness, respectively. This is also reflected in the school themes that were adopted from 1950 to 2015 which includes, among others: “Community Building Jubilee 2000: One in Christ Jesus,” “Building a Transforming Community of Peace,” and “Revitalizing the School Community for Effective Witness to Christ” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 15-16).

Bryk, et al., (1993) explicitly characterized the organizational form of Catholic schools as communal with distinct traditions, values, beliefs and a shared way of life. The literature on the Benedictine charism and the history of the school’s foundation does not only establish appreciation for the roots and heritage of the school, but also evokes a strong sense of community, of belongingness, of oneness with a tradition of over fifteen hundred years. It is a tradition lived by generations of Benedictine Sisters, students, faculty, administrators, staff, parents, and all those who have been involved with the institution one way or the other for 110 years. This sense of community is symbolized by the Coat of Arms of the institution printed on the back cover of the Handbook which is described as “the unifying emblem of SSC, a response to the call of community building, a reminder of the aspirations of past and current administrators, faculty, staff and
students, and a source of renewed vigor and hope for the institution” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 190).

In the Benedictine tradition, Christ is at the center of the community; Christ, from whom the community learns how to serve and whom the community serves in one another (de Vogüé, 1983). A community bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ will have to exist with respect for each other for “they should see Christ in each other and be Christ-like toward each other” (Barry, 2004, p. 33). Thus, respect should be shown to all persons “regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other forms of marginalization which place people beyond the reach of our love and care” (Klassen et al., 2002, p. 159). It is a community where members patiently bear the weaknesses of each other, support and obey one another, and attend to the other’s needs rather than one’s own (RB 72; Grün, 2006). The school experience of the students predominantly happens in the class they belong to. The quality of their teaching and learning experience depends on their class environment. It is in class that friendships are formed. It is also in class that one can experience isolation or rejection. Consequently, the guidelines on Classroom Procedures and Management should not only focus on maintaining order but more importantly promote the value of Community.

Community is not overtly mentioned in the Handbook’s text on Benedictine Spirituality. However, since the other core values are lived in community, the following statements in the text in effect uphold the practice of the value of Community:

In the exercise of Benedictine hospitality, she comes to recognize the face of Christ in the stranger and the familiar. Through obedient listening with the ear of her heart, she embraces the sorrows and pains of people. She steps out from her world of
comfort and extends her hand in loving service to others. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24)

The list of Rights and Responsibilities of Students in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014), on the other hand, explicitly promote the value of Community in emphasizing the observance of respect. The Students have the right to “receive courteous and respectful treatment from various members of the academic community” with the corresponding responsibilities to “respect the educational process and learning environment of others,” and “respect SSC’s good name including that of the members of its academic community” (p. 38).

As explicitly expressed by Mohrman (2006), “if a school genuinely aspires to be Benedictine, then the goal of this living together must be love” (Community Life, para. 1). In the section on the School Code of Conduct, any conflict or misbehavior that occurs in community is considered a “violation of people and relationships” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 7). Thus, the discipline system of CARE Actions/Consequences adopted by the High School is aligned with the value of Community as it focuses more on the formation of the offender and her “[reintegration] into the community as valuable member” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38). p. 7). The relationship of the offender with the community is restored through Community Service, one of the CARE Actions facilitated by the Office for Student Formation (OSF), which involves “chores done either during breaks or after class hours” (p. 8). Care is likewise shown by the SCO by sending “greeting cards for birthdays, celebrations, and other similar events” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 28).
Although it is not clear to whom they are sent, presumably to administrators or faculty, it shows appreciation, support, and affirmation to other members of the community.

A Benedictine school is a community of dialogue, collaboration and consultation not only among peers but also among its members (students, faculty, administrators, staff, parents and including the alumni) and the outside communities that the school serves. Community members participate in setting directions and goals for the whole community or for particular departments and units (Klassen et al., 2002). The following structures and programs provide venues for the aforesaid activities: SCO, Academic Integration, Homeroom Program, Outreach Program, Student Activity Program, and Discipline System.

As a community, a Benedictine school should have a “communal spirit, a spirit of team work” (de Jesus, 2007, p. 136). The objective to promote the school’s community spirit is mentioned in the sections of the SCO and Academic Clubs but neither one elaborated on how the SCO or the clubs intend to do it. In fact, out of five Academic clubs, only Science Club made reference to this objective. Furthermore, the Science Club’s promotion of community spirit through “intellectual integration among school members” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 102) is not explained further. The athletic club High School Pep Squad, on the other hand, is organized primarily “to promote school spirit and drum up support of the student body for the [high school] athletes” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 107). A statement on specific community celebrations, practices, rituals and traditions in the Handbook can highlight the institution’s strong sense of community.
Examples of strong alignment.

To promote and strengthen the community spirit, the school community come together to celebrate their faith, achievements and other important events: “Assemblies are called for ceremonies, announcements, programs, reading of Honors, Holy masses and other liturgical celebrations, contests, and the like” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 80). There are guidelines concerning student leadership that strongly promote the value of Community. One of the objectives of the SCO as written in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) is to “promote the spirit of camaraderie, community and harmony within and outside of SSC” (p. 26). Consequently, it is the SCO Core’s task to “initiate activities for better community growth” (p. 27). For a student to qualify as class or club officer, she must demonstrate “respect for human dignity, Christian concern for and sincere service to others in the community” (p. 32).

Examples of weak alignment.

Awards are given in recognition of the “students’ outstanding service to the High School and/or their excellent performance in their academics, co-curricular and extracurricular endeavors” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 58). Citations are likewise given to those who have brought distinction to the institution by qualifying for and/or winning awards outside the institution in division, regional, national or international competitions (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 60). The tradition of coming together to give the awards does promote community spirit. However, the opportunity to promote a greater value is overlooked when there is failure to emphasize that it is not just individual accomplishments that are recognized but more of a community celebrating the varied gifts, talents, skills and services of its members. It
is meant to thank and affirm the awardees but at the same time also encourage others to contribute their work for the service of the community.

Gaps.

The guidelines on Communication Dissemination, Appointment with Parents, Suspension of Classes, and Emergency Situations (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 91-93) should be more than just a list of procedures. They are specific venues to promote the value of Community. Keeping all the members of the community informed through meetings, assemblies, circulars and the like promotes the community spirit of oneness. Communication dissemination also emphasizes the importance of listening to one another. The guidelines are there to show care and concern for all the members of the community; to ensure the protection and safety of everyone. The procedures are in place in order that no one will be anxious or distressed when unexpected situations or emergencies occur.

The following guideline is one of the rules and regulations on the use of the library:
The library has an “open stack collection.” It therefore follows that binders, fillers, big envelopes and other items brought inside are subjected to inspection before being taken out. Books are inspected upon leaving the library premises to make certain they are properly stamped. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 83)

The guideline does not miss the opportunity to promote the value of Community but actually negates community spirit. Subjecting the binders and envelopes of the students for inspection before leaving the premises seems to be based on the presumption that the students will steal from the “open stack collection.” There is already a lack of trust; a lack of respect for the dignity of a person.
Application of framework on Community for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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| Note: The guidelines in the Handbook focus more on maintaining order in the classroom (i.e., punctuality, tardiness, coming in and going out). There are no guidelines on how to build Community in the classroom. | Community of Care, Respect and Trust  
The classroom is a community within the school community. The school experience of students and teachers predominantly happens in the classroom. While it is in the classroom that close and lasting friendships are formed; it is also in the classroom that one can experience isolation or rejection. Together, the students and teachers are called to build a community of care, respect and trust. It is a community where students and teachers patiently bear the weaknesses of each other, support and obey one another, and attend to the other’s needs rather than one’s own (RB 72). It is a community where people humbly listen to each other; open to what each one has to say and share. It is a place where each one feels safe to be one’s self, confident to take risks and contribute to the community; a place where affirmations and encouragement abound. The students and teachers serve one another by creating a learning and teaching environment that will allow everyone to be the best person they were created to be. |

Figure 4.8 Guidelines on Classroom Procedures and Management:  
Building a Community in the Classroom

Prayer, Study, and Work.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

The adoption of the value of Prayer, Study, and Work, like the value of Community, is very much evident in the Handbook. The balanced life of prayer, study, and work in a Benedictine school is commonly referred to as Ora et Labora (Prayer and Work). In de
Jesus (2007), “academic work and academic excellence” was covered by Labora while “spiritual life” was linked with Ora (p. 124). “Each of these three elements, [Prayer, Study, and Work] demands attention if the totality of the human person is to be acknowledged (de Waal, 2001, p. 86).

The culture of the school’s Benedictine education was described in the Handbook as: (a) “integral formation for the ‘total person’; (b) “education that combined academic excellence with the religious-socio-pastoral and civic formation”; and where (c) “Benedictine culture of Ora et Labora” was fostered (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 11). Ora et Labora, also a Benedictine motto, is one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook. The piece on Benedictine Spirituality states that the students are “trained to live a life of balance and harmony of prayer and work” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24). Thus, a Benedictine school aims to educate and form the whole person: mind, body and spirit.

The institution and the High School Unit envision students who “[live] out Ora et Labora” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 20) and are “committed to glorify God through Ora et Labora” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 23) respectively. They are both committed to providing the students a “holistic formation anchored on academic excellence” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 21, 23). The academic and co-curricular programs are designed to develop the students’ “spiritual, academic, technical and interpersonal skills and values” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 40). The co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, on the other hand,
“complement and enrich the academic program and provide venues for further development of the students” in the following areas:

a. special talents, creative and technical skills and interests;

b. sense of service and social responsibility, through training programs and activities which promote sharing and interaction with others, social awareness and commitment to social transformation; and

c. leadership qualities. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 97)

The value of Prayer, Study and Work also calls for a life of integration where work and study becomes prayer in itself (Bouchard, 2005). Grün (2006) refers to the integration of prayer and work as the “internal connection” (p. 30). In line with the spiritual formation of the students, the Campus Ministry program includes the celebration of worship and sacraments, retreats and recollections. The section on General Guidelines has items referring to Holy masses and other liturgical celebrations, Morning Praise, and retreats and overnight recollections. However, the guidelines for these items dealt more with schedule and other practical concerns (i.e., what to bring, where to assemble, how to behave) and made no mention of the balance and integration of these prayer activities with the life of study and work in a Benedictine school. The integration of these elements is reflected in the quality of one’s prayer, study and work; where everything is done with the awareness of the presence of God and out of love for God (Bouchard, 2005; de Jesus, 2007; de Vogüé, 1983; Heufelder, 1983).

