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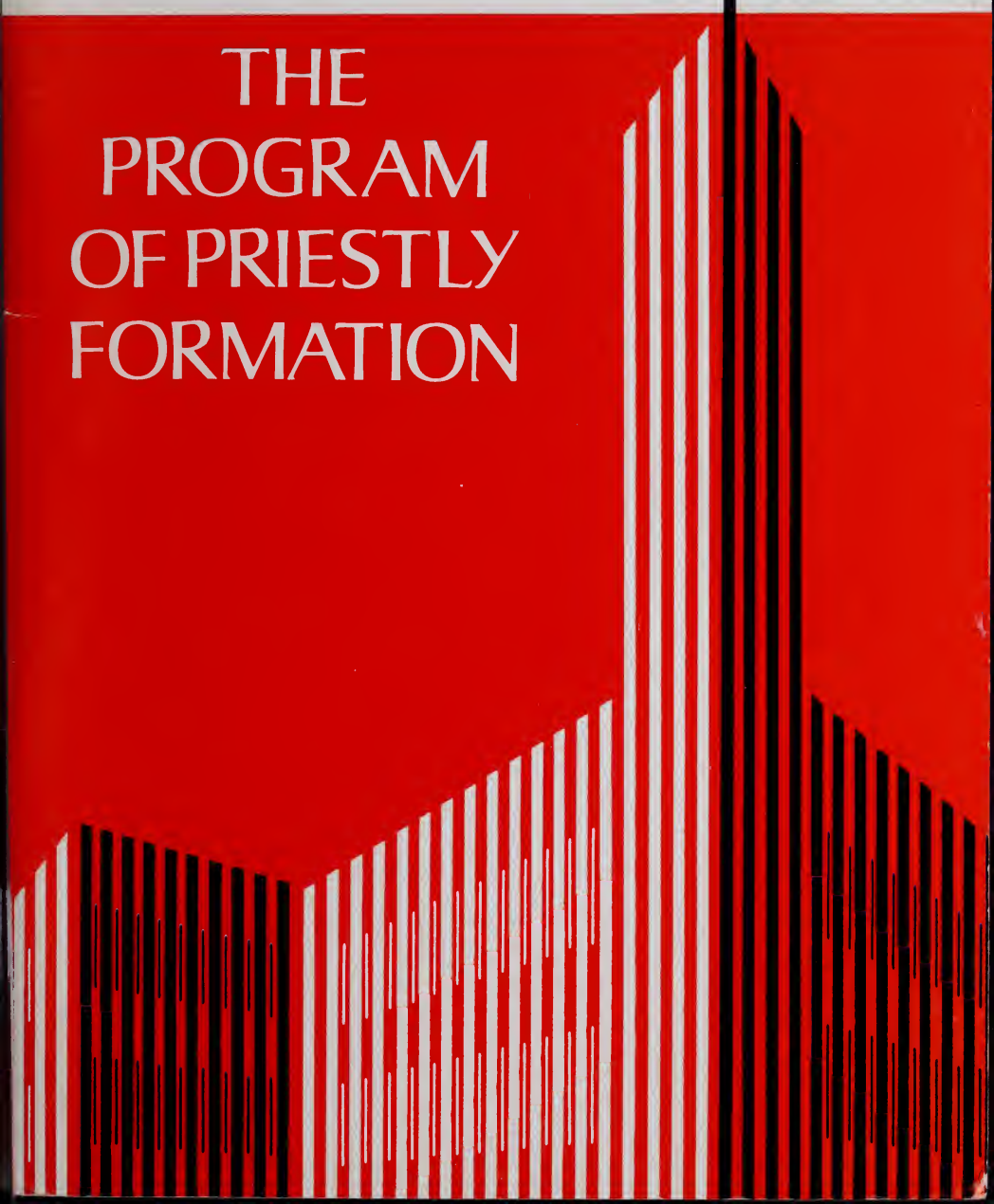
The program of priestly formation...

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NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
OF CATHOLIC  
BISHOPS

THE  
PROGRAM  
OF PRIESTLY  
FORMATION

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**THE PROGRAM OF  
PRIESTLY FORMATION**

**OF THE  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

United States of America

January 18, 1971

**1971**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C.



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SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA

THE SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

hereby approves for a period of five years *The Program of Priestly Formation* of the United States as the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis* of that nation in order that this *Program* be observed in all seminaries of the United States of America which are in any way destined for the formation of the diocesan clergy, all to the contrary notwithstanding.

This approval is given in accordance with the Decree *Optatam totius* of the Second Vatican Council N.1, and in accordance with the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* issued by this Sacred Congregation N.I, 1, and is to be interpreted in the light of these documents.

Given at Rome, from the Palace of the Sacred Congregations, on the 18th day of January, 1971.

PREFECT

GABRIEL MARIA CARDINAL GARRONE

Undersecretary

F. MARCHISANO



SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA

Rome, January 18, 1971

Your Eminence,

It is our great pleasure to respond to your letter to us of the 4th of December 1970, by sending to you the approval of our Sacred Congregation, for a period of five years, of *The Program of Priestly Formation* of the United States of America, recently drawn up and approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of your country.

We would like to take this occasion to sincerely praise all the Bishops of your country for their ardent and zealous work in this very important area of their apostolic labors, and to single out for particular praise the Committee on Priestly Formation and its staff, which obviously worked so long and carefully in the production of this *Program*. We cannot fail to tell you, Your Eminence, of our hopes and prayers that the rapid execution and careful enforcement of this *Program* will effect, in the best possible way, the formation in learning, holiness, and zeal of the many fine seminarians and future seminarians of your country. It is for them and for the good of the Church and the glory of God that so much effort has been expended by United States Hierarchy in the production of this very well-drawn-up *Program*.

The long history of seminary development in your country and the splendid traditions established by numerous and grand seminary superiors, professors and students in the United States, will, we are certain, provide a strong basis for a vigorous renewal of seminary life and studies in the years ahead, as outlined by your *Program*.

The aspects of spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation which are treated so well in your *Program* are not only impressive to read, but are capable of exciting much hope for the promising future when the young priests, formed in the *Program's* fine spirit, will undertake their various ministries in the Catholic Church with that measure of spiritual development, intellectual training, and pastoral practice that will give every assurance of success.

It is also a source of immense satisfaction to us to see the cooperation in the formulation of this *Program* and its eager acceptance by the religious communities of your country, which, we feel, will be a source of enrichment not only to them, but also to the entire Catholic apostolate in the United States.

We cannot allow this occasion to pass, Your Eminence, without asking you to convey to all those involved in any way in seminaries

or seminary-work in the United States our greetings, our continuing admiration, and the promise of our constant interest, prayers, and blessings.

With these thoughts and with our renewed sentiments of high regard and esteem, we remain

Fraternally yours in Jesus Christ

PREFECT

GABRIEL MARIA CARDINAL GARRONE

Undersecretary

F. MARCHISANO

His Eminence  
John Francis Cardinal Dearden  
President of the National Conference  
of Catholic Bishops  
Archbishop of Detroit

# PREFACE

The document presented here is *The Program of Priestly Formation*, prepared by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States and approved in the name of the Holy See by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. It is now the official program for seminaries in the United States.

In modern times, massive technological, sociological and cultural changes have awakened in men a new awareness of the individual person and the community of mankind, have aroused new expectations and new hopes, have developed new modes of communication and new idioms of expression. The Second Vatican Council was held in recognition of the need to re-examine the relationship of the Church to the changing world. In one area of the Church's life, the Council directed that the future programs of priestly formation for each country should be drawn up by the Episcopal Conference of that country, revised at definite intervals and approved by the Holy See (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 1). The *Program* here presented is the fulfillment of the responsibility of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the United States.

The *Program* is not to be considered in isolation. It has a relationship to all the documents of the Second Vatican Council, particularly to the *Decree on Priestly Formation* and the *Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church*. It has a very special relationship to the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*.

It is associated in a living relationship with the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is related to the evolving needs of the Church and to the lives of modern seminarians and to the professional competence of seminary faculties.

At Rome in 1967, the Synod of Bishops recommended that the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education set forth guidelines for the various national conferences of bishops in the world to assist them in formulating their own particular programs. In response, the Congregation developed the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*. In formulating the *Ratio*, the Congregation studied those programs and guidelines which had already been partially developed in various countries. Before the third and definitive version of the *Ratio* was published, two draft versions, one after the other, were circulated among the national conferences and revised in light of reactions and responses.

When the creation of the *Ratio* was just beginning, the *Interim Guidelines* for the United States were fairly well advanced. The United States Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation was thus in a position both to collaborate with the Congregation in the development of the *Ratio Fundamentalis* and to insure the harmony of its own prospective *Program* with the *Ratio*.

Notable harmony does exist between the *Ratio Fundamentalis* and

the *Program* for the United States. Ordinarily the *Ratio*, dealing with the Universal Church, is more general than the *Program*. In some places, however, the *Ratio* is more specific.

*The Program of Priestly Formation* is a document in which bishops, seminary faculties, seminarians and all the People of God can have confidence. It is a sound document because it represents a serious application of the directives of the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* to the American scene, the care and insights of the bishops, and the experience and advice of very many seminary people in the United States.

The *Program* states principles according to which seminaries at every level should be conducted. Most extensive coverage is given to the theologate. Adequate coverage is given to college and high school seminaries. At the direction of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation developed the *Program*. In the formation of the *Program* various subcommittees were formed with episcopal chairmen and membership from various seminaries and representation from religious communities. Draft documents were circulated among many seminaries for comment and suggestions. Each section was revised many times. Finally each section was approved by the Committee on Priestly Formation and submitted to and approved by the National Conference. Meanwhile, draft texts of the *Ratio Fundamentalis* were being circulated to the various national conferences and the United States *Program* was constantly compared with the *Ratio* for congruence. Each section of the *Program* approved by the NCCB was submitted to the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and authorized for interim use. During the period of interim use, on the one hand, seminaries were able to profit from the broad study that had gone into the guidelines and, on the other hand, seminary administrators, faculty members, seminarians and lay educators were able to evaluate the *Program* and to make suggestions for improvements.

In November 1969 the National Conference approved the revised version of all chapters of the *Program*, except the chapter on ecumenism which was not submitted pending the publication of the *Ecumenical Directory Part Two*. On April 6, 1970 the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education approved the *Program*, at the same time requesting certain changes in the text and making the suggestion that religious superiors be asked to consider adopting the *Program* for the formation of religious priests.

In November 1970 the National Conference accepted the *Program*, including a new chapter on ecumenism and also including the changes recommended by the Sacred Congregation. The Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men, whose representatives had contributed to the development of the *Program*, agreed to accept the *Program* as the recommended program for religious priests' formation, if there were added to the *Program* a short section prepared by them on religious life (Part Four). The National Conference approved the *Program* as the one program for all seminarians, diocesan and religious, and the addi-

tion of Part Four. On January 18, 1971 the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education approved the *Program* with all its additions and revisions for a period of five years. On February 5, 1971 the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes gave a *nihil obstat* for the publication of Part Four, pending the development and publication by that Congregation of a *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Religiosae*.

The soundness of the *Program* is indicated by the fact that the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education suggested its adoption for religious seminarians and its ready acceptance by the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men. The one program is evidence of the on-going spirit of cooperation between diocesan and religious superiors in the face of problems that are now so often of mutual concern.

The *Program* is an American document. Undertaken at the direction of the Second Vatican Council and under the supervision of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and approved by the Holy See, it is, nevertheless, a document of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States.

It is an authoritative document because it is a document of the National Conference approved by the Holy See. It is in harmony with the *Ratio Fundamentalis*. For all seminaries in which there are diocesan seminarians, the *Program* has the force of law because of the original mandate of Vatican Council II and of the approval of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and the approval and promulgation by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It has intrinsic authority because of the consultation and authentic experience upon which it has drawn.

The *Program* establishes principles. Just as the *Ratio Fundamentalis* leaves the specific application of principles to the local church, the *Program* leaves the development of specific programs to individual seminaries. But neither document permits variance from the principles themselves (Cf. *Ratio Fundamentalis*, Preliminary Remarks, n. 2; *Program*, nn. 38-41).

It is a whole program, an integral program, an organic program. It is a document that should be evaluated in its totality. Each part should be considered in relationship to the whole. The import of individual chapters should be gathered from the totality of that chapter and also of the whole program. Fragments, phrases, or paragraphs should always be considered in their organic relationships.

It is a human document in the sense that it speaks to men: to bishops, to faculties, to seminarians. It presumes their response. Chapter Five on community life and paragraphs 172 and 183 explicate the fact that it is an instrument to be used with intelligence and in the light of experience.

It is a living document. It comes out of the history of the Church, out of the Church's perennial diligence to prepare witnesses to the Gospel and ministers of sacramental life. It comes out of the experience of the bishops and of the faculties and the seminarians of today. It

is current, but it is open to change and evolution. The *Program* has been approved by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education for a period of five years. After that time, in the light of experience and of changing circumstances, the *Program* will be adjusted and revised.

