HEAD, HEART and HANDS Formation Process

Anchored by the ‘Jesus’, ‘Communion’ and ‘Mission’ dimensions, formation is seen to involve four elements that reflect a Head, Heart, and Hands approach. These are common to all formation activities, but elaborated more particularly as they are applied to each core dimension (Jesus Communion Mission). Formation for each of these dimensions then aims to grow particular capacities named in the Matrix.

The common elements of the formation process are:

**Experience:** Experience refers to engagement with personal experience or stories of others who model particular ways of being, relevant to key formation elements.

**Knowledge:** Knowledge refers to information and conceptual understanding of key spiritual formation content.

**Practice:** Practice refers to skills, practices and disciplines in everyday life that will deepen spiritual growth in an ongoing way.

**Application:** Application refers to applying key elements of spiritual formation learnings to everyday educational contexts.

In brief, and taking an example, the action ‘Embrace the Person and Vision of Jesus’ elaborates in the following way when the formation elements are applied:

Experience: refers to personal encounter with Jesus eg in prayer and other experiences, moving from knowing about, to a much deeper knowing which can be described by the word embrace.

Knowledge: refers to information about Jesus and his vision of life.

Practice: refers to the trying out for oneself the experience/learnings, understanding and adapting them for one’s own situation.

Application: refers to practices and disciplines integrated into one’s everyday life that will deepen one’s embrace of the person and vision of Jesus.

Knowledge (The ‘Head’) is a vital component of spiritual formation. At the same time, this framework is based on the belief that adult spiritual formation must also include a strong experiential (The ‘Heart’) aspect that allows for reflective learning, and the application of knowledge, skills and practices. (The ‘Hands’).