Lectio Divina, or prayerful reading of the Scriptures is part of the Benedictine tradition and should be fostered in a Benedictine school (Frigge, 2003; Klassen et al., 2002; Mohrman, 2006; Wright, 2007). There is nothing in the Handbook that indicates
that it is practiced in the institution. If the practice exists, then it should be included in
the Handbook.

**Examples of strong alignment.**

The descriptions of some academic programs in the Handbook explicitly illustrate the
development of both the interior and exterior aspects of an individual. The Music, Art,
Physical Education and Health (MAPEH) program aims to develop the gifts, talents and
skills of the students. The Physical Education program, in particular, “focuses on the
total fitness of the individual in her physical, mental and social aspects” while the Health
program aim to “establish and strengthen desirable personal health practices and attitudes
for both physical and psychological wellness” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014,
p. 43).

**Examples of weak alignment.**

The Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) has guidelines that require students to
manifest or live out Benedictine values and ideals: as basis for computation of Conduct
Grades (p. 55) and as criteria for recognition or awards (p. 64). Some co-curricular
student organizations have as their objective “to bear witness to the Gospel and
Benedictine values,” “uphold the Benedictine values,” and “develop holistic women
Scholasticans equipped with Benedictine value” (pp. 98, 100, 102). Since Ora et Labora
is one of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education stated in the Handbook it can be
inferred that the practice of balance of prayer, study and work in the life of the student is
likewise included in the values fostered by the guidelines.
Gaps.

Prayer is referred to in the Handbook in two instances: Test and Examinations and Morning Praise. However, the Handbook missed the opportunity to educate the students on the value of integrating Prayer, Study and Work. One of the rules to observe during long tests and periodical examinations merely states that the teacher-proctor shall say a short prayer before the actual test (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 51). The guidelines on Morning Praise, on the other hand, specify the procedure and instructions for order (i.e., when it will start, what to bring, where to assemble, etc.). The guidelines should have included a statement on prayer being an integral part in the work of the day. A statement can be added stating that prayer allows one to acknowledge the presence of God at the beginning of the day. In the same spirit of prayer, the work is then carried out in humble obedience to God.
Application of framework on Prayer, study, and work for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<tr>
<td>Note: The guidelines on Morning Praise refer to procedure and instructions for order (i.e., when it will start, what to bring, where to assemble, etc.).</td>
<td>As a school community we are called by the signal of the bells to acknowledge the presence of God in our lives at the beginning of the day. Prayer is an integral part of our daily work. We approach God with grateful hearts and entrust to God all our concerns, needs, plans, and activities. We ask that we may be attentive and mindful to God speaking to us through the people, events, and situations that we will encounter each day. In the same spirit of prayer, we carry out our study and work throughout the rest of the day in the presence of and humble obedience to God.</td>
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Figure 4.9 Guidelines on Morning Praise: An Introduction

Discipline and Order.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Discipline is one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook and is extensively referred to in the section on School Code of Conduct. The following paragraph appears in the Handbook as an introduction to the section:

Philosophy: Discipline as a Benedictine Value

Discipline is a primary Benedictine value. As such, every Scholastican is expected to practice self-discipline in both academic pursuits and social behavior. Students are held responsible for knowing and complying with the rules and regulations stated in the Student Handbook. [Saint] Benedict puts it beautifully in his Holy Rule: ‘Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord’s service. In
drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and safeguard love.’ (Prologue vv 45-47, Rule of St. Benedict.)

(Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 1)

The Handbook quotes some government laws (i.e., Manual of Regulations for Private Schools of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and the New Family Code of the Philippines) and Supreme Court rulings to establish the school’s responsibility and authority to maintain discipline.

The value of Discipline and Order in a Benedictine school has two aspects: (a) the external behavior and interior attitude to be developed in each person and (b) the discipline system adopted by the institution. The formation of an individual in a Benedictine school is towards a change in external behavior as well as the development of the interior attitude of self-discipline, self-responsibility, self-control, and self-regulation (Darmanin, 2009; de Jesus, 2007; Kardong, 1996). The Handbook states that “discipline is viewed as a tool for character development and personal formation” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 4). The rules and regulations exist as a guide towards the ultimate goal of transformation in Christ. As mentioned in the previous discussion on the value of Obedience, the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations direct the individuals and the community as they live, teach and learn in the school of the Lord’s service. Order is vital in a Benedictine life for it brings peace in the community and in the individuals and allows everyone to concentrate on what is important. Grün (2006) points out that Saint Benedict “does not desire an order that is artificially imposed on people, but an opportunity for individuals to create and find order
within themselves” (p. 52).

Certain sections in the Handbook have guidelines that emphasize the cultivation of self-discipline in the students: Students’ Responsibilities, Decorum and Behavior, and School Code of Conduct. The Handbook is no different from a traditional handbook which basically contains rules and regulations, primarily on expected conduct and behavior (Bailey & Ward, 1968; Purvis & Leonard, 1988; White, 1958) in one’s daily interactions with people, in specific places, and during certain events. While there are rules in the Handbook that require a positive behavior or action, there are also rules that focus on prohibited acts. A significant over-all observation on the Handbook is the absence of an explanation of or introduction to the guidelines that will help the students understand the rationale behind the rules. Students will be able to internalize a rule or regulation if they are able to make meaning of what is expected of them and “synthesize that meaning with respect to their other goals and values” (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This supports Lescault’s (1988) proposal to involve the students in developing a discipline code in order that they will see it “as a necessary means of creating and preserving a safe and orderly environment in which learning can take place [and] not as a list of rules and regulations created by and for the convenience of faculty and administration” (p 46). It would be difficult to instill a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in the students if, in the first place, they do not know the reason why they are expected to act or behave in a certain manner.

Identifying the core value that is intended to be inculcated in the students in following the rules or regulations will ensure that what are written in the Handbook are relevant, reasonable and instrumental in fostering such value. The guidelines on
Classroom Procedures and Management in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) include Permission to Leave the Classroom, Going to the Clinic, Going to the Washrooms, and Calling Out Students From Class (pp. 74-75). The Class Movement guidelines require that students use the staircase, corridors and main staircase properly. The students are told to “keep to the right,” “descend/ascend in single file,” and “walk in pairs,” among others (p. 80). The students should wear “plain white socks worn one inch above the ankle bone” (p. 69). There is a list of Off-limits Areas to the students (p. 90). These are examples of rules that by themselves may either be considered too restrictive, or trivial, or even unnecessary unless it is clear that the practice of said behaviors promote a greater value or the common good of the community. The students will have a deeper appreciation and respect for the rules if they see the rules’ connection to a higher purpose. As aptly put by Goodman (2007), “genuine ‘buy-in’ [of the students] requires personal identification with the values of the institution” (p. 5).

The second aspect of the value of Discipline and Order is the manner of disciplining the students which should reflect the “exercise of utmost care and concern” (RB 27.1). The section on School Code of Conduct presents the system of discipline adopted by the institution. The penalties or sanctions for the commission of offenses enumerated in the Student-Parent Handbook Addendum (2015 ed.) are referred to as CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES which are considered to be “restorative and not punitive in nature” (p. 7). The use of the word CARE as acronym for Confront, Accept, Restore, and Empower (p. 4) is very effective for it also focuses on the mission of care and nurturance of the students. Healing, reconciliation, and integration back into the community of the erring student is the paramount consideration in correcting the
misbehavior or violation committed (Fry, 1981; Kardong, 1996; King, 2014; Schutz, 2009). Thus, the CARE ACTIONS are given to:

- Assist the student to be more aware of herself;
- Help the student realize the consequences of her actions;
- Make the student recognize the significance of rules and regulations in the character formation of a person, and in upholding PEACE in the Scholastican community;
- Guide the student to restore herself despite of the weakness/es she has shown; and
- Empower the student to reintegrate herself to be the best person she could be in the Scholastican Community. (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 7-8)

The CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES include the following: (a) Oral Reminder; (b) Written Reminder; (c) Community Service; (d) Written Reprimand; (e) Academic consequence; (f) CARE Days; (g) Non-readmission; (h) Exclusion and (i) Expulsion (SPH Addendum, 2015 edition, pp. 8-10). The CARE Program is conducted by the Coordinator for Student Formation (CSF), Campus Minister and the Grade Level Guidance Counselor. During CARE Days, the student who is subject to discipline is “assisted to be open in the journey of reflection, service, restoration, and empowerment” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 9). Consistent with the RB’s instruction that sanctions should be commensurate to the seriousness of the faults (RB 24.1), the CARE Team determines the period of CARE Days “according to the gravity of the offense committed” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 9).
The C.A.R.E. (Confront-Accept-Restore-Empower) Team is composed of the CSF as Chair of the Team and Student Formation Leader (SFL), one adviser-in-charge in the grade level of the student, HR Class Adviser, CLE teacher, and Guidance Counselor of the student as members (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 4). The value of Discipline and Order requires that those who have the authority to discipline should “always let mercy triumph over judgment” (RB 64.10) and must use “prudence and love as one sees best for each individual” (RB 64.14). This does not mean, however, that a severe consequence cannot be imposed. If all the efforts to help the individual restore one’s commitment to live in harmony with the community fail, then there is no recourse but to ask the individual to leave (RB 28.6-7). Thus, it is inherent in the authority to investigate and decide disciplinary cases, the responsibility to know and understand the circumstances and situation of the individual subject of discipline.

Unlike the majority of the guidelines, rules and regulations in the other sections of the Handbook which did not make reference to any core value, the SUMMARY OF OFFENSES AND CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 11-18) categorized the acts/offenses according to the values that have been violated. However, not all the identified values are the same with the core values of the Framework used to analyze the Handbook. The minor offenses were categorized as acts against: (a) Punctuality and Respect, (b) Good Grooming and Simplicity, (c) Stewardship, (d) Peace and Order, (e) Propriety and Good Speech, and (f) Responsibility, Integrity, and Honesty. The major/serious offenses were categorized as acts against: (a) Responsibility, Integrity and Honesty, (b) Peace and Order, (c) Public Morals, (d) Respect and Stewardship, and (e) Safety and Security. Cellular phone
violations and Cheating (Academic Dishonesty) were treated separately. The implications of having this set of values and the Core Values of Benedictine Education is something that has to be explored.

