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**“FORMATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD: URGENT NEED  
FOR ONGOING FORMATION FOR FORMATORS”**

By

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**Abstract**

There has rightly been so much emphasis on formation to the priesthood. Whenever a priest performs his pastoral duties properly, the formators in the seminary are applauded. But when a priest fails in his pastoral ministry, formators in the seminary are queried for why they did not identify the flaw in the process of formation. Formators of candidates to the priesthood are very instrumental to healthiness of the faith of the people. How is it possible that a seminarian who was always faithful to the Church’s teaching in the seminary suddenly becomes a priest who is almost like a “soothsayer” in the name of prophecy? How is it possible that this priest no longer sees the need to observe the liturgical rubrics? From *‘alter Christus’* to an ecclesiastical entertainer. How is it possible that the priest trained to form others in the faith is almost becoming an instrument of “deformation” of the faith of others? There is a strong connection between the formation received and the life lived in the priesthood. The capacity of formators to accompany the candidates in the seminary in formation to develop a healthy personality and spirituality goes a long way to impact the quality of the life of the priest in ministry.

Our research will attempt to examine the formation of those responsible for the formation of these candidates. If the formators must discern and help in the conscience formation of the candidates to the priesthood, the formators also must be engaged in on-going formation to keep abreast with the new

challenges facing priests in pastoral ministry. What are some of the areas of on-going formation that may be helpful to formators to enhance their efficiency? This research will draw insights from magisterial documents and psychological findings on the need to form the formators. Failure to form the formators leads to deformation of the candidates for the priesthood.

**Key words:** Formation, Formator and Priesthood

## **1. Introduction**

Every profession requires on-going formation in order to acquire knowledge and expertise that will make the persons more efficient in their various disciplines. It is even more important in the disciplines that have to do with human formation. The vocation to the Sacred Priesthood in the Catholic Church requires lengthen years of human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation. In all these areas of formation, the human formation is considered the bedrock upon which all other aspects of formations are to be built upon.

The Church holds that she has the exclusive right and duty to form those who are designated for the sacred ministries.<sup>1</sup> Every diocese is to have a Major Seminary and where it is not possible an inter-diocesan seminary is to be established. The establishment of inter-diocesan seminary requires the approval of the Episcopal Conference and the approval of the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> Since the formation of priests is intrinsically connected to the proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord, the Church claims the innate right to establish program for the formation of the candidates for the priesthood. Each nation is expected to establish its own program of formation but it must follow the template provided in the *RATIO FUNDAMENTALIS* of the Holy See.<sup>3</sup>

Anyone involved in the formation of candidates to the priesthood must be familiar with all four areas of formation. The person must have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to assist the candidates to develop the necessary virtues and to drop the unhealthy vices incompatible with the ministerial

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priesthood.<sup>4</sup> The changes in the method of the proclamation of the Gospel, the introduction of revised rituals for the sacraments and sacramentals, the evolution of the pastoral needs of the people of God, and the contemporary doctrinal challenges are just some of the few areas that require ongoing formation for the formators. Formators who are not familiar with the sociological changes and the “new mindsets” of the people of God towards reception of the proclamation of the Gospel will not be very effective in the art of formation.

## **2. Objective Of The Paper**

This paper will therefore, attempt to show that it is as important to train the formators as much as it is important to train the candidates for the sacred priesthood. The possible areas of on-going formation of formators will be examined. The entire presupposition of this research is anchored on the fact that there is no fullness of knowledge in any human creature. Growth in knowledge is continuous until death. The Gospel of Luke 2.52 says Jesus grew in wisdom and stature. If Christ who is divine wisdom can because of his human nature be subjected to growth in wisdom, all those who are incorporated into Christ by baptism also have the obligation to seek ways to grow in wisdom and knowledge. For those who train candidates for the sacred priesthood, the ways to grow in wisdom and knowledge is through formation of the formator which is like training the trainer. Let us now briefly examine some possible obstacles to on-going formation of formators.