The first Chairman of the Bishops' Committee for Priestly Formation was Bishop Loras T. Lane. Bishop Lane organized teams of diocesan, religious and lay educators into advisory committees each concerned with a specific area of training. Chairmen of special committees were Archbishop Francis J. Furey, Bishop Joseph T. Daley, Bishop John J. Dougherty, Bishop John M. Fearn, Bishop Frederick W. Freking and Bishop James A. Hickey.

Bishop Lane devised an organizational structure which at once paid careful attention to the history and appropriate documents of the Church and at the same time reached deep into the seminary community of the country for consultation. His personal spirit of dedication and openness laid the foundation for an excellent document.

The second Chairman of the Bishops' Committee, under whom the *Program* was finalized and edited, was Bishop James A. Hickey. In his capacity as Chairman and by appointment of the President of NCCB, Bishop Hickey represented the Bishops of the United States at two international meetings held in Rome to further the formulation of the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*.

As full time staff members during the four years of the development of the *Program*, Rev. T. William Coyle, C.Ss.R. has been Executive Director, and Rev. William W. Philbin has been Associate Director.

Rev. Eugene Van Antwerp, S.S., Associate Secretary of the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association and Rev. Benedict Ashley, O.P. served as members and chairmen of sub-committees and in the final phases of the work served as staff personnel.

Aiding the Bishops' Committee has been the Formation Committee of the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men, under the chairmanship of Very Reverend Walter Farrell, S.J. For more than two years Father Farrell and members of his committee have shared in the work and the meetings of the Bishops' Committee.

In presenting this *Program* for the direction, guidance and help of seminary faculties and students, we might say to them as St. Paul did to Timothy:

Before God and before Christ Jesus who is to be judge of the living and of the dead; I put this duty on you, in the name of his appearing and of his kingdom; proclaim the message. . . . Be careful always to choose the right course; be brave under trials; make the preaching of the Good News your life's work, in thoroughgoing service. (2 Tim. 4:1, 2, 5)

† THOMAS J. GRADY  
Chairman  
Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation



# THE PROGRAM OF PRIESTLY FORMATION

## INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus Christ shares His priesthood with all members of His Church through Baptism and Confirmation. He gives a special sharing in His priesthood through Holy Orders to the men He calls to the service of His People in the Church and in the world. Without this priestly service of the ordained, the members of the Church cannot make fully effective their own common priesthood (cf. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 10). In the conciliar *Decree on Priestly Formation* the service of the ordained priest is described as three-fold, the ministry of the Word, the ministry of worship and of sanctification, and the ministry of pastoral service (cf. n. 4).

2. The purpose of the seminary, therefore, is to provide a program that encourages spiritual and emotional maturity, intellectual and cultural growth, and opportunities for apostolic zeal, so that a man may respond maturely to the priestly vocation and in turn be judged suitable for it—a man of God, adequately prepared for, and committed to, a life-long exercise of the priestly ministry in the Church.

3. Following God's call, "the shepherds of Christ's flock must holily and eagerly, humbly and courageously carry out their ministry, in imitation of the eternal high Priest, the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls. They ought to fulfill this duty in such a way that it will be the principal means also of their own sanctification" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 41). This service consists primarily in building up the People of God in faith and love. Formation for this priestly service must continually look to the needs both of the Church and of the world, and must not proceed in isolation from either. Rather, emphasis on the ecclesial must include concern for the secular. This integral view of the Church and the world, fundamental to the formation of priests today, permeates not only the Council's *Decree on Priestly Formation* and its *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests* but also the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, the *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church*, and the *Decree on Ecumenism*.

4. Response to God's call to serve His People has always been the object of this formation. In the past this service was usually exercised in clearly defined areas of priestly competence. Today, because of our rapidly evolving understanding of man, the world and the Church, and because of the characteristic pluralism of American society, the education of our priests must be broader, more flexible and more creative.

5. In the light of the pastoral emphasis of Vatican II, and in accord with the *Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 1, this *Program* has as its purpose to promote and direct the renewal of priestly formation required by the special conditions of the United States of America. It is obligatory for all diocesan and inter-diocesan seminaries. It should also be followed by seminaries and schools owned and operated by religious in providing programs for the preparation of candidates for the diocesan priesthood. Finally, it should guide religious institutes in adapting their own formation programs to the conditions of education and pastoral ministry in the United States (cf. *infra*, n. 6).

6. At the suggestion of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and at the invitation of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in June 1970 the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men adopted the Bishops' *Program* as the recommended program for the formation of religious priests, "preserving the rights and privileges granted religious in Church law, especially regarding the religious and spiritual formation of their own candidates." With the addition of Part Four, concerned specifically with the religious priest's formation, the *Program* is thus the one program for all seminaries in the United States, whether diocesan or religious.

7. In this *Program*, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops establishes only the more general requirements, stating the aims and objectives which must be fulfilled by any program of priestly formation. More specific objectives in regard to the Rule of Life and education of the seminarians are the prerogative of the individual local Ordinary who oversees the implementation of the *Program* in his own diocese (cf. *infra*, n. 172, 202-204, 240). Under the general authorization received from the Ordinary, the seminary administration and faculty bring their own professional competencies to the task of designing the particular programs of curricula, teaching methods, details of daily life, and the like, in order to achieve these objectives (cf. *infra*, nn. 38-41).

8. All institutions preparing men for the priesthood should conduct a self-study in the light of the provisions of the *Decree on Priestly Formation* and this *Program*. Where such study reveals that because of size, unsatisfactory facilities, inadequate faculty, financing, or other reasons, seminaries are unable to maintain suitable programs, amalgamation of facilities is indicated (cf. *infra*, n. 248).

9. This *Program* deals in Part One with the education and formation of the candidate for the priesthood at the level of professional theological study. Then it treats of preparatory studies at the college and high school levels, in accordance with the American system of education. The principles stated for the professional level should be understood to apply proportionately to the college and high school levels. Therefore, Parts Two and Three presuppose the principles of Part One and treat only of matters special to these preparatory levels.

10. The European system of education has led to the establishment of minor and major seminaries. Vatican Council II affirmed the necessity of

major seminaries<sup>1</sup> and, therefore, of a six-year formation period, two years of which are to be devoted to philosophical and four years to theological study. The American system of education is based on three four-year periods: high school, college, and professional training. The American equivalent to the conciliar "major" or six-year seminary, is the final two years of college and the four years of professional theological study. In the American system, "years" may also be measured in an equivalent number of semester hours. In adapting the European system to the American system of education, the basic philosophical studies should be included in the four years of college study required for the bachelor's degree (cf. *infra*, nn. 293, 301-305, 317); additional philosophical study can be included in the theological program, in such a way that the total philosophical study is equivalent to at least two years.

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<sup>1</sup>*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation* gives a descriptive definition of a seminary. "For a seminary in the true sense to exist, the following features, as can be drawn from the documents and constant mind of the Church, are undoubtedly required: a community inspired by charity, open to modern needs, and organically constructed, i.e., one in which the authority of the lawful superior is effectively exercised with the mind and after the example of Christ; where all help to insure to the students real development of human and Christian maturity; where there is opportunity to begin experience of the priestly state through relationships both of brotherly fellowship and hierarchic dependence; where the doctrine of the priesthood is clearly expounded by teachers deputed by the Bishop himself, and at the same time there is presented what priestly life means and all that is looked for in a priest: these requisites the students must gradually come to know and accept, whether they concern faith and doctrine, or their way of life; lastly, there should be the possibility of testing a priestly vocation, and making certain of it by positive signs and qualities, so that a sure judgment on a candidate's fitness may be offered to the Bishops" (cf. *op. cit.* footnote 74).



# PART ONE:

## PROFESSIONAL FORMATION FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

### CHAPTER ONE: OBJECTIVES

11. The goal of the seminary is to form true pastors of the People of God after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest, and shepherd. This requires that through the program of professional education and formation, the candidate for the priesthood should achieve these fundamental objectives:

- a) a deepening of his personal Christian experience and commitment to service;
- b) a more vivid awareness of the contemporary world in which God's saving presence is at work through men;
- c) a growing understanding of the faith through critical theological reflection;
- d) an awareness of the nature of the redemptive sacramental priesthood and a stronger conviction of the call to share in it;
- e) a vital integration of his theological understanding and his life in Christ.

12. In order to implement these objectives, the theological curriculum should provide organized learning experiences to develop the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for the priest.

13. Renewal of theological education requires that theological faculties, within the scope of this *Program*, and under the direction and with the approval of the Ordinaries concerned, through reflection, innovation, and careful evaluation, develop their own particular programs adapted to the needs of the Church in the United States and in the world. In developing such programs, the following factors should be kept in mind.

14. a) The full contribution of theology to the modern Church requires the development of centers of Catholic theology which operate under the guidance of the *magisterium* of the Church and in close contact with other modern disciplines and offer a diversity of particular programs in theology. Such centers could provide academic training in theological education both for candidates for the priesthood and for others. When seminarians attend these centers, special provision should be made for proper academic counseling and for spiritual and pastoral formation.

15. b) In the United States system of education, study in a field of concentration leading to the bachelor's degree is considered *undergraduate*. Further study is termed *graduate*. This graduate study is of two

kinds, *graduate academic study* primarily directed to preparing the student for teaching and research, and *graduate professional study* primarily directed to prepare a student to practice a profession, e.g., law, or medicine, or teaching.

16. Although the priesthood transcends the character of a profession, in our society it requires professional graduate education for its competent exercise. Both undergraduate and graduate professional education for the priestly ministry have three principal components: *academic* preparation through humanistic and theoretical studies, *pastoral* training through supervised practical experience, *spiritual* and *personal formation* through community life and worship and personal spiritual guidance.
17. Besides the programs of professional study necessary to prepare the candidate for ordination and the pastoral ministry, it is also important to provide programs of graduate academic study to provide the Church with scholars and teachers. A fruitful and stimulating interaction must be established between these two aspects of theological education: pastoral ministry rooted in sound theological scholarship, and theological scholarship enriched by pastoral experience.
18. c) Special programs should be established to enable men coming from culturally disadvantaged social groups in American society to achieve excellence and to enter the priesthood on an equal basis with others.
19. d) Quality theological education in today's climate of ecumenical understanding requires that the students "be brought to a fuller understanding of the churches and ecclesial communities separated from the Apostolic Roman See . . . (and) be introduced to a knowledge of other religions" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 16) (cf. *infra*, nn. 253-288).
20. e) Seminary theological education can only lay the foundation for a theological proficiency that should be developed through a priest's later life. The seminary theological curriculum should be designed to provide this solid foundation, recognizing the need of the priest to participate in programs of continuing education in the ministry. Theological schools might also serve as resource centers for programs of continuing education.
21. f) In view of these many needs, it is necessary to make maximum use of limited physical, financial, and personal resources through cooperation among existing institutions.
22. Theological faculties along with their students are urged to respond to this challenge to renew theological education with energy, initiative, and responsibility for the future of the Church. The following guidelines are offered to provide coordination, direction, and emphasis to this movement.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### Article One: Basic Principles of Curriculum Renewal

#### 1. Faith and Theology

23. Theology has been described as *fides quaerens intellectum*—faith seeking understanding. The first principle, then, in the renewal of the theological curriculum must be a deeper appreciation of the meaning and importance of faith and its content both for Christian living and theological understanding. This objective should be explicitly formulated at the beginning of theological studies, and emphasized throughout.

24. Theological study should contribute to the seminarian's personal development as the Christian man of faith, since doctrinal and pastoral development should be closely connected with his spiritual formation (cf. *Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 8). In divine revelation God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His Will regarding the salvation of men, sharing with man divine treasures which transcend the understanding of the human mind. The seminarian's response of faith is an obedience by which he commits his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God Who reveals, and, under the influence of grace, freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him (cf. *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, nn. 5-6).

25. The candidate for the priesthood should accustom himself to seek the divine reality expressed in the Bible and in the life and teaching of the Church, so that he comes to accept, esteem, love, and live by the mind of Christ. He should become more aware of the richness of divine revelation which surpasses man's effort at expression. He should see the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit making the Church conscious of the truths called for by the needs of the times. For, each age in continuity with the past, firmly rooted in the Bible and faithful to the *magisterium* of the Church, should contribute its own articulation of the Gospel truth in terms relevant to contemporary needs.

26. It is necessary for the student to recognize the distinction between faith and theology, and to see the vital relationship between them. He should be formed to distinguish the truths revealed by God from their theological mode of expression. He must become accustomed to see the validity as well as the limitations of the human expression of God's truth in the course of the Church's history.

#### 2. The Shift of Emphasis in Theological Instruction

27. In recent times a significant shift in emphasis has taken place in the teaching of theology. Stress is now put on the need to involve the student in a dynamic process of reflection on the problems of life, and to instill

in him a sense of the historical development of the Christian faith in the life of the individual and the Christian community. This requires consideration of the differing educational and religious backgrounds of the student and a change in curricular emphasis and methodology, in order to meet the fact that the priestly office, as essentially defined by the Church, is today carried out in an entirely new situation and style, due to mankind's new needs and the nature of modern civilization (cf. *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, Introduction, n. 4).