**Examples of strong alignment.**

Aside from the system of CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES that is strongly aligned with the value of Discipline and Order, there are other guidelines that similarly exhibit the promotion of the value. The SCO Core “helps maintain discipline during departmental and institutional activities” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27). The rights and responsibilities of the students are introduced with the following statement:

> All students of St. Scholastica’s College must realize and understand that responsibility is inherent in every right. The Scholastican values of instilling self-discipline in each one and respecting the dignity of others automatically imply the taking on of responsibility for one’s actions and ensuring that one’s actions do not infringe on another’s rights. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 37)

Finally, one of the norms of Decorum and Behavior expect the students “to exercise self-discipline and responsibility at all times whether in or out of school” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67).

**Examples of weak alignment.**

The rules to be effective must be premised on values that students can relate with (Goodman, 2007) and focused on positive behavior (Fox, Terry & Fox, 1995; McKevitt & Braaksma, 2008). Thus, the following norm ought to be stated positively and should emphasize the values of Christ-centeredness, silence and restraint of speech, and the
creation of a peaceful and harmonious environment: “Students must not loiter, make noise, engage in disruptive behavior, use foul language, display indecent acts and the like at all times” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67).

**Gaps.**

Most of the guidelines, rules, and regulations in the Handbook do not give the purpose for the expected behavior or the value that is intended to be inculcated among the students. Although the value that needs to be fostered can be inferred from the expected behavior, the students will be more motivated to respond accordingly if they understand the relevance of the actions especially when the guideline appears to control their every movement.

The guidelines on Classroom Procedures and Management in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) cover the areas of Attendance, Punctuality and Tardiness, Bells, Permission to Leave the Classroom, Going to the Clinic, Going to the Washrooms, and Calling Out Students From Class (pp. 71-75). The first sentence on Attendance lays down an excellent premise: “Attendance is treated as a matter of discipline” (p. 71). However, the statement could have been expanded to emphasize the importance of being present in classes and other school activities. This section of the Handbook is an opportune place to educate the students on the blessing and privilege of being able to go to school. In order that the guidelines will not merely appear as a means to control the comings and goings of the students, the guidelines can be premised with a statement on the call for commitment to learning and teaching. The same with a guideline on Class Movement which states:
Only classes that will transfer to the (sic) another room may move out of their classrooms after the warning/dismissal bell has been rung. In doing so, they shall line up in pairs and move quietly and quickly with the president and secretary in front and the treasurer and vice-president at the rear. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 79)

The guideline can be premised with a statement that emphasizes the need to maintain an environment that is conducive for learning for everyone. It is necessary to maintain discipline and order in transferring to another classroom or building so as not to disturb those classes that are still going on. To follow the guideline will then be one’s service to the community.
Application of framework on Discipline and order for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<tr>
<td>Note: There is no statement in the Handbook to introduce the specific guidelines abovementioned.</td>
<td>Commitment to Learning and Teaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It is a great blessing and privilege to be able to go to school and experience learning and teaching. Teachers and students learn from each other as they listen to one another. They also teach each other as they share their thoughts, ideas, and insights with each other. The signal of the bells calls each member of the community to respond without delay to an invitation to encounter God in prayer, studies, work, activities, conversations and interactions each day (RB 22.6, 43.1). The school experience of each one is enriched by everyone’s regular, active, and engaging presence and participation in all the classes and activities. Teachers and students serve each other in creating a class environment that is peaceful, free from unnecessary interruptions and distractions.</td>
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Figure 4.10 Introduction to the Specific Guidelines on Attendance, Punctuality and Tardiness, Bells, etc.

Stewardship.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Entries in the Handbook explicitly refer to the value of Stewardship which is included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education. The piece on Benedictine Spirituality captures the essence of the core value of Stewardship which reads: “[Saint] Benedict calls on every Scholastican to be conscious of her stewardship over the good which God has entrusted to her, to recognize, make use and share what she has been given for the good of all” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24). There is
reverence for the whole of creation, both human and non-human, in a Benedictine school (ABCU, 2010; Collins, 2005; Rippinger, 1985). All materials and goods that are used in common are to be kept in clean and in good condition like sacred vessels of the altar (RB 31.10; Kardong, 1996).

The promotion of the value of Stewardship among the students is explicit in the aim of the High School unit to form students who are “skilled in and values inter-personal relationships” and “genuinely cares for the environment” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 23). As stated in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014), one of the functions of the SCO Core is to “promote and protect students’ rights and welfare” (p. 27). The academic program of Science and Technology will enable the students to “become responsible users of technology [and] committed to the protection and preservation of the environment” (p. 41). The socio-civic club Project E.A.R.T.H. (Environmental Awareness and Readiness to Help) is specifically tasked to enforce the commitment of the High School community “to the call for pro-environmental awareness and action” (p. 100).

The members who call themselves “Earthwatchers” commit to –

- respect all of God’s creation;
- promote ecological well-being by disseminating information geared towards the restoration and protection of Mother Earth;
- sponsor outreach activities to communities needing help regarding their natural environment; and
- spearhead the high school unit’s cleanliness campaign.” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 100)
The Committee on Environment Concerns and the Project Earth organization, on the other hand, has set Project Earth Guidelines on designated eating areas and on waste management. “The school’s Waste Management program includes waste segregation, composting and recycling” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 78).

The section on General Guidelines has norms for the “care of school property,” “care for personal belongings,” and “use of facilities” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 81-89). Except for the norms on “care of school property” which mentions a student’s “proper stewardship of her environment” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 82), the value of Stewardship is not stated in the other norms. However, the expected behaviors clearly illustrate the application of the value. Nevertheless, the Handbook can be improved to include statements that will educate the students on the essence of the value.

The practice of simplicity of lifestyle and frugality is also considered part of the value of Stewardship which entails the ability to distinguish between needs and wants (Klassen et al., 2002). The Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) also has guidelines that promote simplicity of lifestyle and frugality. Educational tours, field trips and other off-campus activity will only be allowed if “the values of simplicity and creative use of available resources are upheld and promoted” (p. 112). The campaign of student-candidates “must be conducted with simplicity and at minimum expense” (p. 35). Moreover, “students are discouraged from using expensive signature items in school as a concrete expression of the Benedictine value of simplicity of lifestyle” (p. 68).
Examples of strong alignment.

Certain guidelines explicitly foster the development of the value of Stewardship among the students. The students are “enjoined to take proper care of their belongings and to respect those of others” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). The norms on Care for School Property include keeping walls free from stains, smudges, and notices. Posters should be tacked only on bulletin boards. Garbage should be disposed properly. The bulletin boards are to be kept tidy and orderly (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 82). The guidelines on the Audio Visual Center illustrate the practice of Stewardship in returning borrowed items on time and the immediate reporting of any damage to or malfunction of any of the materials and equipment (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 84).

Example of weak alignment.

The class and club officers are both “elected annually” and they “take charge” of the class and club affairs, respectively. From the list of responsibilities stated in the Handbook, the officers primarily organize and coordinate the daily activities of the class or club. However, as leaders and stewards of the class or club members under their care, the Handbook should include among their responsibilities the task of building a community of care, respect, trust, hospitality, service. The guidelines should also include how the student leaders meet the needs of their members; how the officers respond to their issues and concerns.

Gaps.

The following guideline on the use of the High School Library is an example of a gap in the” Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014): “students who mutilate or steal library
materials will be subjected to disciplinary action” (p. 83). Instead of focusing on mutilation and stealing, the Handbook should have a rule on checking out books and materials. Emphasis should be on taking care of the materials as sacred vessels of the altar (RB 31.10) in order that others may have the opportunity to enjoy and make use of the resources. The value of Stewardship requires that any borrowed item must be returned in the same condition when it was borrowed.
**Application of framework on Stewardship for improvement of a section in the Handbook.**

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<tr>
<td>Note: The Handbook does not have an explanatory paragraph to the guidelines.</td>
<td>We are all given the privilege to enjoy the many resources of our school community. They are places for learning and teaching, and sharing of gifts, talents and skills. They are places of dialogue and collaboration; places where we live our <em>Ora et Labora</em>. However, with this privilege is our responsibility to use and care for our facilities which we own in common in this School for the Lord’s Service. We keep the facilities clean and in order out of charity, respect and consideration for those who will use them after us. We preserve the beauty and simple elegance of our facilities, a part of our Benedictine legacy, not only as service to our school community but also to the outside world and the generations to come who can also enjoy them.</td>
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Figure 4.11 *General Guideline on the Use of Facilities: An Explanatory Paragraph*

**Hospitality.**

*Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.*

A Benedictine community is known for its Benedictine hospitality which is rooted on Saint Benedict’s chapter on welcoming all guests in the monastery as Christ himself (RB 53). This teaching of Saint Benedict has been extended not only to guests or visitors of the community but among the community members themselves (Böckmann, 2005; Bouchard, 2005). Hospitality is one of the values included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Student Handbook. The statement on Hospitality in the Handbook can be found in the piece on Benedictine Spirituality which reads: “In the exercise of Benedictine hospitality, she comes to recognize the face of
Christ in the stranger and the familiar” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 24). Persons are then treated with respect, reverence and care regardless of age, economic and social status, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, intellectual capacity and abilities. According to Dumm (1980), hospitality is about respecting the mystery in each person; discovering the unique gifts that each one possesses.

There are guidelines and programs in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) that definitely fosters the value of Hospitality. The students have the responsibility to “respect the educational process and learning environment of others” (p. 38). The Remedial Program helps students with failing marks in Science, Mathematics, and English (Grammar) classes (p. 46). Special Filipino classes are offered to non-Filipino speakers in order that they meet the expected proficiency as required by the Department of Education (p. 46). The “First come, First serve” policy in the use of school facilities and services will ensure that all are treated with the same respect and care (p. 67). The Student Activity Program of the school also promotes the value of Hospitality in providing venues to the students to develop their special talents, gifts and skills through their participation in student organizations/clubs (pp. 97-108). Hospitality is shown in providing opportunities to parents to have conversations with administrators and faculty (p. 138).

The value of Hospitality in a Benedictine school has a special characteristic in that it extends its welcome especially to the marginalized, the poor, the sick, and the needy for they are the ones who need hospitality the most (RB 53.15; de Jesus, 2007; Kardong, 1996). In the history of the institution, the desire of the sisters “to work among the poor” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 10) was realized when it first opened a “free
school” together with some paying students. This mission has continued in the Night Secondary School program of the school which “provides less privileged women with opportunities for a better future” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 13). The school also offers scholarships to some young girls and boys who come from disadvantaged backgrounds who have musical talents as instrumental soloists (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 14). More importantly, the High School aims to form students who have “compassion for others especially the poor and the marginalized women and children” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 23). This is made possible through the activities carried out by the students in their organizations/clubs. Project EARTH sponsors “outreach activities to communities needing help regarding their natural environment” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 100). The Red Cross Youth Council responds to the less fortunate (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 100). The Math Club “[coordinates] with the Outreach Program in their Supplementary Education in Math to elementary school children” and “[organizes] the ‘Reach Out’ activity with other schools to bring joy to less fortunate kids of adopted communities” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 102).