## **3. Forming The Formator**

It is important to always keep in mind that every human being requires on-going formation. This on-going formation comes in two ways. First, it comes through practical knowledge acquired from years of initial formation and experience. The second way is through a formal or an organised program for the formator. The two should normally co-exist. The law established that all Christ faithful do have the obligation to ensure that the

*Agora: Journal of Philosophical & Theological Studies* message of salvation is spread to every part of the world.<sup>5</sup> The direct implication of this is the fact that the Church must provide the means and the opportunity for the message of salvation to reach the entire world. Priests do have important functions in the fulfilment of this obligation of Christ entrusted to the Church. This is the context in which we must understand the great importance of the process of forming those who provide the leadership in the field of evangelization. Those responsible for the formation of priests take up very important a task that is at the heart of the mission of the Church. Making provision for the on-going formation of seminary formators should therefore be rightly seen as ecclesiastical obligation that flows from the mandate of Christ to the Church to go into the world and make disciples.

In a recent Symposium on the Gift of Priestly Vocation for Formators in English speaking Canadian Seminaries, The Archbishop Secretary of Seminaries for the Congregation for Clergy underscored the need for formators to be engaged in on-going formation.<sup>6</sup> He noted that formation involves gradual and progressive stages as outlined in the *Ratio Fundamentalis*. This gradual and progressive formation requires formators to be well prepared to assist the candidates.<sup>7</sup> In the same Symposium, Carlos presented a paper on how formators are to accompany and help seminarians discern their vocation.<sup>8</sup> In this paper, Carlos writes: “**The high-quality formation of formators** (with on-going formation and of all priests, makes possible the integral formation of seminarians).(Initial formation) who are in the initial stages of their journey and gives it a sure footing.”<sup>9</sup> The integral formation of seminarians will depend upon the quality of the formators. The quality of the formators improves as a result of on-going formation. Carlos explained thus: “The degree of growth achieved by the formator is what allows him to help the young seminarians in their own growth process.”<sup>10</sup> Any seminary that has no space for on-going formation of the formators is doing a great disservice to the Church because of the quality of priests that will come out of such seminary.

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Two specific areas that formators must focus on-going formation are accompaniment and discernment. In the area of accompaniment, the formator must improve on establishing a true bond with God by listening to his Word. The formator must also have a systematic bond with the one who accompanies us in God's name.<sup>11</sup> Engaging in programs that enhances the listening capacity of the formator will help to make the formator more efficient in his work.

#### **4. Priestly Formation**

There have been several magisterial documents on priestly formation.<sup>12</sup> Our research will only deal with a few that we consider relevant to the area of our study. Priestly formation in this research refers to the preparation of candidates for the priesthood. Although, such preparation requires multiple intervention from the family to the parish, to the lay apostolate group the person may belong to, to the diocesan program of formation through pastoral work or other forms of formation, our research will however, be primarily based upon the seminary aspects of formation. It will be concerned about the four areas of priestly formation and how specifically formators are trained to be competent to help candidates in these areas of formation. Therefore, in dealing with priestly formation our attention will not so much be on the candidates for formation but on forming the formators.

#### **5. The Second Vatican Council**

On 28 October 1965 Pope Paul VI published the Decree *OptatamTotius*, on Priestly Formation. The Decree stated that the program of priestly training should be set up by Episcopal Conferences but always keeping in mind the Universal Law on priestly training.<sup>13</sup> The Major Seminaries are the places where candidates to the priesthood are trained to be shepherds of souls after the model of Christ, the Chief Shepherd. All forms of the training in the seminary are to be ordered towards the pastoral end.<sup>14</sup> The intellectual and spiritual training are for

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pastoral effectiveness. In order to be successful in the formation of candidates, seminary formators are to be obedient to their bishops.<sup>15</sup>

Given the high premium place on the formation of candidates to the sacred priesthood, the Fathers of the Council stated:

Since the training of students depends both on wise laws and, most of all, on qualified educators, the administrators and teachers of seminaries are to be selected from the best men, and are to be carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience and special spiritual and pedagogical training. Institutes, therefore, should be set up to attain this end. Or at least courses are to be arranged with a proper program, and the meetings of seminary directors are to take place at specified times.