28. The revision of the curriculum should keep in balance the elements of theological formation—study of the Bible as the inspired expression of divine revelation, historical study of the theological developments in the past, and a sound treatment of fundamental doctrines through systematic theology, including appropriate treatment of the foundations of faith. The curriculum should also be adapted to the needs of an ecumenical age. The student must be guided to see the problems of the modern world in the light both of the riches of Christian tradition and the experiences and insights of the whole believing community of today.

### **3. The Historical Dimension of Theological Study**

29. The historical consciousness emphasized today inevitably affects Catholic theology and causes a greater awareness of the historical dimension of every subject in the curriculum. All courses must help the student develop a critical sense of history and an insight into the richness as well as the limitations of the varying cultural expressions of the Christian faith through the centuries. Paradoxically, today's student often regards the past as remote and irrelevant. He must be helped to see that the past conditions the present, and that present problems cannot be understood without a knowledge of the past. To accomplish this, he must understand the critical methodology of history.

30. In this emphasis, extreme positions are to be avoided: a) an emphasis on static immutability which seeks to explain away the fact of doctrinal development or to elevate one period of Church history as the model for all others; b) an excessive relativism which would destroy continuity with the past and which would lose sight of the fact that Christianity is above all an historical religion; c) a tendency to reduce theology to a merely sociological or comparative study of religious phenomena. Rather, theology must preserve its true character as a study of God's Word revealed to us historically in Sacred Scripture and Tradition. This revelation, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is understood more fully in the context of historical and present experience.

### **4. The Pastoral Dimension of Theological Studies**

31. Vatican II made it clear that theology must have a strong pastoral emphasis. This does not mean that theology should be reduced to merely practical questions or pastoral skills. Nor does it mean that more time is to be given to "applied theology." Rather it means that theology today



will arrive at a better understanding of the Gospel message and be able to explain that message in more relevant terms if it is deeply engaged with the concerns and problems of contemporary man.

. . . The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its expectations, its longings and its often dramatic characteristics (*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, n. 4).

**32.** Clearly this means that it is not possible to teach even the most speculative branches of theology in isolation from pastoral concerns. The splendid advances in theological understanding made by Vatican II are proof that this pastoral orientation, far from weakening speculative theology, will stimulate and enrich it. Thus, emphasis on the pastoral does not weaken the desire of theology to penetrate the mysteries of divine revelation, but rather, together with spiritual formation, stimulates the seminarian to "live in an unceasing union with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 8).

## **5. Unity and Pluralism in Theological Study**

**33.** Theology should be presented as genuine wisdom whose unity is established on the Word of God, Who is one, on the Gospel of Christ, which is one, and the Catholic Church, which is one. The student should see the fundamental unity of the salvific action of God being worked out in all of mankind and within his own person (cf. *Decree on Priestly Formation*, nn. 15, 16; *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, nn. 77, 78). For, the pastoral purpose of the study of theology requires that students penetrate and assimilate the entire doctrine of faith in its simple unity so that they in turn may be able to communicate it to the faithful for their salvation. Therefore professors must effectively cooperate among themselves to achieve internal unity, coherence and harmony, in the presentation of theology. This cooperation will involve restructuring and coordinating various disciplines, a fresh didactic method, and constant reference to the Word of God.

**34.** It is also necessary to recognize a plurality of theologies through which the one faith of the Catholic Church is expressed. This phenomenon, so common in the past (e.g., the contrasted theologies of St. Paul and St. John within the New Testament itself, the differing mentalities of the Eastern and Western Fathers of the Church, the great systems of Aquinas, Scotus, and Suarez), has appeared vigorously in the Church of Vatican II. This plurality should be accepted and encouraged, not in a spirit of a facile eclecticism, but because it will lead to a deeper under-

standing of our common faith and an appreciation by the future priest of the relationship of theology to the Gospel and the *magisterium*.<sup>1</sup>

## **6. Developmental Needs of Students**

**35.** A consequence of this new emphasis will be the need to take fuller account of two pedagogical principles in addition to the time-honored and valid principles of logical scholastic methodology, namely:

- a) The curriculum should take into consideration the experience, interests, and the needs of the student as a person.
- b) The curriculum should include the social, moral, and ecclesial problems of the present time in their relation to the Christian faith.

**36.** The purpose of such orientation of the curriculum is to stimulate the student to intense and genuine thought by building on what he already knows and by leading him from questions that he asks to those deeper and wider truths of divine revelation of which he is not yet fully aware.

## **7. Emphasis on Methodology**

**37.** The curriculum should provide the student with the opportunity to learn and exercise the specific methodologies of exegesis, historical criticism, and systematic reflection, and also the more practical methods related to the ministry itself. The desired pastoral and professional orientation must not lead to the neglect of serious habits of disciplined study and thought. The student should be helped to recognize that pastoral problems cannot be responsibly solved without serious study and sound methodology.

## **8. Respective Roles of Ordinaries and Faculties**

**38.** According to the directives of Vatican II, it pertains to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and to the major religious superiors to establish appropriate programs for their respective seminaries (cf. *Decree on Priestly Formation*, footnote n. 5; *Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church*, n. 35, 5). The establishing of the program includes delineation of the objectives of the curriculum.

**39.** Theological faculties, however, by reason of their scholarship and their commitment to and experience in the actual task of teaching, have the responsibility of developing particular curricula and teaching methods to achieve these objectives established in the national programs. These curricula and local programs are to be developed under the general authorization received from the Ordinary and, if necessary, to be sub-

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<sup>1</sup> "Pluralism in theology" sometimes is taken to mean the creation of new theological systems based on the data of new philosophies which are not yet thoroughly delineated or tested by time. The presentation of "pluralism" in this sense requires a very special competence and is not without danger for young men still being formed in theology.

mitted for his approval. Each faculty should develop the various learning experiences and courses which are in accordance with the faculty's own talents and training, and the particular character of the student body. It is their responsibility to study their own situation and devise a curriculum which is practical and open to constant improvement, without the diminution of any essentials or of the basic unity of theological formation.

40. As a general rule, consultation should exist between the Ordinary and the theological faculty on the one hand, and between these faculties and their respective student bodies on the other. Through the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation, the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association, and other agencies, faculties should exchange information about programs and methods which have been found useful.<sup>1</sup>

41. If difficulties arise concerning the interpretation and application of the *Program*, the matter shall be referred to the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation which, with due consultation, will study and recommend a procedure for solving the difficulty.

## Article Two: The Theological Disciplines

42. In view of the principles enunciated above, it is possible to specify certain principal objectives of the theological curriculum for the priestly candidate. It is not intended that this list of objectives be exhaustive or serve as an outline of specific courses to be taught, but rather that it focus attention on goals to be achieved by the organization of learning experiences in various courses.

43. In preparation for his ministry of service to the Word of God, the priestly candidate should understand and appreciate God's message as it is proclaimed in Sacred Scripture and reflected in the living tradition of the Church. He should appreciate the role of theology in advancing theological research, and accept with wholehearted fidelity the college of bishops in union with the Roman Pontiff as the authentic *magisterium* in witnessing to the faith and giving pastoral guidance (cf. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 25).

44. Of paramount importance for his future ministry is the ability of the seminarian to discover the meaning of the Word of God concerning man's relation to God, to his fellow man, to the Church, and to the society in which he lives. Thus in a true sense, theology probes the mystery of God in probing the mystery of man.

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<sup>1</sup> To provide practical assistance to seminaries in the interpretation and implementation of *The Program of Priestly Formation*, the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation, in collaboration with the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men, will offer the service of consultation teams. Rather than acting as accrediting agents, these teams will help the Ordinaries and the seminary community toward achieving the objectives of the *Program*.

45. In preparation for his sharing in the mission of the Church,
- a) the seminarian should develop his ability to articulate and communicate God's Word in a meaningful way in preaching and teaching;
  - b) he should, through a genuine and personal experience of divine worship and through a scientific study of liturgy, prepare to become an effective liturgical leader. For this to be accomplished, the modes of worship in the seminary should provide for a variety of liturgical experiences;
  - c) he should learn those techniques utilized in the fields of psychology and social action that will assist him in the pastoral guidance of men.
46. In accordance with the provisions of the *Decree on Priestly Formation*, theological study should begin with an introductory course in which "the mystery of salvation should be so proposed that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be helped to establish and penetrate their personal lives with faith and be strengthened in embracing their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart" (n. 14). This course should provide sufficient time (i. e., at least one semester) to enable the students to acquire a positive personal orientation to theological study. Such a course is appropriately placed during college studies in a seminary, or in a religious novitiate, at a time when it will best assist the student to understand his priestly vocation and the preparation necessary for it. If not given then, it must be taken at the beginning of professional theological study.
47. Each theologate should develop courses and provide learning experiences which will help the student attain the competencies described above. For this reason theological faculties are encouraged to develop forms of curriculum and styles of theological education within these general principles and stated goals.

## **1. Sacred Scripture**

48. Sacred Scripture, a vast body of literature written over a period of a thousand years, is the inspired Word of God. Throughout his entire seminary training the candidate shall acquire a loving familiarity with the Word of God in the text of the Bible as fundamental to his Christian faith.

### **A. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR SCRIPTURE STUDY**

49. In order that students may pursue their study of Scripture in a truly professional manner, the entrance requirements of theological schools should encourage quality programs in Sacred Scripture in the college department. This college study might appropriately include the history of biblical times, substantial courses of general and special introduction to the Bible, and an understanding of the message of Scripture as a

whole (cf. *infra*, n. 308). These courses should be taught by professors qualified in the modern biblical approach.

## B. OBJECTIVES OF SCRIPTURE STUDY

50. Since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words.

. . . The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith. It is the task of exegetes to work according to these rules toward a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture, so that through preparatory study the judgment of the Church may mature. For all of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the Word of God (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, n. 12).

51. Therefore, the central task of the Scripture professor is the exegesis of the sacred text so that the student may have the best possible understanding of the sense intended by the sacred authors. Without this grounding a descriptive biblical theology is not possible. The professor should show the nature of such a theology and its basic importance for systematic theology, for "the study of Sacred Scripture is, as it were, the soul of theology" (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, n. 24).

52. The professor cannot be making constant pastoral applications of biblical studies. He must, however, be aware of the student's need for these and devote some time to such applications and to the treatment of the hermeneutical problems involved. The sixth chapter of the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* provides a guide in this regard. He must also recognize that a proper introduction to the Psalms will be an important help for the student's prayer life.

53. The course in Sacred Scripture should serve to initiate the student in biblical criticism, contribute to his understanding of the message of the entire Scriptures, and provide a significant exercise in biblical criticism and exegesis of particular parts.

## C. PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER AND AUTONOMY OF SCRIPTURE STUDY; ITS INTEGRATION WITH OTHER THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

54. The teaching of Sacred Scripture in the theology course should be on a level consonant with the professional character of the training the stu-

dent should receive. While Scripture must ultimately be integrated into the entire program of theological training so that its basic role in the development of theology is clearly recognized, the relative autonomy of the science should also be maintained, i.e., the scientific approach to interpretation must never be sacrificed to "contemporary relevance" or some other ulterior goal.

55. Granted the autonomy of the scientific study of Scripture, there is great need for joint planning of courses among the professors of all the theological disciplines so that what is learned of Scripture will truly inspire all other studies. Some initiative is encouraged with regard to the order of the courses in Scripture and their correlation with other disciplines. As a continuation of the Introductory Course on the Mystery of Christ and Salvation History (cf. *supra*, n. 46), guided reading in the Bible throughout the student's entire formation is strongly encouraged, in order that he develop a broad and deep personal acquaintance with the Scriptures, which nourish his spiritual life. It is also strongly recommended that some advanced biblical study be required of anyone who is to teach theology.

## 2. Historical Studies

56. In the school of theology students should grow in their understanding of the life of the Church and the development of her teaching through studies that emphasize historical methodology. The student should be taught to seek the facts, without idealization of the past or undue stress on an apologetic defense. At the same time the teaching of history should not be merely factual, but should aim at developing a theological insight into the mission of the Church and the significance of her historic experiences for her life today. Historical studies should be closely integrated into all the student's theological work, so that he acquires an appreciation of the historical aspect of theological problems. This implies that the faculty also is trained in historical methodology.

57. Besides a general course of Church history, electives should be provided to study various periods of the life of the Church in greater detail: early Church history and patrology, particularly in view of the stress of Vatican II on return to the sources; the medieval period, because of the influence of scholasticism in the creative development of theology during this period; the Reformation period, in view of its importance to the ecumenical dimension of theology; the modern period, because of the important influences which the growth of science and of critical historical methodology have exerted on man's understanding of himself and his world. There should also be a course in the history of the Church in the United States, because the presence of many cultures side by side has brought to the Church in America a variety of resources, problems, and opportunities.

58. Stress should also be given to a study of the history of the development of dogma and its theological formulation, either as part of the regular courses in systematic theology or in special courses.