*Examples of strong alignment.*

The school’s Orientation Program is an example of Hospitality extended to the students and parents, most especially to the new members of the community. Some of the activities included in the program are Orientation for Newcomers, Benedictine Orientation for Newcomers, Session for Non-Catholics, Club Orientation, “I Belong Program” and the Campus Tour (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 47).
The campaign guidelines for the election of SCO Core give a clear example of how the students can practice the value of Hospitality: “Party names, campaign gimmicks and materials must uphold the dignity and integrity of the SCO and fellow candidates. Campaign strategies should not, in any way, besmirch the reputation of the opposition” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 35). It further requires that campaign must be focused on the candidate’s qualifications.

**Examples of weak alignment.**

The practice of the value of Hospitality can be inferred from the SCO Core’s “commitment to involvement in and solidarity with communities within and beyond SSC” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 270). The Outreach Program also provides a venue for the students to “empower and motivate [the School’s] adopted communities to act effectively towards self-reliance and raise the consciousness of the High School community with regard to its role as a social catalyst” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45).

**Gaps.**

The Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) provides that the students have a right to “a wholesome, liberating and empowering learning environment” (p. 37). The definition can include the right of the students to a welcoming community which is connected to their right to “receive a courteous and respectful treatment from various members of the academic community” (p. 38).

One of the areas included in the list of Off-Limits Areas is the Information/Parlor (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 90). It is the place where guests are welcomed, where inquiries are entertained, and where letters, packages, and the like for
any member of the community are received. It is the place where Hospitality should be practiced. This could have been introduced to the students if there was an explanation on why certain areas were off-limits to them.
Application of framework on Hospitality for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>All must demonstrate:</td>
<td>All must demonstrate:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. respect for human dignity, Christian</td>
<td>1. respect and reverence for every person;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. appreciation of their Filipino heritage</td>
<td>2. appreciation of their Filipino heritage;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. good academic standing</td>
<td>3. respect of and obedience to school policies, rules and regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>x x x</td>
<td>x x;</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. respect and compliance of school policies, rules and regulations</td>
<td>4. leadership qualities like discretion,</td>
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<td>x x x</td>
<td>humility, and stewardship;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. leadership qualities</td>
<td>5. positive interpersonal skills;</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. positive interpersonal skills</td>
<td>6. good academic standing</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 32-33)</td>
<td>x x x.</td>
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Figure 4.12 Qualifications of Class and Club Officers

Service.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

The first sentence in the piece on Benedictine Spirituality in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) refers to the school as a “school for the Lord’s service” (p. 24). And the last value that the piece referred to is Service where it states that the Scholastican “steps out from her world of comfort and extends her hand in loving service to others” (p. 24). Service is also one of the values included in the Handbook’s Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education. The word service is also found in the statement written before the Handbook’s section on Student Activity Program which reads: “Now the challenge is for you to place all your talents and your creative abilities in the service of Christ to help build up His Kingdom” (p. 96).
A Benedictine school is a community where all members “serve one another” (RB 35.1) and “serve one another in love” (RB 35.6); and in imitation of Christ who came to serve and not be served (RB 36.1; Böckmann, 2005; Kardong, 1996). Student leadership in the High School either as members of the SCO Core, or as class or club officers is a position of service. Unfortunately, this point is not mentioned in the Student-Parent Handbook’s (Revised 2014) discussion on Student Officials. Nevertheless, the value of Service is encouraged as students are recognized for their exceptional service to the community. Awards are given to graduates who have shown or demonstrated service variously described as “dedicated, sincere, outstanding, consistent, exemplary and committed” (pp. 60-62). The recognition given is either for service to a co-curricular organization, the school community, or the outside communities. A year end award is also given to undergraduates “who have shown dedicated service in [their] co-curricular organization” (p. 60).

The institution envisions students “with a passion for service and commitment to truth and justice to transform society” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 20). Thus, one of the special programs under the section on Academic Matters is the Outreach Program whose goal is to “empower and motivate its adopted communities to act effectively towards self-reliance and to raise the consciousness of the High School community with regard to its role as a social catalyst” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45). This is the school’s response to the Catholic social teaching’s principle on preferential option for the poor (Caveglia, 1999; Böckmann, 2005) where, according to Böckmann includes “raising our consciousness, activating energies of the poor, helping them to help themselves, working toward improving systemic problems,
and prophetic admonition of the powerful” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 194). Service most especially to the poor, the sick, the pilgrim, the children and all persons in need is service to Christ (RB 36.1, 53.15; Böckmann, 2005; de Vogüé, 1983; Kardong, 1996).

There is no doubt that the value of Service is entrenched in the life of the school community. As stated in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014), offices are set up to ensure that the needs and requirements of the students are met: St. Liguori Management and Wellness Center, Campus Ministry Office, Library and Audio-Visual Center, Registrar’s and Grants Office, Medical and Dental Services, Food Services, Bookstore Services, Communications and Safety and Security Office (pp. 115-118). Some of the services provided by the High School Campus Ministry, for example, are pastoral care and counseling, family ministry, and ministry to the sick (p. 116). The service component of the different co-curricular student organizations is strongly evident in the descriptions written in the Handbook. The clubs aim to provide opportunities for the students to develop their gifts, talents and skills and share them in service of the school community and the outside communities. The KAPATID Music Ministry leads the school community during school Masses as vocalists and instrumentalists. Student mentors in the Young Mentors’ Club mentor their younger club mates. The Math Club conducts reviews to prepare fellow students for examinations and “coordinates with the Outreach Program in their Supplementary Education in Math to elementary school children” (p. 102). The Project E.A.R.T.H. spearheads the cleanliness campaign of the high school community and “sponsors outreach activities to communities needing help
regarding their natural environment” (p. 100). The Red Cross Youth Council “promotes community health through talks and symposium” (p. 100).

**Examples of strong alignment.**

The value of Service is practiced in requiring student leaders (SCO Core Members, class and club officers) to demonstrate “respect for human dignity, Christian concern for and sincere service to others in the community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 32). Care and service are given to the students in recognizing their right to “use [the] facilities and to be provided efficient services” and their right to “safe and clean buildings and facilities as well as adequate physical protection and protection of personal property inside school premises” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 38). There is also the Remedial Program which helps students who have failing marks in Science, Math and English (Grammar).

**Example of weak alignment.**

The specific functions of the SCO Core, class and club officers should not just enumerate organizational and management tasks and responsibilities of the position but should also include “witnessing and practice of Benedictine values.” The official task of the student leaders is to be of service to the community. Although the practice of Service can be inferred from the requirement that officers must demonstrate “sincere service to others in community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, ised 2014, p. 32), it is important to expressly state that student leadership is a position of service. The practice of the value of Service is fundamental in leadership.
**Gaps.**

The Handbook does not maximize the opportunity to educate the student on the values that are necessary towards a transformation in Christ. The guidelines should be premised with the values to facilitate the students’ interiorization of said values. With respect to guidelines on the use of facilities, it can be emphasized that taking care of the property is a consideration for the other users in order that their needs will also be met. Moreover, following the guidelines will also spare the school from unnecessary expenses. The guidelines prohibiting playing and napping in the Library and the Audio Visual Center can avoid disturbance and distraction of others. Furthermore, the facilities should be used for the purpose they were intended so as not to deny those who will need the space. The value of Service demands that we always think of what is best for others.
Application of framework on Service for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<td>Note: The guidelines merely refer to the list of areas that are off-limits, an exception to using the hallways of the Administrative Offices and the authority of the Administration to designate off-limits areas. (SPH, Revised 2014, pp. 90-91)</td>
<td>As members of a Christ-centered community, we serve one another in love (RB 35.6). We create an orderly and harmonious campus environment that will allow all members of the school community to live, learn, teach and work together. We refrain from going to certain places in the campus as a sign of respect and reverence to persons and their areas, spaces, offices or workplaces in order that they may carry out their study, work and leisure peacefully, joyfully and effectively. We also discipline ourselves to be in our designated place of study and work so that we make the best use of all opportunities for learning and teaching in our “school for the Lord’s service.”</td>
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Figure 4.13 Guideline on Off-Limits Areas: An Explanatory Paragraph

Justice.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Justice is one of the five core values in the Framework not included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014). However, in the school’s history, the religious congregation’s commitment to social justice led to the articulation of the components of a “socially-oriented school” in 1975 (p. 13) which became known as the “four-pronged thrust” of the institution (St. Scholastica’ Priory, p. 54). The institution envisions a student “with a passion for service and commitment to truth and justice to transform society” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 20). The mission of the institution is to provide a “holistic formation anchored on academic excellence to mold [their] students into
critically aware and socially responsible agents of change towards the transformation to a just and equitable society” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 21). Mission is done in the context of a socially-oriented school with the following components: (a) working with the marginalized of society towards self-reliance and total human liberation; (b) systems of evaluation recognize the uniqueness of every person, develop critical thinking and cultivate social responsibility; (c) policies of employment and interrelationships reflect social values, especially justice, equity and respect for human dignity; and (d) various sectors participate in making the decisions and policies which affect them (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 21). This pursuit for justice is further reflected in some of the school themes that were adopted through the years: “1979-1980 Social Involvement,” “1980-1985 Education for Justice,” and “1989-1990 Justice, Peace and Sovereignty” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 15).

The value of Justice in a Benedictine school is the righteousness of God; the practice of the love of God and neighbor in response to God’s saving justice. It is not about the rigid application of the law but of consideration for personal circumstances of people and situations (Böckmann, 2005, 2015; Kardong, 1996). Justice, according to Saint Benedict, is all about being fair, generous and kind; giving to people according to their needs in order that “the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from” (RB 64.19; Böckmann, 2005, 2015; Klassen et al., 2002; Smaragdus, 2007).

In the school community, the value of Justice is strongly promoted in the open communication that exists between the SCO and the other members of the school community. Through the SCO Core, the needs of the student body are brought to the attention of the administrators, faculty and parents. The SCO Core “[represent] the
student body in the decision-making of the school through the Expanded Administrative Council (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 26-27). In the class level, the Homeroom Period is the venue where students can express their needs and concerns (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 45). To ensure an objective, unbiased and just evaluation of the students’ performance in the academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs, the Grading System and the procedures for Honors and Awards are included in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014, pp. 53-64; Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 23-35). There are also guidelines and procedures for the impeachment of student leaders (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 36-37).