Administrators, however, and teachers must be keenly aware of how much the success of the students' formation depends on their manner of thinking and acting. Under the rector's leadership they are to form a very closely knit community both in spirit and in activity and they are to constitute among themselves and with the students that kind of family that will answer to the Lord's prayer "That they be one" (cf. John 17:11) and that will develop in the students a deep joy in their own vocation. The bishop, on the other hand, should, with a constant and loving solicitude, encourage those who labour in the seminary and prove himself a true father in Christ to the students themselves. Finally, all priests are to look on the seminary as the heart of the diocese and are to offer willingly their own helpful service.<sup>16</sup>

The Fathers of the Council took on-going formation of formators seriously enough to decree that Institutes for forming formators be set up. Such Institutes will help to keep

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formators abreast in the new pedagogical ways of discerning and accompanying candidates towards the priesthood. The regular meetings of Rectors and other formators are to be focused on improving ways of on-going formation of the formators.

The Decree makes an important point by stating the strong connection between the success of the priests in the ministry and the nature of formation received in the seminary. It will also mean that to some extent, the failure of the priest in the ministry can be traced to the nature of the formation and discernment received at the seminary. This further underpins the argument for ensuring proper on-going formation of the formators.

Another essential element expressed by the Council Fathers is the community in which the seminarians are formed. Formators are to establish a closely-knit community in which they work in solidarity under the leadership of the Rector. Formators must keep in mind that the seminary environment is a community. One of the distinguishing factors of a community is a shared goal and a shared means of achieving it. The Rector is expected to help guide the formators to use a common means to achieve the common goal of forming candidates for the priesthood in the Church. Programs that will enhance community living should be provided from time to time for formators to access. This is one way of forming the formators to enable them provide and sustain conducive atmosphere for the formation of candidates for the priesthood. A formator who is manifestly unable to live in a closely-knit community should be assisted to develop the capacity to live in a community with shared goals. In the unfortunate situation where the formator is still unable to abide by community life, a pastoral solution that will strongly include the possibility of exiting the seminary formation system should be explored.

## **6. Pastoresdabo Vobis On Forming The Formators**

St. Pope John Paul II in this famous post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation stated that without priests the Church will not be able to fulfil the fundamental obligation Christ entrusted to the

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Church, which is to go out and preach the Gospel to the entire world:

Without priests the Church would not be able to live that fundamental obedience which is at the very heart of her existence and her mission in history, an obedience in response to the command of Christ: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Mt. 28:19) and “Do this in remembrance of me” (Lk. 22:19; cf. 1 Cor. 11.24), i.e., an obedience to the command to announce the Gospel and to renew daily the sacrifice of the giving of his body and the shedding of his blood for the life of the world.<sup>17</sup>

The Church must therefore place great importance on those who form candidates to the priesthood because they are participating in the core of the mission of the Church. The formation of the formators is therefore part of the essential mandate of Christ to the Church. PDV describes the work of the formators as follows:

The Church’s work of formation is a continuation in time of Christ’s own work, which the evangelist Mark illustrates in these words: “And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons” (Mk. 3:13-15).<sup>18</sup>

The seminary community constitutes a sort of mountain place. It is a place of prayer and discernment. The process of identifying those who are suitable for the priestly ministry is one that should be done with all the seriousness it deserves. The formators in the seminary must have the necessary knowledge and skills to assist in the four areas of formation mentioned in PDV. The Document stated that the entire work of priestly formation rests on a solid human formation:

The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation. [...]. Future priests should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry. These qualities are needed for them to be balanced people, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities. **They need to be educated to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgment and behaviour.**

Formators must first of all possess these qualities in themselves in order to be able to discern them in the candidates for the priesthood. On-going formation of formators should consider helping in the area of developing personal self-respect for the truth and respect for dignity of the human person and the diversities of opinions. A rigid approach to every aspect of human life is unhealthy. To have balance judgment, a formator will have to be capable of making assessments that are not influenced by their ethnicity. On-going formation of formators should also focus on how to work in a multi-ethnic diverse society.

The candidates for the priesthood are expected to display a great sense of affective maturity and sound human sexuality. This will enable the person to be able to minister as a celibate priest to everyone in the pastoral field. The life style of formators often times constitute the model upon which seminarians build their future upon. Formators should be role models in the area of affective maturity. The formation of the conscience of the candidates should be sound.<sup>20</sup>

Spiritual formation requires that the candidates have a deeper communion with Christ who is inviting them to work in his vineyard. "Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience

of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery.”<sup>21</sup> Formators are to be concerned with the spiritual life of the candidates for the priesthood. A spirituality that is devoid of communion with the suffering Christ must not be promoted. The current trend of seeking miraculous healings in almost every case of illness point to an unhealthy spirituality especially by priests who promote such beliefs. Although, Spiritual Directors are primarily responsible for the spiritual formation of the seminarian, all other formators must have some rudimentary knowledge on spiritual formation. The provisions of *OptatamTotius* should be observed in the area of spiritual formation:

Spiritual formation should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. Those who are to take on the likeness of Christ the priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives. They should live his paschal mystery in such a way that they will know how to initiate into it the people committed to their charge. They should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons they should love and reverence the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross.”<sup>22</sup>

The intellectual formation of candidates to the priesthood is rooted in the fact that human beings are called to participate in the Light of God’s mind.<sup>23</sup> Through this way, the human being is able to confront the new challenges that come up in evangelization. The educational formation of the formators is essential in the area of intellectual formation. It is expected that formators

continue to engage in further researches in their respective area of discipline. Attending conferences, seminars, symposiums, and so on, are some of the ways of ensuring on-going formation of the formator as it relates to intellectual formation. There should be reasonable financial budget to encourage formators to seek on-going formation in their respective disciplines. In this way, they will be able to proffer new solutions to contemporary pastoral challenges in an intellectual manner to the students.

In the area of intellectual formation, formators should be able to help with a balanced sense of inculturation of the faith. Christianity should not be presented as foreign to any culture.<sup>24</sup> The resurgence of many superstitious beliefs within the Christian community is a sign of lack of proper intellectual formation. The growing trend of exorcising none possessed persons, the preaching of prosperity gospel in order to raise fund to complete some projects that in some cases are not even essential to the life of the Church, and the personalization of sacramental celebrations are just a few indicators that the intellectual formation is deficient in these priests. Formators must engage rigorously the culture of the people and identify unhealthy elements and promote healthy elements as tools of evangelization.

Pastoral Formation is the goal of the entire formation. The formators must seek ways to truly prepare the candidate to be able to work effectively in the pastoral field:

Pastoral formation certainly cannot be reduced to a mere apprenticeship, aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques. The seminary which educates must seek really and truly to initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the

Whenever there is a disconnect with pastoral theology and practical experience, the faithful are confused. Whenever there is a disconnect between magisterial teaching and the practices promoted by priests the faithful are confused. The parish life presents the faithful with various challenges regarding the faith. There are so many contradictory doctrines promoted outside the Church and unfortunately now even within the Church. The Churches moral teaching rooted in *Humanae Vitae*, the observance of well-formed conscience and spirituality that are in line with the traditional teachings of the Church are often being tactically discarded and replaced by new trends in doctrine. These new trends preach a life that is empty of the cross and one filled with abundant material blessings with a robust health. The new trend promotes spiritual destruction of ones' human enemies, supported with selective scriptural citations from the Old Testament.

Giving the constant fluctuation of life styles in behaviour, in taste, in fashion, and modes of living, the question has always been raised as to whether the formators should also change some essentials in the area of formations. The Nigerian society today is greatly saturated with prosperity gospel, proliferation of healing ministries and diverse style of programs. There are wide publicity through the various social media and banners where the pictures of the ministers dot every nukes and crannies of the city. The opinion of some Catholics have been; will the Church not change the method of training priests so that they can at least acquire the skills of these Pentecostal preachers. For such persons this is an existential question for the Church. They often argue that there is a constant migration of Catholics to the new ecclesial communities or churches because they provide them with the kind of spirituality that they like. Although, there is hardly any convincing statistics to back up such claims, the fact that they are constantly being made, demands attention of every well-meaning

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Catholic.

Formators in the Seminary must be conversant with on-going pastoral dimension. The seminary should not be so cloistered that the formators are completely unaware of the new developments in parish life. The goal of the formation process is to prepare candidates to becoming priests, who will work in the ministry. It will therefore be necessary that strict observance of the policy that require formators to spend some time in parish ministry during the long period of seminary vacation be adhered to. It is perhaps relevant to note the emphasis Pope Francis places on pastoral experience of members of the Vatican Diplomatic Corp. Pope Francis recently directed that those who are to become Papal Nuncio are to undergo at least one year of pastoral ministry. In this way, they will have personal experience of pastoral life. The same principle should be applied to formators in the seminary. At least a period of one-year pastoral work as a priest should be required before a formator assumes office in the seminary.