### 3. Systematic Theology

#### OBJECTIVES OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

59. "Systematic theology" can be understood in many senses, since it is precisely in this field that theological pluralism is particularly evident. In general, systematic theology aims at helping the student analyze and synthesize his understanding of the Christian faith in continuity with the heritage of the past and in the context of the community of the faith today. Through its study the student should be helped to achieve an integrated view of Christian doctrine by reflection on the Gospel message and its varied expression in terms of human experience. He should explore the relationship among the elements of this tradition and try to understand the process of doctrinal development in the life of the Church. He should appreciate and fully accept the role of the bishops in union with the Pope in the authentic declaration of the faith. All this should be undertaken with constant reference to the biblical and historical traditions and in dialogue with the separated Christian churches and secular academic communities. Finally, but fundamentally, the student needs to understand the work of God in our times—a work sometimes hidden in secular trends—and the opportunities for the growth of God's kingdom which are open today. The hopes of secular man are often corrupted into atheism, nihilism, and apathy to God's presence. Theological understanding must help to heal blindness and deafness to God in the modern world.

#### METHODOLOGY

60. In the theological school, emphasis should be given to theological method so that the student may be able to evaluate the strengths and limitations of past and current theological speculation. The student should learn how to use biblical and historical sources in his theological thinking and how to relate this thinking to his personal faith, life, and apostolate. The *Decree on Priestly Formation* states,

**The theological disciplines, in the light of faith and under the guidance of the magisterium of the Church, should be so taught that the students will correctly draw out Catholic doctrine from divine revelation, profoundly penetrate it, make it the food of their own spiritual lives, and be enabled to proclaim, explain, and protect it in their priestly ministry (n. 16).**

61. Once the systematic study of theology is begun, students will usually become aware of a need for a greater understanding of the philosophical methods required in such an analytic study and of the importance of studying philosophical authors who have greatly influenced theology in the past and today. Hence, the curriculum should offer opportunities for deepening the student's philosophical understanding at this level of growth. The *Decree on Priestly Formation* directs that in the revision of ecclesiastical studies a primary concern should be a better integration

of the philosophical and theological disciplines, so that they work toward opening the minds of students more and more to the mystery of Christ, and to seeing the connections between philosophical argument and the mysteries of salvation, treated in theology under the superior light of faith (nn. 14, 15; cf. Appendix II, "Relation of Philosophy and Theology").

62. Systematic theology, while respecting the autonomy of other disciplines, should help to broaden the student's Christian vision and provide the integrating and deepening principles for his thought and behavior in Christian, priestly living.

## PLURALISM

63. While a plurality of theologies within the Catholic tradition is recognized (cf. *supra*, n. 34), the *Decree on Priestly Formation*, in accordance with many papal documents, recommends St. Thomas Aquinas as the model and guide for study and research in systematic theology (n. 16). This recommendation should be followed in the context of the historical and pastoral orientation outlined above. The thought of Aquinas should be presented as an important element in helping solve the problems of the day; it should be presented not as the ultimate synthesis but as a part of the great theological dialogue of the past which continues in our times. Because they articulate present-day problems, modern theologians, both Christian and non-Christian, should be utilized as stimulating participants in this continuing dialogue.

## DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

64. The titles and order of courses in systematic theology should be left to the discretion of individual theological faculties. An important aspect of systematic theology is Apologetics, which is concerned with the preparation necessary for the gift of faith and with the rational foundation of a living faith, taking due account of the sociological conditions which influence the Christian life. The curriculum should also provide for competence in the principal areas of faith, such as Christology, ecclesiology with its missiology,<sup>1</sup> the sacraments and liturgy, the Christian concept of God and eschatology. It is necessary also to deal with important contemporary themes such as the theology of history and of Christian secularity. Opportunities for more specialized study in some of these areas should be available to the students.

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<sup>1</sup> On May 17, 1970, the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations issued a "Circular Letter to the Episcopal Conferences on the Missionary Aspect of Priestly Formation," stating, ". . . the ordinary seminary could not offer a strictly missiological formation along the lines of the decree *Ad Gentes* (nn. 16, 26). . . . Nevertheless all seminarians . . . should be given a certain general knowledge of the missions, or an introduction to the more fundamental questions of missionary theology (cf. *Ad Gentes*, n. 39 c; *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 96; *Norms for Implementation of Four Council Decrees*, III, n. 1)."



## MORAL AND ASCETICAL THEOLOGY

65. The common division of systematic theology into Moral and Dogma has recently given way to the older and more authentic Christian emphasis on the intimate relation between belief and life. Vatican II, while confessing that we are a Church of sinners, insisted on the universal call to holiness (cf. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, ch. 5). Through the Holy Spirit men respond to this call by a personal effort to keep God's command. In the spirit of the Gospel, love "which fulfills the law," unifies this whole effort. Dogmatic, Moral and Ascetical Theology, therefore, are inseparable and are of great importance in guiding Christian growth in genuine love.

### OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

66. In this context of our redeemed life of growth in love, theological study must seek to understand and establish a proper balance between personalism and the good of the community, individual liberty and law, moral principles and their application through individual conscience in concrete circumstances. This study should be developed and enlightened by progress in New Testament studies, in the history of human culture, and in psychology and sociology.

67. Therefore the study of the dogmatic, moral and ascetical aspects of systematic theology should lay stress on the following points:

- a) the Christian life as an imitation of Christ and a participation in the divine Trinitarian life by faith, hope and charity;
- b) the unity of the Christian life in the love of God and neighbor, and its intensely personal character as a service of people;
- c) the social character of the Christian life as lived in a community open to all men;
- d) the human character of the Christian life as involving man in his total bodily, affective, knowing, and historical existence, conditioned by time, place and culture;
- e) the death of Christian life through sin, alienating man from God and neighbor by a mind and heart closed to truth and love;
- f) the dynamic character of the Christian life as a continual growth in the Holy Spirit through prayer, the sacraments, ascetic discipline, and loving service;
- g) the prudential character of the Christian life as an increasing ability to learn from experience and reflection how to make wise decisions applying the norms of Christian morality to the changing circumstances of life.

68. The curriculum, therefore, should embrace the theology and spirituality of the various states of Christian life, especially that of the priesthood. And the curriculum should be so designed that the student himself gradually moves from an adequate general Christian vision towards a secure, flexible and truly prudential understanding of Christian life and

decision-making, both for the formation of his own conscience and for skillful teaching and counseling of others in the formation of their consciences, in due obedience to the moral teaching of the Gospel and of the Church.

#### **4. Sacred Liturgy**

**69.** The Second Vatican Council spoke emphatically about the place of Liturgy in the curriculum:

**The study of Sacred Liturgy is to be ranked among the compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religious houses of studies; in theological faculties it is to rank among the principal courses. It is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, and juridical aspects. Moreover, other professors . . . will clearly bring out the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, as also the unity which underlies all priestly training (*Constitution on Sacred Liturgy*, n. 16).**

**70.** Faithful to the Council's emphasis, *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation* states that Liturgy:

**. . . is to be presented, not so much in its juridical aspects as in a theological and historical context. And, on the spiritual and pastoral plane, it should be linked up with the other subjects in order that the students may realize how the salvation mysteries are rendered present and operative in the liturgical ceremonies. Texts and rites of Oriental and Western liturgies should be explained in order to illustrate the eminent place, which, theologically speaking, Sacred Liturgy occupies in expressing the faith and life of the Church (n. 79).**

**71.** In this *Program's* later section on spiritual formation intimately linked with pastoral development, all growth is seen as deriving from the Liturgy, in particular the Eucharist (nn. 133-141). And all pastoral ministry is seen as facilitating a response to the Lord's saving action, present in the Liturgy.

**72.** Through a clear understanding of the nature of Christian Liturgy and of the present Church discipline surrounding it, seminarians will prepare to help people adapt to the changes called for by the Second Vatican Council, distinguishing between the permanent elements and values of Christian worship and the variations appropriate to our age.

#### **5. Pastoral Studies**

**73.** It has been indicated that all theology today has both an historical and a pastoral dimension which should appear throughout the curriculum. The curriculum, however, should also include special courses dealing with the principal areas of the priestly ministry. In these courses the

student learns to deal with pastoral problems in a way truly theological. These courses must be correlated and integrated with the total seminary programs of pastoral field education (cf. *infra*, n. 94 ff.) and of liturgically oriented life. The courses must, in fact, serve those broader educational experiences by approaching and evaluating them from the focus of theology itself.

**74.** The principal areas to be treated are:

- a) the priestly work of proclaiming the Word of God through preaching, catechizing and many forms of Christian education—requiring special skills in pedagogy, psychology and communication;
- b) the priestly work of organizing and guiding the life of the Christian community and of the individual within the community—calling for a knowledge of the sociology of religion, Canon Law, ascetics, and the art of pastoral guidance;
- c) the priestly work of sanctifying the people by leading liturgical worship and administering the sacraments. This requires a knowledge of liturgy, art and psychology.

**75.** Pastoral courses and experiences should be so organized that the student does not merely learn prescribed routines of ministry, but becomes sensitive to human needs and skilled in finding theologically sound solutions to pastoral problems, even in complex and novel situations. The student should come to understand that the priest is ordained to serve a priestly people, to assist this people to grow in their own gifts of the Spirit, not to dominate but to inspire and guide. Finally, he should become vividly aware of the Church's mission to all peoples of the world.

### **Other Studies**

**76.** The foregoing is not meant to be an exhaustive listing or description of theological courses. Other studies may be added according to the needs of the students and the judgment of the faculty, care being taken not to overload the curriculum with courses of secondary importance.

## **Article Three: Methods of Instruction and Evaluation**

### **1. Instruction**

**77.** The methods of instruction should aim at a real deepening of the student's insight and a real growth in mature attitudes and behavior, as well as the mastery of information and techniques. Hence, all teaching must begin with the student's actual experience and interests and must remain in constant contact with these, avoiding irrelevant problems and merely verbal answers.

**78.** The student's interests and experiences, however, may be very narrow, superficial or faddish. Hence, teaching must seek to enrich his experience, broaden and deepen his interests, and awaken him to the

concerns and needs of others. Especially it should seek to arouse in him a sense of wonder at the mysteries of existence and of faith and a desire to explore them courageously.

**79.** Besides a growth in broad appreciation, it is important also that the student come to understand the intrinsic, objective and scientific requirements of a developed discipline, and this should be achieved in his field of concentration.

**80.** While a basic trust in the competence of the teacher is necessary on the part of the student, this faith should not be abused, but should be strengthened by the teacher's evident understanding of the student's point of view and sympathy for it.

**81.** These methodological objectives shift the emphasis from the traditional lecture system to stress on personal activity by the student in extensive reading, seminars, discussions, independent study, and clinical or field experience.

**82.** The scholastic method retains its value in helping the student develop logical rigor of definition and argumentation, analysis and synthesis. The lecture method, also, is valuable as a means by which the professor demonstrates the method proper to his discipline, opens new questions and synthesizes the state of current research. The use of seminars introduces the student to the methods of scholarship and criticism. In the physical and social sciences, the empirical and mathematical methods are indispensable and require laboratory or other research experience. "Team-teaching" also can be of help in showing interdisciplinary relations.

**83.** Perhaps the most serious pedagogical problem to be met in theological education today is that of bringing experience and reflection into working relationship. A student can adequately appreciate some theological problems only when he has some personal experience of how they exist in concrete reality. He then needs time and guidance to analyze the problem, explore the relationship of theology to the issues which emerge, and seek a solution through reflection and prayer. Finally, he needs to test, in his own Christian experience and in his relations with others, the value of what he has learned. He needs to grow in his sense of the mystery of God. The aim of such experience-reflection methods is to enable the students to learn to think theologically in practical situations as members of a believing community.

**84.** The various methods of unifying experience and reflection should be tried and evaluated. One such method uses core groups of ten or twelve students and a faculty member. Student activity is central, but the faculty member has the responsibility of keeping this activity in contact with theological tradition and the faith of the Church.

**85.** The consideration of method in theology is incomplete without mention of reflective and communal prayer. Because it deals with divine

mysteries, theology calls for contact with God in personal prayer, liturgical worship, and the experience of Christian community.

**86.** In each case, the method to be used depends not only on the requirements of the subject matter, but also on the maturity of the student and the special talents and training of the teacher.

**87.** New methods of instruction, for example the use of television, programmed instruction, other audio-visual methods, etc., are not to be neglected and may prove of value even in fields where "book learning" has dominated.

**88.** Above all, it is important that the student should have both first-hand contact with the sources of our cultural tradition, not merely with manuals and textbooks, and first-hand contact with, and participation in, the life of contemporary society, which will serve to raise real problems for study and reflection.

**89.** One method of constructing the curriculum so as to meet the needs of individual students and to prepare them for different situations of ministry is to divide the curriculum into a "core" and elective courses. The "core curriculum" is an integrated series of courses required of all students for ordination. These courses introduce the student to each of the major areas of theology and enable him to learn the principal methodologies. This core should be sufficiently limited to permit the student, with proper counseling, to choose enough elective courses to begin developing an area of specialization.