The Handbook quoted from Prologue 47 of the RB at the beginning of the section on the School Code of Conduct: “The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 1). Böckmann (2015) considers this as Saint Benedict’s concept of justice. It is by “reason of justice” that the imposition of a little strictness will be required in order that “all will be given what they need, each is to be given the necessary space and required things” (p. 72). Thus, the Procedures for Disciplinary Actions ensure that there is due process in handling disciplinary cases. The CARE Team who investigates and hears the disciplinary cases for serious and major offenses can recommend necessary CARE Activities for the offended party if needed (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 5-7). As stated in the Handbook, the CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES adopted by the High School to implement discipline “focuses on understanding the conflict/misbehavior, and listening and responding to the needs of both the offender and the offended” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum,
It is a challenge for persons in authority to make sure that in their deliberations, personal circumstances of people and situations are always taken into consideration and not always a rigid application of the law.

Other policies that promote the value of Justice include the “First come, First serve” policy in the use of school facilities and services (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). Under the section on Student Service Program, the Registrar’s and Grants Office is in charge of the scholarship and grants programs of the school. “The High School Unit offers academic scholarships, merit, sports scholarships and financial grants to deserving students who qualify and meet the criteria and conditions set by the High School Scholarship Committee” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 116). The Policy on Sexual Harassment protects any member of the school community from an “intimidating, discriminating, hostile or offensive [learning] environment” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 140).

**Examples of strong alignment.**

The Social Studies Academic Program aims to “develop students who

- know the facts, information, issues, events and theories;
- can analyze information critically;
- demonstrate a Christian/Benedictine stand regarding issues; and
- create outputs that show the depth of their knowledge. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 42). “Through these skills and values, the students are expected to be agents of peace and justice for social transformation” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 42).
The inclusion of a Grading System for the Academic Grade, the Conduct and Homeroom Grades, and the Club Grade Criteria and Rubric in the Handbook fosters Justice. Transparency on how the students are being graded and evaluated provides the students opportunities for clarification and serves as a deterrent from arbitrary and biased evaluations (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 53-56; Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp.24-36). This also applies to the guidelines for Academic Honors and Awards which make sure that the deliberations are objective and just (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 57-64).

*Example of weak alignment.*

Under the general guidelines on Decorum and Behavior, the students are expected to demonstrate “the usual norms of politeness and etiquette . . . in all dealings with various members of the academic community” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67). It can be inferred that included in this guideline is the practice of Justice where students also exhibit fairness, generosity and kindness in their interactions with all the members of the school community.

*Gaps.*

One of the functions of the SCO Core is to evaluate the performance of class and club officers (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 27). However, the Handbook does not provide information as to how the student officers will be evaluated. Such information is vital for the guidance of the student officers and for transparency.

The guidelines on Classroom Procedures and Management in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) cover the areas of Attendance, Punctuality and Tardiness, Bells, Permission to Leave the Classroom, Going to the Clinic, Going to the Washrooms,
and Calling Out Students From Class (pp. 71-75). The Handbook seems to be more concerned on monitoring the comings and goings of the students. Although maximization of class hours is important, what is more essential is creating a classroom environment that will be conducive for learning and teaching. It is important that the students build relationships of care, trust, fairness, kindness, respect and openness. Inclusion of guidelines on how the value of Justice and the other values can be fostered in a classroom environment is essential.
Application of framework on Justice for improvement of a section in the Handbook.

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<td>1. The usual norms of politeness and etiquette are to be demonstrated in all dealings with various members of the academic community. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67)</td>
<td>1. Hospitality, politeness, respect, fairness, kindness and humility are to be demonstrated in all interactions with all members of the school community.</td>
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Figure 4.14 Guideline on Decorum and Behavior

Peace.

Summary/analysis of the alignment of the Handbook with this core value.

Peace is the last core value in the Framework that is not included in the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine education stated in the Handbook. However, just like the other core values not included in the Hallmarks, there are guidelines in the Handbook that foster the practice of the value of Peace. “PAX” or Peace is a Benedictine motto (Fry et al., 1981; Kardong, 1996). The task of peace-building is very much reflected in some of the themes that were adopted by the school through the years: “1988-1989 Women in National Development; Mary the Magnificat; Peace and Disarmament,” “1990-1991 Peace and Sovereignty,” “2002-2003 Transforming Communities of Peace: Peace-building Relationship in the Family and School,” and “2003-2004 Transforming Communities of Peace: Seek Peace, Pursue Peace” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 15-16). One of the objectives of the SCO Core is to “promote the spirit of camaraderie, community and harmony within and outside of SSC” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 26). Specific academic and special programs promote the value of Peace (i.e., Social Studies and the Outreach Programs).
Benedictine peace is founded on love. It comes from an inner peace that arises from “accepting everything God presents, whether one’s own weaknesses or those of others” (Grün, 2006, p. 42). Böckmann (2015) comments that to seek and pursue peace in daily life means to “contribute to understanding, respect, and reconciliation, to seek the positive aspects of life, and to emphasize that which builds up . . . and to pray time and again for the love of Christ so that we may again return to peace in our relationship with one another” (p. 34). The Prayer Room is one place on campus that promotes the value of Peace. It is a place “conducive for prayer and reflection” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 84). Class Prayer Service, recollections, confessions and other religious activities are available for one to be reconciled with God, with one’s self and with the community.

The quote in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) that precedes the section on General Guidelines is a reminder on how to live in peace: “Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way. The love of Christ must come before all else. Rule of St. Benedict Chapter 4.20-21” (p. 66). The students’ responsibilities to “respect the educational process and learning environment of others,” and to “respect SSC’s good name including that of the members of its academic community” (p. 38) written in the Handbook are examples that clearly promote the value of Peace. The same with campaign guidelines requiring that campaign paraphernalia and strategies should uphold the dignity and integrity of the office and the candidates; focus on their qualifications and not besmirch the reputation of the opposition (p. 35). Another policy that strongly promotes the value of Peace is the CARE system under the section on School Code of Conduct which facilitates the process to allow the student offender to find inner peace.
Peace in community is achieved by ensuring that “legitimate needs are being fulfilled” (RB 34; Kardong 1996, p. 281) to avoid murmuring and grumbling. The section on Student Services presents the different programs that meet the needs and requirements of the students (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 115-117). Procedures and guidelines are in place in order that no one will be anxious, distressed or confused when certain untoward incidents or situations happen. The Handbook has guidelines in cases when classes are suspended unexpectedly within the day because of typhoons or during emergency situations like fires or earthquakes. There is a system for communication dissemination in order that all members of the community will be updated and informed of matters of concern (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, pp. 91-94). However, the Handbook can be improved by putting into writing the purpose for the guidelines to strengthen and deepen the students’ understanding of the different values fostered like community, stewardship, discipline and order, and peace.

**Examples of strong alignment.**

The description of the Social Studies program in the Student-Parent Handbook (Revised 2014) shows its goal to develop the students to be “agents of peace and justice for social transformation” (p. 42). The Outreach Program, on the other hand, “shares with those involved in community work the vision and realization of a society that is just, peaceful and humane” (p. 45).

The CARE ACTIONS that are implemented in the discipline system under the section on School Code of Conduct is strongly aligned to the value of developing inner peace and
being reconciled with the community that has been harmed and aggrieved by the conflict/misbehavior:

- Assist the student to be more aware of herself;
- Help the student realize the consequences of her actions;
- Make the student recognize the significance of rules and regulations in the character formation of a person, and in upholding PEACE in the Scholastican community;
- Guide the student to restore herself despite of the weakness/es she has shown; and
- Empower the student to reintegrate herself to be the best person she could be in the Scholastican Community. (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 7-8).

*Example of weak alignment.*

Under Decorum and Behavior, the students are expected to observe certain guidelines in their dealings with teachers:

- directly submit assignments/projects to the concerned subject teacher during his/her class period;
- schedule appointment for consultation by filing the appropriate form in the Office of the Assistant Principal;
- should not call teachers during lunch break unless prior appointments have been set or if there is an URGENT need; and
- should not enter the faculty room and loiter along the corridor outside it. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 67)
It can be inferred that the observance of the guidelines will inculcate in the students the value of Peace wherein they will have respect and consideration for the sacred space of other people, in this case, their teachers.

_Gaps._

The last few areas discussed in the section on General Guidelines are Change of Address, Communication Dissemination, Appointment with Parents, Suspension of Classes, Emergency Situations (Fires, Earthquakes, etc.), Students Appearing in Advertisements/Commercials, Contributions, Ticket Sales, Etc., and Security. The guidelines cover areas that greatly affect the protection and care of all the members of the community, especially the students; and the maintenance of peace and order in the entire community. For better understanding and greater appreciation of, and obedience to the policies and guidelines, the Handbook should include a paragraph to introduce the guidelines. The paragraph can lay down the premise of the guidelines and take the opportunity to further educate the community on the values that are inculcated as result of obedience to the guidelines.
**Application of framework on Peace for improvement of a section in the Handbook.**

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<td>Note: There is nothing in the Handbook that introduces the aforementioned guidelines.</td>
<td>In this “school for the Lord’s Service”, we commit to live in peace, love and joy as a community. As our service to one another, we interact in ways that promote the well-being of each person, and uphold the harmonious relationships in the community. To this end, we have policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure that we maintain our communication lines open to each other. Important and relevant information must be disseminated so that everyone has a common understanding of issues and concerns and are properly guided in their actions. There are guidelines for the protection, care and security of all the members of the community especially during emergency situations and unexpected events to avoid unnecessary distress, confusion and anxiety to anyone.</td>
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Figure 4.15 *Introduction to the Guidelines on Change of Address, Communication Dissemination, Appointment with Parents, Suspension of Classes, etc.*

**Over-all Summary of Analysis of a High School Student Handbook**

The High School Student Handbook that was studied has seven main sections: General Information, Academic Matters, General Guidelines, Student Activity Program, Student Services, School Discipline, Physical Plant and Guidelines for Parents. There were 11 appendices which include policies on sexual harassment and bullying, rubrics for computation of grades, and college songs, among others. The last few pages were stories on the lives of Saint. Benedict and his twin Saint Scholastica and the Student Handbook Contract to be signed by the student and parents or legal guardian.
The section on General Information has three main headings: The School, Student Officials and Rights and Responsibilities of Students. From the list of titles under “The School”, the reader is already introduced to the Benedictine character of the institution: Missionary Statement of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters, Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education, Benedictine Spirituality, Medal or Cross of St. Benedict. Although not in the table of contents, a high school unit organizational chart is presented before the discussion on the student officials.