## **7. Obstacles To Forming The Formators**

This research to a great extent assumes that seminary formators are priests. Although, this assumption is not absolutely true, because there are very good religious sisters and brothers involved in formation as well as highly-educated lay faithful. But our research will be primarily concerned about formators who are priests. Let us briefly highlight some of the challenges or obstacles to on-going formation of formators.

### **7.1. The “Final Goal” Syndrome**

Many professions that have long years of training do have on-going education fatigue. When there is no financial remuneration for embarking on further education in the area of specialty, the person is further less motivated. Priests who are formators in the seminary have all gone through close to ten years of seminary formation and pastoral work. Many of them have also completed several post-graduate studies. Although, there are no well-known publications of the numbers of seminary formators with Doctorate

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Degree, but a cursory look at the number of formators in most of the seminaries in Nigeria will indicate that close to 90 percent of these formators do have doctorate degrees. Those without it are in most cases in the process of obtaining the degree. This is expected in every academic community and the seminary should not be an exception.

However, the need for on-going formation still remains even after obtaining a doctorate degree in the various relevant disciplines. There is a general belief born out of perception that once a person is ordained a priest, the person has “arrived.” This arrival mindset can impede openness to further education and formation. For any priest to consider the priesthood as an end in itself can become a challenge towards growing in wisdom and knowledge as it was reported by the Gospel of Luke 2:52 regarding Christ human nature. The anti-dote to the final goal syndrome is to imitate Christ who grew in wisdom. There is no final goal for any human being on this earth.

## **7.2 Lack Of Mandatory Ongoing Formation Of Formators**

There is hardly any well-articulated demand for on-going formation of formators. The knowledge of the formators in their respective disciplines such as Scripture, Systematic Study or Dogma, Moral Theology, Pastoral Theology, Liturgy, Philosophy, Psychology, Spirituality, Canon Law and other relevant ecclesial or secular disciplines is not sufficient to be effective formators. These disciplines do not in themselves provide the priests formators with all the necessary skills to accompany and discern the vocation of the seminarian. There should be mandatory on-going formation in the area of discernment and accompanying of the candidate towards the priesthood. We had earlier pointed this out when we discussed the presentation of Jorge Carlos Patrón Wong.

### **7.3 Lack Of Proper Enforcement Of Promotion Based On Publication And Research**

In the academic community, the people are concerned about researches and publications. Promotion is based upon publication of well researched papers on reputable Journal that enjoy blind rigorous peer review. Participation at international Conferences and regular on-going research are all taken seriously. In fact, it is sometimes put in sayings like: “publish or perish.” This goes to underscore the value placed upon on-going formation of lecturers. However, with a somewhat equal priestly status that the sacramental order establishes, there is less motivation to publish. The perception of a priest with several publications and one who has no publication is not different in the eyes of many faithful. It may be time to review establishing merit-based promotion following the Nigerian Universities Commission(NUC) regulation. Formators with more publication should have their papers assessed and the Appointment and Promotion Board of the Seminary should help to ensure that there is reward for such efforts of formators. The proper academic hierarchy should be well entrenched. The template provided by the Institutions that the seminary is affiliated to will help in this area. In other words, a formator who has enough publications to move from Lecturer II to Lecturer I, to Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor (Reader) and to full professor should be encouraged with corresponding financial remuneration. Although, priests are expected to live out the promise of poverty, it is nonetheless desirable to enhance their capacity to do charity to others from their legitimately earned income.

### **7.4 Performance Review**

Most establishments do have performance review system. Performance indicators or indices are established to be used in the evaluation of persons. Some establishments will have indices such as productivity, punctuality, impact on the lives of the people, compatibility with fellow workers, health condition, mental fitness etc. It is true that all these indices may not be

*Agora: Journal of Philosophical & Theological Studies* applicable to formators in the seminary, but it will be of great service towards helping to form formators if a general template that could be adopted is established. Performance indices such as openness to pastoral availability, accessibility of a formator by students, readiness to comply with seminary statutes, moral uprightness of the formator, the psychological mindset, the physical health etc. It may also be of help if students are allowed to make objective impute in the process of this assessment.