**90.** Another method to meet individual needs better is the "track system," in which students are divided according to interests, abilities, and possible future apostolic work. This method allows for smaller and more homogeneous groups within courses. It should not be allowed to degenerate into an easy course for inferior students as opposed to a difficult course for superior students.

## **2. Evaluation**

**91.** Improved methods of instruction imply improved methods of academic evaluation which must constantly be readjusted to the actual progress of the student. Former systems of examining and grading sometimes resulted in formalism and did not recognize individual differences and gifts of originality. Contemporary educational psychology provides many techniques for a more adequate evaluation of the student's real development; these techniques are now widely used in American education. They should be employed in seminaries with a view to discovering the student's potentialities, his actual development in the ability to solve both theoretical and practical problems, and the integration of these abilities with his total personality.

## Article Four: Structure of Seminary Education

92. As an incentive to excellence, theological schools should set up degree programs in the pattern of American education and should seek recognition by appropriate accrediting agencies. At least a first professional degree should be offered to make it possible for all priests to have a certification of professional training. Consolidation of existing resources will make feasible some academic programs also offering graduate degrees.

93. The time a student spends in the theologate should be determined on the basis of achievement. However, the basic program should be flexible, so that with proper guidance it may be adapted to the actual maturation of the student. Normally students will need at least eight semesters of theological study to complete the academic and field education requirements for priestly ministry. In some cases students might profit from a period of supervised pastoral work away from the seminary as part of the program. This period might be spent at a training center for some specialized ministry, or in a parish with intensive directed study of the parish ministry. This training would be distinguished from a Deacon Internship, which, if adopted by an Ordinary, would begin after completion of the seminary course (cf. *infra*, nn. 117-120). Other students who complete the basic course in less than eight semesters and who show special promise may be designated by the Ordinary to begin further degree studies as soon as qualified.

## CHAPTER THREE: PASTORAL FORMATION

### Article One: Pastoral Orientation of Seminary Curriculum

94. The Second Vatican Council was a pastoral council. It is not surprising, then, that a strong note of pastoral concern resounds throughout the *Decree on Priestly Formation*, reaching its climax in the directive that “. . . pastoral concern . . . ought to permeate thoroughly the entire training of the students. . . .” (n. 19). The goal of the seminary program is to send forth a priest who has a rounded pastoral outlook, ready to assume the pastoral duties which his service to the community demands. This service requires special concern for individuals and groups alienated from society and the Church, either by accident or by choice. This pastoral focus should be the point of integration of the various aspects of the formative process: the academic, the spiritual, and the expressly pastoral. The attempt to achieve a proper balance among these aspects is a challenge to today’s seminaries and will be an on-going work in the years to come.

95. In general, this pastoral focus requires that all subjects in the curriculum be taught with an appropriate pastoral orientation. This does not mean that there should be an unnatural striving to give a pastoral tone to each and every theological subject, but that all subjects should be taught with the needs of the future pastoral minister in view. Preparation, emphasis, and choice of material will all be directed toward this end. To put it another way: the pastoral orientation should be focused on the student rather than on the subject matter. Within this pastorally-oriented curriculum, it is presumed that there will be one or more courses, as may seem proper, treating Pastoral Theology in an explicit way.

### Article Two: Field Education Program

96. This present document, however, is not concerned with the academic curriculum as such. Rather it proposes a Field Education Program that is to be coordinated with and integrated into the academic sphere. This program aims to provide to the candidate for the pastoral ministry an opportunity for personal involvement in and practical exercise of the apostolate. This is in accordance with the recognition of the Fathers of the Vatican Council that the seminarian needs “. . . to learn the art of exercising the apostolate not only theoretically but also practically. . . .” (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 20).

97. The custom of engaging in apostolic works is a common feature in seminaries today, but the essential role that this endeavor should play in the total educational and formative process has recently been recognized in a fuller way. This dimension of learning through active engagement in the ministry must be seen as an integral part of the total formation of the future priest, drawing from the academic and spiritual

aspects and, in turn feeding back into and enriching them. Active pastoral involvement, if carefully designed and properly supervised—an absolute necessity—is just as educational in nature as is classroom work. The latter provides the necessary theoretical background for the priest on mission; the former, a laboratory for learning through practice. Such a Field Education Program, therefore, is by no means an endorsement of a fallacious activism.

### **Article Three: Objectives of the Field Education Program**

98. One of the principal goals of a Field Education Program is to teach the seminarian the habit of theological reflection about the priestly mission. As he engages in his active apostolate, he will be forced again and again to consider how his pastoral activity fulfills the mandate of Christ, how the various forms of the apostolate establish and build up the Church among men, how the needs of the People of God are being met by his service and witness. As he does this under the direction of supervisors with pastoral experience and theological competence, his academic work and the apostolate will reinforce one another, and he will recognize the theological disciplines as relevant to his mission. Working side by side with priests who show forth the spirit of Christ will not only inspire the seminarian but will also capitalize on the process of learning by example and identification, an aspect of education that has been profitably exploited in medicine and other professions, but seldom in theological education. Thus the Field Education Program can be the best integrating force in the total formation process, manifesting and increasing the relevance of theology and linking more closely the apostolic and spiritual aspects of the candidate's life (cf. *infra*, n. 123 ff).

99. It is also important for other reasons that the seminarian be introduced into the apostolate during his time of preparation for the priesthood. The preservation and fostering of his zeal, the nourishing of his calling to the priesthood, not to speak of the vocation he shares with all baptized Christians, all demand that he be engaged, at least to some degree, in the vineyard of the Lord. Thus he will be cooperating in a real salvific work, but in such circumstances and under such conditions that his apostolic work becomes a truly educational experience as well. His decision to move ahead to the priesthood or not will be put to a realistic test, as he sees more clearly what a priest's life will demand of him. He will undergo the maturing experience of frustration that is a part of life and of the following of Christ. Thus he can develop the responsibility, initiative, and obedience that priestly life demands. He will also experience working within the structure of the Church, where there is a hierarchy of mission and authority. At the same time, those charged with judging his fitness will have the great advantage of seeing him under conditions which more nearly approximate his future life as a priest. Their judgment will be all the more sound and more confident. They will be able to answer with a greater degree of assurance than ever before, "What kind of priest will he be?"



100. The priest, perhaps more today than at any time in the Church's history, must develop a fine sensitivity to people, their needs and aspirations, their circumstances of life, their attitudes toward God and man. Only if the candidate develops this sensitivity and awareness will he be able to enter fruitfully into that "dialogue with men" which the *Decree on Priestly Formation* urges upon him (n. 19). A prime result of a good Field Education Program is precisely the fostering of this dialogue, with the added benefit that such dialogue is continually seen not as a merely human endeavor but as a part of the work of salvation. In addition, the candidate will ". . . be properly instructed in inspiring and fostering the apostolic activity of the laity" (n. 20) and be led to an appreciation of what the global mission of the Church is, so that he is ready to ". . . help the needs of the whole Church, prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere" (n. 20).

#### **Article Four: Integration with Spiritual Formation**

101. This experience of pastoral service to people should stimulate the spiritual development of the priestly candidate. His vision of faith and of God's work in people's lives will no longer be restricted to his fellow seminarians and to the seminary community; it will include a close observation of the men, women, and children he is serving in his apostolic work. Increased humility should be the first result as he sees lives different from his own, lives which call for different responses to God and different virtues to be emphasized. His humility will thus involve a readiness to listen and to learn. But he will also observe people's need for the Lord, and he will rejoice and give thanks, seeing God's work in them. Recognizing how his own efforts can be of help, and how comfortable and easy he must be in speaking about God and in reflecting confidence in God, he should be more convinced of his need to grow continuously in union with the redeeming Lord, and to reflect in prayer that "it is God who gives the increase" (1 Cor. 3:7).

102. A Field Education Program will help the candidate achieve a greater degree of personal and emotional maturity, because it will place him in more of a "real world" atmosphere than has been usual in the rather closed seminary environment of the past; it will force him to accept new responsibility. Experience has shown that the student is forced to resolve some of the personal crises that inevitably arise from contact with the needs of others. All of this does not mean that the seminarian at the end of his formal period of education will be a man who has reached his full growth, either emotionally or intellectually, either in the theological expertise or in pastoral experience. But a program that carefully balances and integrates the academic, spiritual, and apostolic aspects of the formative process will produce a well-rounded priest, capable of assuming the burdens of the pastoral ministry and ready to continue, in an independent fashion, the multi-faceted growth process already well begun in the seminary.

103. There is a rapid development in the area of field education, and so it is acknowledged that these guidelines are only a beginning rather than a final word. They are intended to lay the foundation of a program which will help future priests become "all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9:22).

## **Article Five: Practical Recommendations**

### **A. Field Education Program in Every Seminary**

104. *Every seminary should institute a Field Education Program.* Only a coordinated apostolic program will accomplish the *educational* task that is necessary in pastoral training. This requirement leaves room for experiment, for legitimate differences of opinion on the intent of the program, and for the consideration of the particular seminary in the framework of its own social, geographical, and apostolic needs. The program should be constructed in such a way as to receive approval from the seminary's accrediting agency as an integral part of the curriculum.

### **B. Director with Full Faculty Status**

105. *The Field Education Program should be entrusted to a Director who has full faculty status.* The Director will have the responsibility of developing the program and of evaluating the performance of the seminarian. He should be professionally trained for this work. His training should be particularly in two areas; first, in *theology*, so that field education may be a truly theological discipline; second, in *supervisory techniques*. As we observe in medicine, social work, and other professions, supervision is a skill and technique which can be learned. Universities, clinical programs in hospitals, social agencies, urban training centers, etc., can provide useful courses and/or serve as training grounds for learning supervisory techniques. A variety of other disciplines can be of use, as the supervisor's time and abilities will permit, such as religious sociology, psychology, counseling and group dynamics.

106. Above all, the priest chosen for this position must have had personal pastoral experience. *His role in the over-all seminary program is crucial*; he will have a unique opportunity, not ordinarily shared by others on the academic faculty, to teach and to judge the candidate in a special forum.

107. Any apostolic program under a trained supervisor will be far more educationally fruitful than one directed by an untrained faculty member. Until such a trained supervisor is prepared, however, interim personnel can direct the work, so that action need not be postponed in implementing this program.

108. The focus on a single, competent, professionally trained supervisor—a necessity in a good program—is by no means to exclude the partici-

pation of other faculty members, working under his direction, in the apostolic activities of the students. Indeed, this participation is to be encouraged; some seminary educators believe it is essential to the success of the program. Both priests and lay people who have shown proficiency in various areas of pastoral work in the diocese or religious institute should be brought into the seminary faculty at least on a visiting basis (cf. *infra*, n. 114).

### **C. Variety of Supervised Experiences**

**109.** The Field Education Program should be so constructed that each seminarian has a variety of supervised and evaluated experiences.

**110.** The *parish experience* stands in first place. Whatever the future structures and activities of the parish may be, it is in the parish that most of the newly ordained will find their arena of apostolicity. The parish-centered program will be particularly for deacons.

**111.** The seminarian will have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the various aspects of the parish: worship, administration, education, and mission. He will participate in the worship of the community, observing and sharing in the Eucharist and the other sacraments in their parish setting, and, if a deacon, preaching the Word of God under the helpful direction of an experienced parish priest. He will become acquainted in some measure with the functioning of the parish, as it responds to the educational and other needs of the parishioners. He will review, with the parish priests and those of the laity who share the responsibility of the parish in the various councils and committees, the mission of the parish, with a view to seeing how this particular parish fulfills the mission of the Church universal. It might be suggested that, after a general introduction to all the areas of parish life, the seminarian specialize in one task in one of these areas, in order to carry through a project in the course of his time in the parish.

**112.** Other areas that should be included in the program are *catechetics or another form of religious education, and some form of specialized ministry*, e.g., Catholic Charities, hospitals, community organizations, agencies for the handicapped, special diocesan or religious apostolates.

### **D. Gradual**

**113.** The Field Education Program should be gradual, moving from simpler forms and objectives for beginners and progressing to greater involvement for the deacons.

### **E. Auxiliary Pastoral Supervisors**

**114.** An important factor in a successful Field Education Program is the careful selection of a number of priests or other qualified persons who will act as auxiliary pastoral supervisors. These auxiliary pastoral

supervisors will work in close cooperation with the Field Education Director and under his direction in supervising the seminarians. He will offer the supervisors a measure of training which may be confined to a few sessions but will acquaint them with objectives, methods, and scales of evaluation. Without direction and close cooperation the program will fail in its purpose of *teaching* the seminarian, providing him with analysis and critique of his performance, and helping him to reflect theologically on his work.