Only two sections are obviously connected to two Core Values of Benedictine Education by their titles: Student Services and Student Discipline. The section on Student Discipline, however, was amended in 2015 and was renamed as School Code of Conduct. Nevertheless, the section is introduced with a discussion on the “Discipline as a Benedictine Value.” The separate sections on Academic Matters and Student Activity Program give an impression of a holistic education and formation – the value of a balance of Prayer, Study and Work. The section on General Guidelines addresses the way of life in a Benedictine institution. The headings under this section include Decorum and Behavior, Uniform, Classroom Procedures and Management, Leaving the Campus, Recess and Lunch Breaks, Assemblies, Care for School Property, Use of Facilities, and Students Appearing in Advertisements/Commercials, among others. It can be inferred from the headings that the following Core Values are practiced in the observance of some guidelines: Silence, Humility, Obedience, Discretion, Prayer, Study and Work, Discipline and Order, Service, and Stewardship.

The sections were introduced by a quote from the RB or a description of the value pertinent to the section.
Section I: General Information

“Listen carefully my child, to my instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from someone who loves you; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice.” Rule of St. Benedict Prologue v.1 (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 8)

Section II: Academic Matters

“First, every time you begin a good work, you must pray to God most earnestly to bring it to perfection. Cf. Rule of St. Benedict Prologue v. 4” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 39)

Section III: General Guidelines

“Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way. The love of Christ must come before all else. Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 4:20-21” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 66)

Section IV: Student Activity Program

“Now the challenge is for you to place all your talents and your creative abilities in the service of Christ to help build up His kingdom.” (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 96)

Section V: Student Services

“I have not come to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me.” (John 6:38) Rule of St. Benedict Chapter 5 v.13. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 114)

In the analysis of the High School Student Handbook, reference was made to two pieces in the Handbook that either described or mentioned the values in the Core Values
of Benedictine Education Framework: the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education
adopted by the institution and the piece on Benedictine Spirituality. The Ten Hallmarks
of Benedictine Education include Christ-Centeredness, Ora et Labora, Stewardship,
Obedience, Humility, Hospitality, Discipline, Silence and Good Speech, Community and
Service. However, the Student Handbook merely identifies the hallmarks and does not
present a guide towards understanding the hallmarks in the context of a Benedictine way
of life. Even though there were obvious alignments of the Student Handbook to the
Framework, even with those Core Values not included in the Ten Hallmarks, a definition
or discussion of the value in its piece on the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education or
in an appropriate section will facilitate the students’ interiorization of the values. The
same with the piece on Benedictine Spirituality which referred to the Core Values of
Christ-Centeredness, Stability, Ora et Labora, Stewardship, Hospitality, Listening and
Service. An overview of Benedictine Spirituality and quotes from the RB are not
sufficient to convey to the students the very essence of the values that the institution aims
to instill in the students.

With the inclusion of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education, it is presumed that
these are the values that the institution would like to be developed in the students. With
regard to the other Core Values included in the Framework that were not in the Ten
Hallmarks, they are deemed included in the “Benedictine values,” and “values of
Benedictine education” (referred to across the different sections of the Student
Handbook) that students are expected to manifest and demonstrate. The biggest gap in
the Student Handbook for all the Core Values is the absence of a concrete definition and
explanation of the meaning of the values in order that the students will better understand,
appreciate and ultimately imbibe them. The very structure of the Student Handbook with
its policies, procedures, and guidelines necessarily involves a corresponding obligation
on the students to “observe,” “follow,” and “comply” with the rules and regulations
stated in it. At the same time, the Student Handbook is clear as to the consequences for
failure to comply. The specific guidelines and norms in the Student Handbook will
remain as actions carried out by mere compliance in the absence of measures to educate
and form the students as to the purpose for such behaviors. Students will be able to
internalize a rule or regulation if they are able to make meaning of what is expected of
them and “synthesize that meaning with respect to their other goals and values” (Ryan &
Deci, 2000).

The section on General Guidelines is the most significant section for the students for
it contains the do’s and don’ts, the acceptable and unacceptable, the expectations and
prohibitions. As previously mentioned, the section covers Decorum and Behavior,
Uniform, Classroom Procedures and Management, Use of Facilities, among others. It is
primarily because of this section that a student handbook is defined as an “indispensable
instrument for the control, management and enhancement of student conduct”
(Bordinsky, 1980, p. 29) for the students are responsible to “abide by the rules and
regulations of the school and all student organizations” (Student-Parent Handbook,
Revised 2014, p. 38). Unfortunately, as in some other sections of the Student Handbook,
there is no explanatory paragraph that introduces the purpose for the guidelines and why
it is important for the students to abide in them. And yet, the school’s mission to educate
and form the students demands that they genuinely grasp the rationale for the existence of
the rules and regulations and their obligation to comply. Furthermore, commitment to the
observance of the school rules and regulations can be fostered if the reasons for such rules are effectively conveyed. To illustrate how the Student Handbook can be improved to educate and inform the students on the rationale for the rules and regulations, an explanatory paragraph to the section on General Guidelines may be written as follows:

We intend to establish a school for the Lord’s service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in or to amend faults and to safeguard love” (Rule of St. Benedict Prol 45-47).

Our School for the Lord’s Service is a community whose way of life is centered on Christ. We are a community of unique individuals bonded in Christ and for the service of Christ. We strive to live in peace, joy and love in spite of our differences in personalities, circumstances, needs and opinions. Together we build a welcoming and caring community; and create a safe and supportive environment that is conducive for teaching and learning.

As we live our life of prayer, work and study, our Ora et Labora, we are guided by certain policies, procedures, rules, and regulations that direct us in our Benedictine way of living, teaching and learning in this school community. In humility, we “listen” and “act” on what we “hear”. Our obedience is our response to God and our service to one other and to the outside world “that in all things God may be glorified (1 Pt 4:11)” (Rule of St. Benedict 57.9).

The explanatory paragraph not only introduces the students to the institution’s Benedictine way of life but it also shifts the notion of obedience from mere compliance
with rules and regulations to service to the school community (King, 2014). The students are then given another perspective of looking at rules and regulations; no longer as an imposition or a burden but as guides for living and learning in the school community (Strange & Hagan, 1998).

An example of an item in the Student Handbook that is strongly aligned with a Core Value is the guideline on the Prayer Room. It is a perfect illustration of framing the Student Handbook in alignment with the Core Value of Silence and Restraint of Speech. The following quote from the RB on the very nature of a prayer room and the statement on what it is for, lays down the very purpose of the guidelines set in the Handbook:

The Prayer Room ought to be what it is called, and nothing else is to be done or stored there. After the prayer, all should leave in complete silence and with reverence for God, so that anyone who may wish to pray alone will not be disturbed . . .” (Rule of St. Benedict 52.1-3)

1. It is a place for prayer, silence, reflection and other religious activities; it is not used for meetings.

2. Silence is to be maintained at all times to create an atmosphere conducive for prayer and reflection. (Student-Parent Handbook, Revised 2014, p. 84)

Ora et Labora, Community, and Service are the words/terms most commonly referred to across the sections in the Student Handbook although not necessarily in the context of the practice of the Core Value. It can be presumed, however, that these are the Core Values most commonly known by the members of the school community. The Core Value of Discipline and Order, on the other hand, is the value that has an entire section
devoted to it. The following paragraph appears in the Student Handbook as an introduction to the section on School Code of Conduct:

**Philosophy: Discipline as a Benedictine Value**

Discipline is a primary Benedictine value. As such, every Scholastican is expected to practice self-discipline in both academic pursuits and social behavior. Students are held responsible for knowing and complying with the rules and regulations stated in the Student Handbook. St. Benedict puts it beautifully in his Holy Rule: ‘Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord’s service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and safeguard love.’ (Prologue vv 45-47, Rule of St. Benedict.) (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., p. 1)

The cultivation of the Core Value of Discipline and Order is very crucial for it determines the effectiveness of the Student Handbook as a tool for formation of the students. The formation of an individual in a Benedictine school is towards a change in external behavior as well as the development of the interior attitude of self-discipline, self-responsibility, self-control, and self-regulation (Darmanin, 2009; de Jesus, 2007; Kardong, 1996). The section on School Code of Conduct and the items on Students’ Responsibilities and Decorum and Behavior have guidelines that emphasize the cultivation of self-discipline in the students. While there are rules in the Student Handbook that require a positive behavior or action, there are also rules that focus on prohibited acts. Thus, identifying the Core Value that is intended to be inculcated in the
students in following the rules or regulations will ensure that what are written in the Student Handbook are relevant, consistent, reasonable and instrumental in fostering such value. The following guideline is an example of how a rule can actually promote a Core Value and hinder the development of another Core Value:

The library has an “open stack collection.” It therefore follows that binders, fillers, big envelopes and other items brought inside are subjected to inspection before being taken out. Books are inspected upon leaving the library premises to make certain they are properly stamped. (p. 83)

The abovementioned rule on the use of the library may promote the Core Values of Discipline and Order, and Stewardship but it also negates community spirit. In subjecting the binders and envelopes of the students for inspection before leaving the library premises seems to be based on the presumption that the students will steal from the “open stack collection.” There is already a lack of trust; a lack of respect for the dignity of a person.

Rules, by themselves, may also be considered too restrictive, trivial, or even unnecessary unless it is clear that the practice of said behaviors promote a greater value or the common good of the community. It must be underscored that the students will have a deeper appreciation and respect for the rules if they see the rules’ connection to a higher purpose. As aptly put by Goodman (2007), “genuine ‘buy-in’ [of the students] requires personal identification with the values of the institution” (p. 5).