## **8. Conclusion**

The pastoral ministry of the priest is very essential to the fulfilment of the mission of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the formation of candidates to the priesthood is of great importance to the vitality of the Church. The quality of formators in the seminary greatly influences the quality of candidates for the priesthood that the seminary trains. The on-going formation of formators becomes essential to the faith formation of the faithful. If the formators impact knowledge that are relevant to the pastoral challenges the seminarians will face in the priestly ministry, the latter will be able to render effective pastoral services to the faithful. Forming the formator is part of the call to go out and make disciples of all nations. Part of the response of the Church to the mission of Christ therefore includes making provisions for on-going formation of formators. There should be clear program for formators. The curriculum for such program must include ways of accompanying students in the process of discerning their vocation. If the Church in Nigeria could establish a kind of template similar to the *Ratio Fundamentalis* for formators it would create the imperative for every formation house to embrace the call for on-going formation. A program of on-going formation must be funded for the Church to make it easier for formators. Such a program should be mandated.

In addition, a kind of performance feedback from the students should be gathered from time to time to help the formators understand the way the students perceive their formative skills. A questionnaire or other appropriate format may be used. This will

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be imitating Christ Jesus himself who sought for feedback when he asked his apostles: “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Mathew 16: 13). The need to constantly ask this question every time is clearly underscored by Christ in this passage. The sincere responses from the students will help the formators to improve on their formative skill. It must always be kept in mind that the Church is only as healthy as healthy as the formation houses are. The places where the leaders of the Church are formed and those who form them should be given the highest priority in the administration of the Church. When the Lord told Peter to feed his sheep (John 21:17), he also included in this command, the obligation to form those who will be feeding the sheep.

## **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Canon 232. All citations from the 1983 Code of Canon Law are taken from, *Codex iuriscanonici, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli II promulgatus, fontium as notatione et indice analytico alphanbetico auctus*, Libreria editrice Vaticana, 1989, English translation Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition, prepared under the auspices of the CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1999.

<sup>2</sup>Canon 237.

<sup>3</sup>See canon 247.

<sup>4</sup>For a comprehensive reading on formation of virtues during seminary formation, see, Mercitta Kannampuzha, "The Role of Virtues in Formation Programmes: Seminaries and Religious Houses," in *The Living Word*, 124/3 (2018), pp. 123-142.

<sup>5</sup>Canon 211.

<sup>6</sup>See Carlos Patron Wong, "The Gift of Priestly Vocation," Symposium for Formation Teams English-Speaking Seminaries of Canada 4-7 April 2019.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>See Carlos Patron Wong, "Accompaniment and Discernment of Priestly Vocation," Symposium for Formation Teams English-Speaking Seminaries of Canada 4-7 April 2019.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>See Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>See, Rajakumar Joseph, "Ministerial Priesthood and Integral Formation. Revisiting Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis (The Gift of Priestly Vocation)," in *Vidyajyoti*, 83 1/18, (2020), pp. 24-47; John McAreavey, "The Formation of a Celibate Clergy." In *ITQ* 64 (1999), 261-275; Antony Valungal, "Spiritual Formation to Become a Missionary Disciple and Pastor in the Document of the Gift of the Priestly Vocation," in *The Living Word*, 122/6 (2016), pp. 334-352; James J. Conn, "Reflections on some recent norms on priestly formation," in *Periodical* 98 (2009), pp. 1-32; Gordon Read, "Seminary Formation and the Discernment of Priestly Vocations," in *Canon Law Society Newsletter*, (2011), pp., 35-40; Rajesh Pollayil, "Psychological Dimensions of Priestly Formation," in *The*

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<sup>13</sup>*SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL*, Decree on Priestly Formation, *Optatam totius* 28 October 1965, no. 1. All citation of *Optatam Totius* Decree on the Training of Priests are taken from [www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651028\\_optatam-totius\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html). (=OP).

<sup>14</sup>OP. no. 4.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>O.P. no. 5.

<sup>17</sup>JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, On the Formation of the Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day, 25 March 1992, no. 1, from [www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_25031992\\_pastores-dabo-vobis.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis.html). (=PDV).

<sup>18</sup>PDV, no. 2.

<sup>19</sup>PDV, no 43.

<sup>20</sup>PDV, no. 44.

<sup>21</sup>PDV, no. 45.

<sup>22</sup>OP no. 8.

<sup>23</sup>PDV, no. 51.

<sup>24</sup>PDV, no. 55.

<sup>25</sup>PDV, no. 58.