### **F. Summer Apostolic Program**

115. Summer apostolic training can be a valuable part of the Field Education Program. A summer apostolic program should be planned by the Field Education Director in collaboration with diocesan officials, e.g., the vocation director. A pattern, guidelines, resource material, and general direction should be provided by the seminary. Adaptation, supervision, and specific direction will be provided by the diocese. This will avoid the weaknesses of many summer programs, which can be haphazard, unsupervised, vague, and unproductive. It is recognized as well that taking an ordinary job and thus learning how the layman struggles and lives is an excellent preparation for a later ministry.

### **G. Clinical Pastoral Programs**

116. The possibility of offering the students an opportunity to take Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) might be explored. Such Clinical Pastoral Education programs seem to offer promise of real benefits to the student, such as increased ability to reflect theologically on ministry, greater sensitivity to those to whom he ministers, and expert supervision of his apostolic efforts.

### **H. The Exercise of Diaconate**

117. The *Decree on Priestly Formation* has declared it the responsibility of the bishops to decide:

**whether it be opportune to rule that the students, at the end of their course in theology, exercise the order of deacon for a fitting period of time before being promoted to the priesthood (n. 12).**

A distinction must be made between the exercise of the diaconate as an integral part of the four-year theological formation period and the Deacon Internship, which presupposes the completion of the formal period of theological formation. The exercise of the Diaconate during theological formation is primarily an educational function rather than a ministerial one, as the deacon reflects theologically on himself as minister. The Deacon Internship has primarily the purpose of serving the People of God. Within the limits set by legitimate authority, experimentation with a variety of programs regarding the exercise of the

Diaconate both during and after theological formation is encouraged; the Ordinary should carefully assess these programs and report his findings to the Committee on Priestly Formation.

**118.** A recommended program of Deacon Internship is that, after a seminarian has completed his four-year course of theology, he be assigned to pastoral work as a deacon. When he judges himself ready and is judged to be ready, he will be called to the priesthood. This will make it possible for the faithful to join in some way in the process of evaluating the candidate. The words of the ordination ceremony will again be meaningful, "Not without cause did the Fathers direct that the people should also be consulted in the choice of those who are to minister at the altar."

**119.** A variant proposal is to begin this pastoral experience during the last three months of the scholastic year and extend it through the summer with the target date for ordination in September.

**120.** A variety of continuing relationships with the seminary during the period of Deacon Internship can be imagined, e.g., the continuance of some formal study in specially designed programs, a return to the seminary periodically for Retreat Workshops.

## ***I. Continuing Education for Priests***

**121.** Since priestly formation, in the wider sense, cannot cease at ordination, every diocese should have a plan to provide for continuing education of its priests. In dioceses where a seminary is located, the seminary will, of course, provide significant resources for this enterprise, but the prime responsibility lies more properly in the hands of the bishop or his delegate, who will draw upon many other resources besides the seminary to provide opportunities for such education.

**122.** Such a plan might include some of the following elements: clergy conference days, Retreat-Workshops, pastoral and theological institutes, summer courses, even a "Priests' Month" after about five years of priestly ministry, devoted to spiritual as well as theological and pastoral renewal. Indeed the possibility of periodically providing similar renewal opportunities to all priests might be considered.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation is studying the matter of continuing education in the ministry and will make further recommendations to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## CHAPTER FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

### Article One:

### Development Toward Priestly Maturity

#### Goal

123. The goal of priestly maturity for seminarians is delineated in the Second Vatican Council's *Decree on Priestly Formation* as a proper orientation towards the pastoral ministry.

**. . . the entire training of the students should be oriented to the formation of true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd (n. 4).**

**The spiritual training should be closely connected with the doctrinal and pastoral, and, with the special help of the spiritual director, should be imparted in such a way that the students might learn to live in an intimate and unceasing union with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit (n. 8).**

124. In the *Decree* therefore, pastoral orientation is to be the guiding criterion of the spiritual, intellectual, and disciplinary components of seminary life. The Council's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* makes the same pastoral emphasis. After stressing the universal call to holiness, that all the faithful of Christ are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity, the *Constitution* goes on to recommend to the shepherds of Christ's flock and to the priests associated with them that they carry out their ministry "in such a way that it will be the principal means also of their own sanctification" (n. 41).

125. The nature of the ministerial priesthood still further confirms such pastoral emphasis. The starting point is the priesthood of Christ, Who came "not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (*Matt. 20:28*); Our Lord's abiding concern was for others, ultimately to lead them to His Father. Through their baptism God's people share in the royal priesthood of Christ. The vocation of the ministerial priest is precisely to serve this holy people as they grow in likeness to the Lord and share more deeply in His redeeming mission.

126. Thus the People of God need wise and holy pastors, men close to the heart of Christ and consumed in His work of salvation. It is the seminary's task, under God, to prepare men for this ministry of service. The goal encompasses three basic areas: Ministry of the Word, Ministry of Sacrament, Pastoral Ministry.

## A. Ministry of the Word

**127.** The *Decree on Priestly Formation* considers first the future priest's duty as minister of the Word, in which he will continue the work of Christ the Teacher.

**They are therefore to be prepared for the ministry of the Word: that they might understand ever more perfectly the revealed Word of God; that, meditating on it they might possess it more firmly, and that they might express it in words and in example; . . . (n. 4).**

**128.** God has spoken to us in His creation, in His activity with His people throughout their history—culminating in Christ and expressed in a unique and privileged way in the Bible, and God still reveals himself to us in the events of our own day.

**129.** Seminarians are to be helped to an understanding of this revelation of God—preeminently that of Sacred Scripture—through study, reflection, and personal prayer, so as to be able to express the saving message in their lives and in their ministry. In collaboration with the priests of the faculty, each contributing his specialized knowledge in theology, the Spiritual Director must emphasize in lectures, homilies, and private interviews the need for reflection on, and response to, God's Word, reminding all: “. . . that it is God who opens hearts, and that power comes not from themselves but from the might of God,” and that “in the very fact of teaching God's word they will be brought closer to Christ the Teacher and led by His Spirit” (*Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, n. 13).

**130.** Personal instruction, guidance, and encouragement is to be given in the art of interior prayer in order to facilitate the work of the Spirit. Prayer should gradually become more the responsibility of the individual, both as seminarian and as priest. This spirit of prayer, conceived, developed, and nourished in baptismal faith, will lead the seminarian to “have that mind in him which is in Christ Jesus” (*Phil. 2:5*). Thus united personally and intimately to the Redeemer, and sensitive to the suffering and anguish of his fellow man, the future priest will more readily “preach the inexhaustible riches of Christ and enlighten all men as to what is the plan of the mystery hidden from eternity in God who created all things” (*Ephesians 3:8, 9*).

**131.** Familiarity with God through prayerful reflection on His Word is the dynamic basis of apostolic work, the announcing of the Good News. It is, therefore, essential that candidates for the priesthood be helped to develop a spirit of prayer like that of Jesus, full of confidence in the Father, direct, personal and open. In engendering this spirit of prayer, seminary faculties must build upon the strengths characteristic of the present generation.

**132.** Many young people today feel a strong need for prayer and are especially aware of the presence of God in other persons and in the

events of human encounter. Yet, despite the fact that traditional methods of prayer and meditation are based on profound religious experience, their value is not always self-evident to modern youth. Consequently, these methods should be carefully studied in the light of current theology, the behavioral sciences, and the arts, so that their enduring values may be recaptured for our times. Thus the students' readiness for prayer will be deepened, so that they come to see more clearly the need for perseverance and discipline in prayer, and of silence and reflection, in order to achieve a personal dialogue in faith with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

## **B. Ministry of Sacrament**

### **1. CHRIST AND THE CHURCH**

**133.** Christ is the primary sacrament of God's encounter with man. All of God's people so share in Jesus' sacramental manifesting of God to the world that the Church itself becomes a great sacrament. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is the exemplification of the fidelity, love, and openness to the Holy Spirit through which the whole Church seeks to become the place of God's presence in and for the world. Like Mary, each Christian becomes a living sacrament, a sign of Christ. For the individual Christian, layman or cleric, this transformation in Christ is especially accomplished through specific sacramental actions.

**134.** Like other Christians, the candidate for the priesthood has in his baptism been plunged into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection; he has accepted the adult implications of this baptismal commitment in confirmation. Looking forward to the special charism of the ministerial priesthood, the seminarian is called upon to share more deeply in the Lord's death and resurrection through the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist.

### **2. PENANCE AND CONVERSION**

**135.** St. Paul urges all Christians, baptized in the death of Christ and now His members, to be dead to sin, to put on the new man, and grow in the grace of their calling to the Christian life. Penance, humility, and self-denial are fundamental means to successful conversion of heart for all the People of God. The future priest, to be a shepherd of souls continuing the redemptive mission of Christ in his own time, should be thoroughly imbued with his own need of initial and continued conversion. The great means of conversion established by the Lord in His

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<sup>1</sup> "In the midst of his daily labors Christ eagerly sought solitude, in order to pray to his Father without distraction; following his example and counsel (*Matt. 6:6; 14: 13; Mk. 6:30, 46*) students should try to develop a 'life hidden with Christ in God' (cf. *Col. 3:3*) from which arises irresistibly the love of one's neighbor directed toward the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church. They ought, therefore, to be concerned about the keeping of external silence, without which there is no interior silence of soul, and which is needed for thought and for the work and the repose alike of the whole community" (Cf. *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 57).



Sacrament of Forgiveness should be revered and used regularly to help in the dynamic and on-going process of transformation.

**136.** All aspects of conversion are to be seen as intimately related to and integrated with the total Christ-life coming from the Liturgy and in particular from the Eucharist. Therefore, all personal efforts to respond to God's call to conversion, such as prayer, personal self-evaluation before God, the practice of Christian mortification and self-denial, the honest admission to a confessor or spiritual director of need for spiritual growth, should be seen as sacramentalized in their relationship to the Eucharist through Penance.

### 3. THE EUCHARIST

**137.** Just as genuine conversion makes real community possible, a converted people celebrate and deepen their union with one another, with Christ, and with the Father supremely in the Eucharist. It is from this source and within the Christ-centered atmosphere emerging from it that the personal development of the future priest can take place.

**138.** The People of God expect seminarians to be men of profound Christian piety and positive maturity. The future priests must grow on the very bread they are to break for their people. More and more they should come to understand not only that the Eucharist is the central act of divine worship for the Mystical Body, but that participation in the Eucharist is the most vital source of nourishment and enrichment in the Christian life. They must recognize the Eucharist as the principal source of unity and cohesion in charity within the Church. Attentive to the unique presence of Christ in the Eucharist as a source of grace, they will be open to the redeeming presence of Christ in His world. By confirming their own conviction about the centrality of the Eucharist, they will be able to strengthen the People of God as witnesses to that mystery of faith.

**139.** Thus the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the center of all Christian life and growth. Particularly in the light of the liturgical renewal of the whole twentieth century, daily participation in the celebration is expected of a student preparing for the ministerial priesthood. The responsibility for this participation should rest upon the student's conviction about this central role of the Eucharist in the development of priestly life.

**In the mystery of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, in which priests fulfill their greatest task, the work of our redemption is being constantly carried on; and hence the daily celebration of Mass is strongly urged, since even if there cannot be present a number of the faithful, it is still an act of Christ and of the Church (*Decree on Ministry and Life of Priests*, n. 13).**

### 4. DIVINE PRAISE

**140.** In calling us to friendship with Him, God wishes us to share His own glory and joy. The Christian community expresses this joy in songs

of praise, both those provided by the inspired Scriptures, and those created by human literature, music, and art. This liturgical praise reaches its climax in the Eucharist, but it is also extended through the Divine Office so as to give to all the times of the day, the week, and the year this same character of a "sacrifice of praise." Modern man, subject to the pressures of technology where efficiency and utility tend to become the measure of life, more than ever needs time and leisure for joyful communal prayer. The future priest needs to achieve this vital rhythm of work and praise in his own personal life, and he must also be prepared to lead the laity in that greater participation in Divine Praise urged by Vatican II (cf. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, n. 100). In particular, the public recitation of Lauds and Vespers will enhance the student's faith and sense of community.

141. As Jesus Christ, with His mother and all the saints, intercedes before the Father for the Church on earth, so those who recite the Office intercede for all men in need. Future priests should grow in the awareness of men's needs, and of the power of intercessory prayer, which is for them a most serious obligation in behalf of the people entrusted to them by the Lord.

### **C. Pastoral Ministry—Service to the Christian Community**

#### **1. THE COMMUNITY—PRESENT AND FUTURE**

142. The seminarian also aims at maturing into a man dedicated to the Church, the community of believers. Not only must he communicate God's message of unity through love, and make the Lord's saving action present sacramentally but also his pastoral service involves personal knowledge and encouragement of the Christian layman in the latter's vocation of restoring all things in Christ. Above all, priestly service looks towards effecting unity in one fold. Thus the priest must strive to form communities, opening people to the shared cooperative effort and profound sense of union that the Spirit of God's love inspires.

143. With this vision of his future ministry, the seminarian can engage himself in a twofold present experience of community—that of the seminary itself and that of the wider community of families and other groups of Christians nearby who draw inspiration from the seminary. Within the seminary the future priest is particularly obligated to the closer living experiences of the small groups or sub-communities so common today—experiences often painful, demanding understanding and tolerance.