The second aspect of the Core Value of Discipline and Order is the manner of disciplining the students which should reflect the “exercise of utmost care and concern” (RB 27.1) and the section on School Code of Conduct is strongly aligned to it. The
CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES system of discipline is stated to be “restorative and not punitive in nature” (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 edition, p. 7). The use of the word CARE as acronym for Confront, Accept, Restore, and Empower (p. 4) is very effective for it also focuses on the mission of care and nurturance of the students. This section of the Student Handbook clearly promotes the practice of healing, reconciliation, and integration of the erring student back into the community as the paramount consideration in correcting the misbehavior or violation committed (Fry at al., 1981; Kardong, 1996; King, 2014; Schutz, 2009). This section of the Student Handbook does not only promote the Core Value of Discipline and Order but the other Core Values as well. The description of the CARE ACTIONS in the Student Handbook evidently shows the application of the Core Values of Silence, Listening, Humility, Obedience, Discretion, Stability, Community, Stewardship, Hospitality, Service, Justice and Peace:

- Assist the student to be more aware of herself;
- Help the student realize the consequences of her actions;
- Make the student recognize the significance of rules and regulations in the character formation of a person, and in upholding PEACE in the Scholastican community;
- Guide the student to restore herself despite of the weakness/es she has shown; and
- e) Empower the student to reintegrate herself to be the best person she could be in the Scholastican Community. (Student-Parent Handbook, Addendum, 2015, pp. 7)

Unlike the majority of the guidelines, rules and regulations in the other sections of the Student Handbook which did not make reference to any core value, the SUMMARY OF
OFFENSES AND CARE ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES in the section on School Code of Conduct (Student-Parent Handbook Addendum, 2015 ed., pp. 11-18) categorized the acts/offenses according to the values that have been violated. However, not all the identified values are the same with the core values that are in the Framework used to analyzed the Student Handbook. The minor offenses were categorized as acts against: (a) Punctuality and Respect, (b) Good Grooming and Simplicity, (c) Stewardship, (d) Peace and Order, (e) Propriety and Good Speech, and (f) Responsibility, Integrity, and Honesty. The major/serious offenses were categorized as acts against: (a) Responsibility, Integrity and Honesty, (b) Peace and Order, (c) Public Morals, (d) Respect and Stewardship, and (e) Safety and Security. Cellular phone violations and Cheating (Academic Dishonesty) were treated separately. The implications of having this set of values and the Core Values of Benedictine Education is something that has to be explored.

After a close reading of the policies, procedures, guidelines and rules and regulations in the Handbook, there are those that may be a strong alignment to a specific Core Value but will be a weak alignment to another Core Value. In spite of the absence of discussions on the values, the Student Handbook was strong in promoting the Core Values of Ora et Labora, Community, Discipline and Order, Stewardship, and Service each as a value and in connection with the other Core Values. The practice of the Core Values of Hospitality, Justice and Peace were more intertwined with the other Core Values. Together with the Core Values of Stewardship and Service, the values of Hospitality, Justice and Peace are clearly practiced more in relation to the interactions with the outside communities and society. There is a need to better understand the living out of these three Core Values within the walls of the school community and the
relationships among the members. With respect to the Core Values of Christ-Centeredness, Silence, Listening, Humility, Obedience, Discretion and Stability, identified in the Framework as the interior dispositions that must be inculcated in every person, the challenge is to deepen the community’s understanding of the essence of this Core Values in the context of the Benedictine tradition and charism.

**Conclusion**

A major change that happened in the development of the Student Handbook was the institution’s adoption of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education and its inclusion in the 2013 updated edition of the Student Handbook. Some administrators and members of the Student Handbook Committee consider the Student Handbook as a guide for the “living out of the Benedictine values;” the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education as the core values. The other item in the Student Handbook which was considered connected to student formation as mentioned in the email interview, is the piece on Benedictine Spirituality which was already printed in a 2001 edition of the Student Handbook. The analysis of the Student Handbook referred extensively to both the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education and the Benedictine Spirituality since they were the only two entries in the Student Handbook that mentioned the core values of Benedictine Education.

Aside from the list of the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education, the text on Benedictine Spirituality, and a brief description of the value of Silence in relation to the use of the Prayer Room, there is nothing in the Student Handbook that discusses or even defines the core values. Neither was there a reference to the core values as basis for evaluation and review of the Student Handbook. Although there were strong alignments
of the provisions of the Student Handbook to the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework designed by the researcher for purposes of this study, there were also weak alignments and gaps that were identified across the Student Handbook. In the absence of a criteria based on the core values for evaluation and revision of the Student Handbook, it is not surprising that the analysis revealed a lack of consistency and uniformity in the presentation of the guidelines, rules and regulation in the Student Handbook. A more structured mechanism for the evaluation and revision of the Student Handbook is necessary considering that revisions are made through sub-committees in the Student Handbook Committee.

A common refrain in the analysis of the Student Handbook and in the responses of the Sisters/Nuns to the questionnaire is the need for an explanation of the purpose of the rules and regulations in the Student Handbook in order that the students can “make meaning of what is transmitted to them.” The students have to make sense of the purpose of the behaviors that are expected of them to be able to internalize the attitudes and values associated with such behaviors. As pointed out by the Sisters/Nuns, the thrust of formation is for the students to be self-directed and make the right choices; to be self-disciplined and grow in freedom. This will only be possible if the students are able to identify with the values and integrate them into their lives. Another refrain is the importance of acknowledging the uniqueness and differences among persons, the different “aptitudes, perceptions, capabilities, and abilities of students.” In dealing with the students, it is important that their personal circumstances are always taken into consideration. This becomes very relevant when accompanying erring students in their healing, restoration and re-integration back into the community. The Sisters/Nuns also
see the value of having an accompaniment program or a senpectae in the person of a campus minister, counselor, or a student formation director to give support during the erring student’s process of conversion.

The institution has already made a very significant step towards developing a formative Student Handbook in the implementation of the CARE discipline system. However, this is just one section of the Student Handbook. The goal is to make the entire Student Handbook a living example of the RB; to have a Student Handbook that authentically and intentionally transforms the Core Values of Benedictine Education into actions and thus, be an integral part of the holistic formation of the students.

**Implications and Future Research**

The analysis of the Student Handbook showed that it has both strong and weak alignments to the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework. Gaps have also been identified where the Student Handbook missed the opportunity to foster the development of the core values in the students’ daily living of the Benedictine way of life. Whether or not the students were able to make meaning and fully internalize the core values in their daily lives is a question that can now be explored. An assessment of the impact of the Student Handbook on the holistic formation of the students can be done by gathering data on the students’ knowledge, experience and perceptions of the Student Handbook; and the impact of the Student Handbook on their personal growth. The outcome of the study can definitely contribute to the development of a truly formative, integrated and holistic Student Handbook. A study can also be made to determine the applicability of the Core Values of Benedictine Education Framework as a guideline for the institution’s decision-making or policy-making bodies in drawing up rules and
policies for administrators and employees, like using the Framework as a tool for performance evaluation.

It is hoped that the result of this study will also facilitate a dialogue among the leadership of the different member-schools of the Association of Benedictine Schools. Not all the schools have adopted the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education. With this Framework, the question of whether or not there should be a common articulation of the core values of Benedictine Education among all the member-schools of the Association of Benedictine Schools is something that must be considered.

Likewise, this study can also offer a suggestion to the International Commission on Benedictine Education which exists to support schools which promote a Benedictine vision of education to start a conversation among the administrators and teachers of the member schools in the Benedictine Educators’ Network; to revisit their Student Handbooks and look at them beyond a list of rules and regulations and instead as a powerful and effective tool for the formation of Benedictine core values.

For schools who follow another spirituality or charism, may they also be inspired to create their own framework of core values and use it to evaluate their Student Handbooks to be more aligned to the values that the institution envision their students to inculcate and imbibe.

A future study can also be done on the parallelism of the Core Values of Benedictine Education with the Core Convictions of Catholic Faith for education identified by Thomas Groome (2014). The outcome of this study will help Catholic Benedictine institutions identify concrete ways to live out their identity authentically and intentionally.
Another future research that will prove to be very challenging and engaging is to look at how the Student Handbook in practice can work interactively with our understanding of human development based on Piaget’s cognitive development theory, Kohlberg’s moral development theory, Fowler’s faith development theory and Erikson’s psychosocial development theory.

**Limitations**

The first limitation of this study is its generalizability since only one Student Handbook was analyzed. The applicability of the Framework, the findings, observations and analysis from such data may only be applicable to this institution. Nevertheless, it is valid as to the experience of this particular institution and other Benedictine schools of similar circumstances. Moreover, since the institution is an exclusive school for girls, an evaluation of a Handbook from a co-educational institution might result to a different set of findings.

Another limitation is the questionnaire that was administered to the Sisters/Nuns that were formators and/or educators. Out of the four open-ended questions, one question addressed the core value of community and the other one on discipline. Consequently, the researcher was not able to gather insights from the Sisters/Nuns as to their understanding of how the other core values are lived out in a Student Handbook.

The researcher decided not to include *conversatio* as one of the values although there are literature that include it as one of the Benedictine values in an educational setting. Strange and Hagan (1998) defined it as a “commitment and openness to change and growth, becoming more and more, in the presence of others, what an individual is called to be” (p. 8). *Conversatio* has also been identified as one of the Ten Hallmarks of
Benedictine education by the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities of North America (2007). The goal of Christian Benedictine Education is a transformation into the newness of Christ and as one strives to live daily the core values of Benedictine education, the process of conversion and transformation is inherent in the daily living out of the values. One will not mature and grow in inculcating such values into one’s life without letting go of one’s old ways that are contrary to the values that one wants to imbibe. It is in this spirit of integration and interrelatedness of conversatio with all the other values that the researcher did not choose to treat it as a separate value. However, a future research can consider the inclusion of the value into the framework.

The researcher also did not go further into research on self-determination and self-regulation. These two terms were discussed in the literature in relation to the concept of self-will in the Rule of St. Benedict. Since the study focused on the interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict, the researcher deemed it pertinent to limit the research on the works of Benedictine scholars rather than consulting other secular authors on the concepts of self-determination and self-regulation.
References

Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities. (2007). Education within the Benedictine wisdom tradition. Retrieved from 
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Appendices

Educational Apostolate of the Manila Priory (School Year 2016-2017)*

Manila Community (Luzon) has St. Scholastica’s College (1906) with an enrolment of 4,107 students from Kindergarten to Graduate School: 1388 in Grade School, 1392 in High School and 1327 in College and Graduate School. The Senior High School accepted 4 male students who will pursue either an arts or music degree in college. Only the Music and Fine Arts Department in College are co-educational. It also has a free Secondary Night School for girls and young women who have no means to get an education.

Legazpi Community (Luzon) has St. Agnes Academy (1912) with an enrolment of 2,271 boys and girls in the Kindergarten to High School: 1143 in Grade School and 1128 in High School.

Angeles Community (Luzon) administers the diocesan school, Holy Family Academy (1922) which had an enrolment of 3,188 boys and girls from Kindergarten to High School. Grade school students totalled 1610 and high school students, 1578.