144. In a word the seminary should give the student an experience of the Church. Thus some contact with older people, children, and women, with races and cultures other than his own, is most fitting.

145. The seminarian must recognize in himself any tendencies to isolation and disinterested individualism, and must work against these

as out of harmony with the Gospel. Although both study and prayer demand periods of silence and solitude, the thrust of the seminary enterprise is towards others. The Good News must be proclaimed.

## **2. VIRTUES OF SERVICE**

**146.** A priestly life of service—in common with the life of all faithful Christians—must find its source and inspiration from the Indwelling of the three Persons of God within the redeemed heart of a man. This dignity makes us holy, God-like in our being. And it is the Holy Spirit who prompts us to the faith, hope, and love that—together with the moral virtues touching and transforming all of the human—constitute Christian living. The great exemplar both of consciousness of God and of love for human beings remains Jesus Himself. And Mary, His Mother, the handmaid of the Father who yet could hasten to Elizabeth, also embodies this apostolic ideal. Consequently, devotion to Jesus and Mary should grow deeper in the seminarian's heart as he is penetrated by the mystery of salvation, and should orient him to the service of God's people. This priestly dedication to service is expressed particularly in the virtues of love unto sacrifice, mature obedience, celibate chastity, and pastoral poverty.

### **a. Love Unto Sacrifice**

**147.** Rooted and grounded in charity and thus able to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge (*Ephes. 3:19*), the priest must also, like St. Paul, find himself driven on to the service of people. The exemplar, before and after ordination, is Jesus himself, telling us at the Last Supper and on the cross that the ultimate in love means laying down one's life for another.

**148.** Although the personalist atmosphere of today should be receptive to the meaning of genuine love, pre-occupation with self and with self-fulfillment tends to obscure that meaning. With his eyes on the Savior, the future priest can grow in the conviction that to love means to give. In personal prayer and reflection, in his pastoral and apostolic relationships with people outside the seminary, in interaction with his fellow seminarians, he must gradually grow in the generous love and spirit of sacrifice which must characterize one who ministers in the name of the Good Shepherd.

### **b. Mature Obedience**

**149.** A cooperation-oriented vision, based on community, can help the future priest to focus clearly on the place of authority and obedience in his life. His present relationship with rector and faculty and his future obedience to, and collaboration with, his bishop are seen against the background of the true community that believers comprise. In this context of the community of the Lord's People, he should find growing in his life a strong, filial devotion to the Holy Father as Vicar of Christ. He will come to understand that in the development of mature obedi-

ence the virtues of trust, dialogue, and communication are the utmost importance, and that individualistic and selfish pre-occupation with his own will inhibits his contribution to the common Christian effort. On the other hand, a sense of his basic human and Christian equality with authority figures will purify him from the fear-inspired subservience which masquerades as genuine obedience. Nothing can prepare the seminarian better for his future use of authority as service. He will avoid the harsh abuse of people that is found so often in men wounded in their own personality development. He will readily see his own relationship with people as an extension of his bishop's service.

### **c. Celibate Chastity**

**150.** The gift to God of his right to married love is also seen in the light of the Savior's love forming us into a community, a pilgrim people looking forward to the Lord's coming. The priest's celibacy will be clearly pastoral, not merely in the sense of freeing him for greater service, but of involving a gift at the heart of his identity, offered to the enterprise of the Lord saving His people. By it the priest commits himself to his people without reservation, and seeks to be for them a witness of the coming of the kingdom of God, not only in the future, but in the life of today. He also seeks to be for them a sign of hope; married people, seeing the joy with which the priest sacrifices himself for them and their children, will be strengthened in faith for their own self-giving.

**151.** Confidence of continuing chastity will thus, in the future as in the present, be rooted in the Lord. Far from resting on a disordered failure to appreciate women and his natural attraction to them, the future priest's celibate chastity will grow precisely with his esteem and admiration of women, because he recognizes their unique reflection of God's love and care. This open and honest attitude towards celibacy, sex, and love should constitute an abiding stimulus towards growth in holiness, towards "saturation in the mystery of the Church" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 9).

**152.** The challenge of celibacy must be viewed in terms of the Lord's saving work, and demands a constant turning to that Lord for strength. Yet remembering Our Lord's indication that such a life is only "for those to whom it is given" (*Matt. 19:11*), the seminarian who finds himself unable to sustain celibate chastity can see an indication that he should serve God's people in another way. Without losing his dedication to the Lord's Church, he should peacefully make the mature decision of turning to another contribution of service to the Christian community.

### **d. Pastoral Poverty**

**153.** In the present United States society, possessing its greatest abundance of material goods in history, the priest is uniquely situated to sacramentalize the proper ordination of creature values through man to God. Even in our affluence the father of a family is burdened by anxiety to provide for his wife and children; and in this he fulfills the first

orientation of things, that they exist for man. Freed from this anxiety, the celibate priest bears greater responsibility to use material goods for the benefit of the total human family. Paraphrasing St. John's advice, with even a small share in the world's goods, how can any Christian, especially a priest, turn from his brother in need? (*1 John 3:17*)

**154.** Like any person, the priest must use the good things of life with joy and gratitude, but the limited value of things dictates that he must deny himself some of these to become involved with greater values. The central point in his perspective must always be the community of faith, the people of the Lord's Church moving through time to eternity and to the Father. Both in his proper use of created values, particularly in the use of his time and his energy, and in his detachment from worldly goods, his very real poverty, the priest must witness to the prime value in his world, persons responding to God's love and becoming one in Him. Around this nucleus should be seen the restoration of all things in Christ.

**155.** As the seminarian in the theologate moves towards priestly maturity, his growth must include this spirit of pastoral poverty. Although approached and striven for in the atmosphere of freedom appropriate for the theology student, the ideal must be placed before him constantly and experienced in the concrete circumstances of seminary life. His ability to integrate poverty into his approach to the living Church while in the seminary offers the best indication that he will witness to true values as a priest, and not compromise by amassing wealth and living in comfortable semi-luxury. It was precisely in His public ministry, His pastoral work, that the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head.

## **Article Two:**

### **The Role of the Faculty and of the Spiritual Director**

**156.** In every theologate someone should be appointed to coordinate the personal instruction and guidance of the students as they mature in their commitment to the priesthood. He has been customarily called the Spiritual Director, although other titles are in use, and in some seminaries, for instance those of the Sulpician Fathers, the Rector exercises this role. The role is one of spiritual leadership in order to draw the entire seminary into a more generous response to the Gospel message.

#### **A. Collaborative Effort of the Whole Faculty**

**157.** Responsibility to guide towards priestly maturity once lay chiefly with the one Spiritual Director. The growth process involved is now recognized to be much too complex for one man's talent and time because of the fundamental changes in society, the Church and the seminary. Priestly growth is more correctly seen as the collaborative effort of an entire faculty. No faculty member may feel that this high responsibility lies outside of his interest or labor. All the priests on the faculty

witness the priesthood to the students. A seminary faculty which fails to appreciate this need for collaboration will fail proportionately to fulfill its reason for existence. Each member of the faculty must be involved in the priestly work of assisting the seminarians to mature in their commitment to the priesthood. The Rector should secure this agreement from the faculty; the Spiritual Director must bear the responsibility of coordinating this effort.

**158.** Every faculty member should therefore be chosen with care. He should be considered for a number of talents, not signally one. Experience has demonstrated that for the full personal growth in Christ of the seminarians, as well as for his own sense of priestly satisfaction, beyond his talent as scholar and teacher, a seminary faculty member must be a warm and generous and spiritually mature person. The crucial importance of this work demands careful attention to the selection of a seminary faculty.

**159.** Desired priestly maturity and an enlightened Christian conscience are effects of many influences. All activities in the seminary—doctrinal, pastoral, spiritual, social—create an atmosphere in which priestly maturity and Christian conscience develop. It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of faculty influence by way of example and dedication and personal life in true Christian friendship. No academic subject can therefore be considered merely informational and not formational. The constant effort of every faculty member, like that of any Spiritual Director, must be to promote growth of the student in priestly maturity. His total life must support this effort.

**160.** The seminary community may be constituted of many subcommunities living, worshipping, and working together under the leadership of a resident faculty member. In this capacity the resident faculty member will have many tasks. One of these should be to provide for group reflection on the seminary experience in order to help the students integrate academic and field education. In this way the student begins to realize how prayerful study can deeply influence an effective approach to field projects, and he is able to bring the practical insights of his field experience to his intellectual and spiritual reflection. The faculty members so engaged will be expected to meet regularly with the Spiritual Director to coordinate this work of spiritual formation.

## ***B. Specific Responsibilities of the Spiritual Director***

**161.** Since it is the particular concern of the Spiritual Director to see that priestly maturity is promoted, he should make provision that each student receive personal direction, that no seminarian be without warm and interested concern. Although in sub-community systems a pastoral relationship develops between the students and their resident priest faculty member, the Spiritual Director must insist on the seminarian's remaining free in the choice of his personal Spiritual Director. Further, he should coordinate the effort, at least in general goals, approach, and skills, of all the priests involved in personal spiritual direction.

**162.** Beyond this, he should be creative of ways to make direction effective. He ought to make recommendations to the faculty; the faculty ought to make recommendations to him. It is his responsibility to arrange for group discussion and advisory consultation for the faculty involved in personal and group formation.

**163.** The Spiritual Director should exercise concern that prayer in all its practice be vital, especially the Eucharistic celebration. To this end it is recommended that he be a member of the seminary liturgy committee. Personal spiritual practices such as private prayer, reflective reading, and self appraisal, he should continually revitalize by imaginative direction of the entire spiritual program. The arrangement of profitable retreats and days of recollection is his responsibility. That total daily life at the seminary conspire to produce holiness and happiness is his goal.

### ***C. Provision for Other Professional Services***

**164.** It is presupposed that the Seminary provides for adequate psychological entrance testing and appropriate procedures to handle faculty referral of students for professional counseling and therapy. It is recommended that safeguards be introduced to guarantee the proper use, and prevent the misuse, of information derived from this source. There is ordinarily much to be gained by contracting a competent psychiatrist or psychologist to meet regularly with the faculty and discuss questions and problems they face in this as well as in other areas of seminary life.

**165.** Beyond this, the Spiritual Director should provide for an arrangement whereby men who seek professional help at their own initiative or at the advice of a personal adviser may do this with ease and privacy. It is commonly agreed today that many men can profit considerably from a temporary counseling experience and that such counseling is an aid to spiritual direction. Hence the Spiritual Director should be alert to this possibility and should provide for such cases. Furthermore, while appreciative of the great value of such professional services, the Spiritual Director should himself be ready to recommend to particular students, when the need arises, that they temporarily withdraw from the seminary until such time as their emotional adjustment is sufficient for them to profit from the seminary experience.

### ***D. The Training of the Spiritual Director***

**166.** The enlarged responsibilities of the Spiritual Director demand a special preparation for this task. A priest chosen for the office of Spiritual Director should possess manly piety and prudent judgment. He should have had a background of pastoral experience which has demonstrated an ability to relate well with people. It would be desirable that he receive advanced training in such disciplines as contemporary theology, scripture and counseling. It is strongly recommended that special courses, institutes or programs be established for this training.

## **E. Period of Intense Introduction to the Spiritual Life**

**167.** According to the *Decree on Priestly Formation*, “. . . it will be the prerogative of the bishops to establish a fitting period of time for a more intense introduction to the spiritual life” (n. 12).

**168.** Although there is encouraging potential in this suggestion as it applies to United States seminaries, it is cautioned that such a period of intense orientation not be considered a substitute for the full formation program integrated over the four years of theology with intellectual growth, community living, and pastoral experience. Granted the priority of the total program, a period of concentrated attention to growth in the Christ-life can be a great help, both for reflecting on and assimilating the more prolonged scholastic and pastoral experiences and for arriving at a genuine commitment to seminary life and priesthood.

**169.** The timing of such an experience must vary depending on whether seminary life begins with the theologate or includes college or high school. Many college seminaries have favored the summer after the second year of college; many theologates, when most of their students have not had the intense introduction in college, have preferred the summer after the first year of theology. Still others have preferred a period between college and theology. Moreover, whether the summer is the most appropriate time for such a program is still open to question and experiment.

**170.** With the above as goals, seminaries are encouraged to design their own programs of intense spiritual orientation. So that the values of such orientation can be shared, the National Conference offers the office of its Committee on Priestly Formation as a communications center to receive and transmit the results from seminary to seminary.



## CHAPTER FIVE: COMMUNITY LIFE AND DISCIPLINE

### Article One: Community Life

#### A. Community

**171.** Priestly formation takes place most effectively in community. Community is here understood as an organic network of inter-personal relationships. Gathered for the purpose of helping young men prepare for the priesthood, a seminary community will reflect the unity of faith and love that comes from the Holy Spirit and links the seminary to the larger community of the total Church and the world. In this communal setting, students deepen their awareness of the ideals and challenges of the priesthood through their own exercise of pastoral ministry, through reflection upon revelation and its meaning for the modern world, through association with their bishops, priests, and faculty members, and in great part through the constant and sometimes even abrasive relationships with other seminarians.