San Fernando Community (Luzon) has St. Scholastica’s Academy (1925) with boys (645) and girls (1160) in Kindergarten to Grade School and girls (1286) only in High School, with a total student population of 3,091.

Ormoc Community (Visayas) administers the co-educational diocesan school St. Peter’s College (1930) with an enrollment of 1,630 from grade school to college: 572 students in grade school (286 boys, 286 girls); 813 students in high school (372 boys and 441 girls); 245 college students (52 men and 193 women).
**Bacolod Community** (Visayas) has St. Scholastica’s Academy (1958) with 1,969 students and Holy Family High School with 300 girls.

**Marikina Community** (Luzon) has St. Scholastica’s Academy (1961), an exclusive school for girls with an enrolment of from kindergarten to high school: 1647 kindergarten to grade school and 1405 in high school.

**Tabunok Community** (Visayas) has St. Scholastica’s Academy (1965) with 1,258 high school students (570 boys and 688 girls).

**Tacloban-School Community** (Visayas) has St. Scholastica’s College (2000) which offers co-educational undergraduate courses in Nursing, Pharmacy, Midwifery, Medical Technology, Business Administration, Accountancy, Psychology and HRM. It had an enrollment of 391 college students. In 2012, it opened a Basic Education Department. For school year 2016-2017, there were 54 grade school students (27 boys and 27 girls), and 150 high school students (59 boys and 91 girls).

**Westgrove Community** (Luzon) has St. Scholastica’s College (2001) with a total enrolment of 466 girls: 195 in the grade school and 271 in the high school.

*Based on the Report of the Executive Directress of the Association of Benedictine Schools (ABS)*
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE: A School Discipline Model in the Wisdom of St. Benedict

INVESTIGATOR: Sr. M. Christine Pinto, O.S.B.; Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Doctoral Candidate Duquesne University; pintof@duq.edu

ADVISOR: Dr. Connie Moss, Director, Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program, Department of Foundations & Leadership, Duquesne University; +1.412.396.4433; moss@duq.edu

SOURCE OF SUPPORT: This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Duquesne University.

PURPOSE: You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate how the Student Handbook of St. Scholastica’s College, Manila aligns the holistic formation of the high school students according to the Rule of St. Benedict. A significant part of this research is establishing the historical context of the Student Handbook. In order to qualify to participate, you are either a current or past administrator of St. Scholastica’s College, Manila (institutional or of the high school unit) in the past ten years (2005-2015). You may also qualify if another participant suggested that you should be interviewed.

PARTICIPANT PROCEDURES: To participate in this study, you will be asked to provide your answers to interview questions which accompany this informed consent information. Your responses should be emailed back to the researcher within 2 weeks from receipt of the interview questions unless your schedule prevents you from doing so. In that case, inform the
researcher of the soonest time you can email your responses. You may also be asked to respond to follow-up questions based on your responses. Before the end of the email interview, you will be asked to identify other specific individuals that the researcher should interview about this topic.

This is the only request that will be made of you. No additional requirements beyond the time you spend answering the interview and follow-up questions and emailing them to the researcher.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are minimal risks associated with this participation but no greater than those encountered in everyday life. Your participation in this research will be a valuable input towards developing a school discipline model that will contribute to the formation of Benedictine students not only in the schools owned and/or administered by the Manila Priory but in other Benedictine schools as well.

COMPENSATION: There will be no compensation for participation in this study. Participation in the project will require no monetary cost to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your participation in this study and any personal information that you provide will be kept confidential at all times and to every extent possible. Emailing your responses to the interview and follow-up questions to the researcher will indicate your voluntary consent to participate in the research. Your email responses will be copied into a Microsoft word document and will be given an identity code. All email messages and documents will be kept secured. Your document will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's convent in the United States and in the Philippines (upon her return) for three years after the completion of the research and then destroyed. No identifying data will be used in the data analysis. Your responses will only appear in statistical data summaries and no one will be able to identify your individual responses.
RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: You are under no obligation to participate in this study and are free to withdraw consent to participate at any time prior to emailing your responses to the interview and follow-up questions to the researcher.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request by emailing schristineosb@gmail.com.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason, by simply not emailing my responses to the interview questions. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may email Sr. M. Christine Pinto, O.S.B. at pintof@duq.edu and Dr. Connie Moss at moss@duq.edu or call at +1.412.396.4433. Should I have questions regarding protection of human subject issues, I may email Dr. Linda Goodfellow, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board, at goodfellow@duq.edu or call at +1. 412.396.1886.

By emailing my responses to the interview questions, I am voluntarily consenting to participating in this research project.
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE: A School Discipline Model in the Wisdom of St. Benedict

INVESTIGATOR: Sr. M. Christine Pinto, O.S.B.; Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Doctoral Candidate Duquesne University; pintof@duq.edu

ADVISOR: Dr. Connie Moss, Director, Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program, Department of Foundations & Leadership, Duquesne University; +1.412.396.4433; moss@duq.edu

SOURCE OF SUPPORT: This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Duquesne University.

PURPOSE: You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate how the Student Handbook of St. Scholastica’s College, Manila aligns the holistic formation of the high school students according to the Rule of St. Benedict. In order to qualify to participate, you must be a sister, nun or monk of a Benedictine Congregation in the Philippines presently involved in formation work or a former formator now assigned in the schools.

PARTICIPANT PROCEDURES: To participate in this study, you will be asked to provide your answers to a questionnaire which accompany this informed consent information that will be distributed by the Priorress/Abbess/Abbot of your congregation. The responses to the questionnaire must be emailed to the researcher at studhb15@gmail.com, an email account set up for the purpose of this research. Send your responses within 3 weeks from receipt of the questionnaire unless your schedule prevents you from doing so.
In that case, send your responses on the soonest time possible.

This is the only request that will be made of you. No additional requirements beyond the time of answering the questionnaire and emailing the responses are anticipated.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** There are minimal risks associated with this participation but no greater than those encountered in everyday life. Your participation in this research will be a valuable input towards developing a school discipline model that will contribute to the formation of Benedictine students not only in the schools owned and/or administered by the Manila Priory but in other Benedictine schools as well.

**COMPENSATION:** There will be no compensation for participation in this study. Participation in the project will require no monetary cost to you.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your participation in this study and any personal information that you provide will be kept confidential at all times and to every extent possible. Emailing your responses to the questionnaire to the researcher will indicate your voluntary consent to participate in the research. Your email message will be immediately cleaned of identifying information and will be printed for back up. Your email responses will be copied without identifying information and pasted into a Microsoft word document without an assigned code number. All documents will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's convent in the United States and in the Philippines (upon her return) for three years after the completion of the research and then destroyed. As soon as your responses are secured, your email message will be deleted and re-deleted from the delete file. No identifying data will appear in statistical data summaries and no one will be able to identify your individual responses.

**RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:** You are under no obligation to participate in this study and are free to withdraw consent to participate at any time prior to emailing your responses to the
researcher. Once the message is received and immediately stripped of identifying information it will not be possible to retrieve your responses.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request by emailing schristineosb@gmail.com.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason, by simply not emailing my responses to the questionnaire. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may email Sr. M. Christine Pinto, O.S.B. at pintof@duq.edu and Dr. Connie Moss at moss@duq.edu or call at +1.412.396.4433. Should I have questions regarding protection of human subject issues, I may email Dr. Linda Goodfellow, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board, at goodfellow@duq.edu or call at +1. 412.396.1886.

By emailing my responses to the researcher, I am voluntarily consenting to participating in this research project.
Interview Questions for School Administrators/Student Handbook Committee
This study was approved by Duquesne University Institutional Review Board 8-3-2015.

Please answer the questions to the best of your personal knowledge and include in your responses as much detail as possible.

1. How many years did you work at St. Scholastica’s College, Manila? What was the nature of your work?

2. In your work, were you involved in the creation of a student handbook?

3. What do you know about the creation of the High School Student Handbook?

4. What was the purpose of writing the student handbook?

5. What had to be written down in the student handbook?

6. Who determines what should be included in the handbook?

7. Who were involved in writing the student handbook? Were committees created in writing specific sections of the student handbook?

8. Are you familiar with the Manual of Regulations of Private Schools? Are there provisions in the Manual that were adopted in the writing of the student handbook? What are these provisions, if any?

9. Who gets a copy of the student handbook?

10. How often is the student handbook disseminated? How is it disseminated?

11. Have there been evaluations of the handbook? What were the criteria?

12. Who evaluates the student handbook?

13. How many times was it evaluated during your time? Is there a regular time frame for evaluating the handbook?

14. What changes have been made? Additions, deletions?

15. Is there a particular section of the handbook that is usually revised?
**Questionnaire**

This study was approved by Duquesne University Institutional Review Board 8-3-2015.

PAX! You have experienced Benedictine formation as a formandee and as a sister, nun or monk tasked with the formation of young women and men who would like to embrace the Benedictine vocation. This survey contains 4 open-ended questions that will ask you to identify provisions in the Rule of St. Benedict (RB) that apply to the formation and discipline of high school students in a Benedictine school as articulated in the Student Handbook. Three other questions will ask you to provide some demographic data. Your responses to this survey will greatly inform the criteria that I will use in evaluating the Student Handbook of St. Scholastica’s College, Manila according to the Rule. Your responses will also provide valuable input in creating a school discipline model in the wisdom of St. Benedict.

I appreciate you taking the time to assist me in this endeavor.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your personal knowledge and include in your responses as much detail as possible.

1. What did St. Benedict see as the essential parts/elements in community living that should be in a Student Handbook?

2. The Student Handbook provides sanctions or penalties for offenses committed by students. What instructions of St. Benedict on disciplining monks should be followed in dealing with students who do not follow the rules and regulations of the school?

3. The Philippines has adopted the K-12 basic education system which means that students will now have 6 years of high school education. The high school community will then have students of different ages, personalities, stages of personal development, socio-economic status and family backgrounds. What does St. Benedict say about formation work involving a diverse group of formandees that applies to students? In what situations is it important to consider the differences among them?

4. St. Scholastica’s College, Manila has come up with its Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education (adopted from the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities of North America) as the values that students should have. One of the hallmarks is DISCIPLINE and it is described as discipline “towards learning and freedom.” According to the RB, how can formandees or students develop this kind of discipline?

5. How many years have you been a final professed sister, nun or monk?

6. How many years have you been in formation work?

7. How many years have you been in the school apostolate?
That in All Things God May be Glorified!