**172.** The head of the community is the bishop, who should “with a constant and loving solicitude encourage those who labor in the seminary and prove himself a true father in Christ to the students themselves” (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 5). In his name the priests assigned to the seminary serve as makers of the community. They help to create a climate in which the young men can recognize as their model Christ, Who was Teacher, Priest and Shepherd. “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” (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 5).

#### B. Aspects of Seminary Community

**173.** The seminary functions as a human community, a faith community, an apostolic community, and an academic community. It is the creative interaction of these four factors that should attract, support and challenge young men in their final preparation for the priesthood.

##### 1. HUMAN COMMUNITY

**174.** As a human community, the seminary brings together men of varied temperaments and talents, backgrounds and responsibilities. Rather than stifle such differences, the seminary should create a climate for mutual respect, responsible communication, and purposeful collaboration so that the individual will have the opportunity to grow into full adulthood and accept maturely the responsibilities of the priesthood. The bond which unites the community, both faculty and students, is Christian charity.

## 2. FAITH COMMUNITY

175. The student today comes to the theologate from a troubled world with its ideals and hopes, its fears and confusion. Listening to the Spirit within the total community, with his teachers and peers he seeks objective validation for his faith. Through reflection and prayer, he works toward a deeper personal conviction and commitment. The community, both faculty and students, will find its source and sign of unity in the liturgy, particularly in Eucharistic worship. For both the individual and the community, communion with the Lord will call forth the self-sacrifice and charity necessary for the Church's mission to the world.

## 3. APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY

176. Formation in pastoral concern must provide focus for the entire seminary program. Faculty and students will be alert to contemporary pastoral problems by direct involvement in apostolic ventures. In working in the ministry under the supervision of the faculty and other priests and laymen, the student will learn to appreciate the complexities of pastoral problems, to apply his zeal and skills toward their solution and to experience both the joys and the frustrations of the work.

## 4. ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

177. In the academic community, learning is appreciated and pursued. Serious theological preparation is required for those who hope to serve the People of God and the world's need. The search for a deeper understanding of the Word of God necessarily involves the individual's own effort, often painful, stimulated and sustained by communal exchange. The environment of both classroom and campus should favor open discussion in which the merits of tested ideas and the complexities of contemporary problems can be adequately appreciated. The seminarian should pursue academic excellence and be evaluated according to the criteria of success and failure accepted in today's world.

### C. Sub-Groups in the Seminary Community

178. For the development of community life and for collaboration in apostolic works, it might be advisable, especially in larger seminaries, to form teams or groups which include a priest deeply involved in the students' life and work. The nature and structure of such groups will depend upon local needs and conditions.

## Article Two: Discipline

179. Each seminary should have a written Rule of Life which sets forth the important points of discipline affecting the student's daily life. This Rule of Life should be based on this *Program* and adapted to local circumstances, with the approval of the Ordinary (cf. *infra*, n. 204 b).

**180.** An atmosphere of freedom in the context of well-defined personal responsibility is an important medium of formation. A demanding academic program, a systematic and supervised apostolic program for pastoral training, a well-ordered liturgical program, close personal contact with members of the faculty, and the demands of a life in common with other students make it possible to dispense in great part with detailed regulations.

**181.** While before Vatican II seminaries served well the needs of their age, today's seminary will hopefully provide priests who have matured in the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility. The Council has pointed the way to a positive approach at once more flexible and more personal, by which the student develops the virtues necessary for contemporary living. Some regulations are necessary for day-to-day living; others contribute to the atmosphere in which seminary objectives can be achieved. In establishing such directives it is the role of authority to listen to all the voices within the community, to appraise the facts, and then to articulate policies and standards. Simultaneously, all members of the community are expected to express themselves clearly, to share their insights and feelings, and to cooperate in the implementation of the regulations. Such a process insures that the rules express the law realistically and that they speak with the double force of authority and fact.

**182.** In summary, then, the program of discipline in the seminary is to be designed in such a way that the candidate, as he progresses through his training for the priesthood, is given more opportunity to exercise responsibility in the use of freedom. At the same time he should grow in the realization of the need of authority and organization in the community of the Church for effective pursuit of its goals, and in the realization of the value that discipline has in strengthening persons to perform difficult tasks necessary for personal growth and for service to the community. The priestly candidate must learn to spend himself in the service of others in the community of God's people, as Christ the High Priest did and taught. "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. He who loves his life, loses it; and he who hates his life in this world, keeps it unto life everlasting. If anyone serves me, let him follow me" (*John 12:24-26*).

### **Article Three: Relation of Community Life and Discipline**

**183.** a) Frequent communication and interchange should mark the relationship between the seminary community and the bishop, who speaks with the authority of the local Church.

**184.** b) Although the seminary structure will vary from place to place, the need for community is universal.

185. c) The development of different types of seminary community can follow different designs, as the need of specific areas or religious institutes are recognized.
186. d) In an American seminary, virtues should reflect the values prized among Americans, such as: personal freedom and initiative, teamwork and respect for democratic processes, adaptability, tolerance of another's faults and limitations, and a talent for organization and implementation.
187. e) Observing the principle of subsidiarity, faculty and students should collaborate on specific community programs to achieve the goals of priestly formation. While administration and faculty hold the ultimate responsibility, students should be given the opportunity to enter into the decision-making process in proportion to their maturity and background (cf. *infra*, nn. 219, 245).
188. f) A seminary is a living community, and its programs need constant review and renewal by all the participants in decision-making.
189. g) Freedom and accountability to an objective standard of Christian excellence are necessary correlatives in community life and discipline.
190. h) Since an atmosphere of freedom in the context of personal responsibility is an important medium of formation, numerous and overly-detailed rules for an entire seminary community must be avoided.
191. i) Regulations are necessary for the good order of the seminary, and to create an atmosphere in which seminary objectives can be achieved; they should respond to a real need of the seminary community.
192. j) The seminary community should provide clear and adequate structures for its government, communication, and appeal.
193. k) Those called upon to obey will respond to the charisma of authority in a spirit of faith and love.
194. l) The goal of priestly formation in community is the development of a man who is not only a responsible leader of men, but also a maker of community, bringing the People of God to respond to the God Who has first loved them.

## CHAPTER SIX: SEMINARY ADMINISTRATION

### Article One: Administrative Principles

**195.** Effective administration is required to achieve the goals of the seminary. Essentially the tasks of such administration remain the same as in the past—planning, organizing, directing, motivating, and evaluating so that the seminary will provide the program and atmosphere in which a man may grow into the Christ-like maturity required for the priesthood. In American society today, the role of administrator and the mode or style in which he must work are undergoing rapid changes. To this evolution Vatican II contributed the insight that administration is a Christian service. This spirit of service implies that authority be exercised according to the example of the Lord Who came “not to be served but to serve” (*Matt. 20:28*).

**196.** In an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding, decisions by appropriate authorities will be made as the fruit of free and open discussion proper to the various groups within the seminary community. While the goals of priestly formation will be kept clearly in view, administrators, faculty and staff will be flexible enough to respond wisely to the interests and suggestions of the men they guide toward the priesthood. They will foster initiative as well as individual and group responsibility, by observing the principle of subsidiarity.

### Article Two: Organization of the Seminary

**197.** A variety of forms and structures characterize the seminary program in our country, and undoubtedly the future will witness new models. Currently seminaries may be classified, on the basis of student body, as:

- a) diocesan, drawn from members of a single diocese, a province, or a larger grouping;
- b) religious, drawn from a single province or a group of provinces;
- c) combinations of diocesan and religious students under diocesan or religious sponsorship.

**198.** A seminary may also be classified, on the basis of program, as:

- a) a self-contained unit that provides the entire program of spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation;
- b) an institution which provides a basic program in these areas, supplemented by cooperation with other institutions;
- c) an institution which provides part of the program (e.g., spiritual and pastoral formation), while other parts (e.g., academic) are pursued in another institution (e.g., college or university);
- d) a cluster of several institutions of differing types which cooperate with one another.

**199.** Whatever the arrangement, all elements of priestly formation should be integrated and harmonized to achieve a pastoral orientation in the candidate for ordination and a sense of unity with his bishop or religious superior in the service of the Church (*Decree on Ministry and Life of Priests*, n. 8).

**200.** For practical reasons these guidelines are drawn to form the basis for a complete, self-contained program. They are not meant, however, to indicate a preference for any one of the forms described above and, with suitable adaptation, may apply to all types of seminaries.

### **Article Three: The Seminary and the Community it Serves: Formation of Policy**

**201.** Priestly formation takes place within the context of the total community, particularly the Christian community. The students themselves are eager to respond generously and effectively to God's call. Laity and religious men and women are concerned that the candidates meet their needs. Priests already experienced in the ministry are concerned for the formation of future co-workers. Because priests are to be "prudent cooperators of the episcopal order" (*Decree on Pastoral Office of Bishops*, n. 34), the preparation of future priests is the particular concern and responsibility of the Ordinary who has the right to call to Orders. All these individuals and groups place their trust in the seminary administration, faculty, and staff responsible for the actual preparation of a man for the priesthood. To encourage and insure communication among all those who share his concern, adequate structures must be provided.

#### **1. The Role of the Ordinary (Bishop or Major Religious Superior)**

**202.** As the chief representative of Christ in the local Church the Ordinary is the head of the entire Christian community and, in a particular way, of the seminary community (cf. n. 172). Responsibility for all seminary formation programs—spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, and pastoral—falls primarily on him. He discharges this responsibility both personally and through the seminary administration, faculty, and staff. As far as his other duties will allow, he should visit the seminary, show a lively interest in, and concern for, the progress of the students, and encourage the priests assigned there in their dedication to this work so important for the good of the entire Church. These are his delegates, immediately and directly responsible for the actual preparation of a man for priesthood, and must work "zealously and harmoniously together, faithfully obedient to the authority of the bishop" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, nn. 4-5).

**203.** His obligations:

- a) The Scriptures impose upon the Ordinary the obligation of find-

ing worthy and faithful co-workers in the service of God's People (cf. *1 Tim.* 5:22).<sup>1</sup>

b) Vatican II requires him to implement the *Decree on Priestly Formation* and its application to the United States by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**204.** Consequently the Ordinary will provide that:

a) structures be devised to serve the interests of all the People of God described above;

b) the administration and faculty of the seminary offer a program in accord with the mind of the Church and in keeping with standards of American higher education; this includes the written Rule of Life which he is to approve (cf. *supra*, n. 179);

c) through regular meetings adequate communication be maintained between himself and the faculty and administration to discuss the changing needs of the Church, the progress of candidates for the priesthood, and developments in the seminary program;

d) all reasonable efforts be made to "show himself to be a true father in Christ to the students" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 5).

## **2. Seminary Board**

**205.** To assist the Ordinary, administrators, and faculty, a Board should be constituted to help develop the basic policy of the school in accordance with Church Law, this *Program* of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and standard American educational practice. Members of the Board will represent the clergy, religious, and laity who share a concern for priestly formation. For seminarians serving more than one diocese or province there should, when feasible, be representation of the several areas served. It is also important that the Board include representation from the broader academic community and from the various professions that can contribute to a more effective program, e.g., law, medicine, and finance. Under the Ordinary, each Board will develop its own by-laws to determine membership, scope, and procedure.

## **3. Seminary Community**

**206.** Policy will ordinarily be proposed at the level of the seminary community where concrete needs and problems are experienced. Proposals will flow from the Rector and faculty, from faculty committees, from faculty-student dialogue, and from the students themselves. After re-

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<sup>1</sup>*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation* treats of the pastoral obligation of caring for vocations to the priestly life (nn. 5-10), and states that some of this section might be incorporated bodily into the national programs for priestly formation (Preliminary Remarks, n. 4). Since the Committee on Priestly Formation has no competence in the matter of fostering vocations, it has not included in its report any section on vocations. In Appendix IV, however, there is an adaptation of the statement of the Bishops' Committee on Church Vocations.

view by the seminary faculty, policy proposals of major importance will be presented by the Rector to the Seminary Board and Ordinary for approval.

## **Article Four: Faculty and Administrative Officers: Implementation of Policy**

### **1. The Faculty: Conditions of Service**

**207.** The qualities necessary for faculty members have been stated generically by Vatican II: pastoral experience, adequate spiritual, academic, and professional preparation (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 5). In choosing a priest for the seminary, the appropriate authority should consider, among other factors, the ability to establish effective rapport with young people, willingness to engage in this form of the apostolate, and genuine stability with regard to temperament, psychological health and maturity. As a rule, he should have some years of appropriate parochial or pastoral ministry (cf. *infra*, n. 368). Specific preparation should be given those who are to exercise administrative responsibilities.

**208.** Despite a reduced number of students, the need for seminary personnel continues, since supervision of field work and increased academic specialization call for an appropriate teacher-student ratio. To provide adequate and competent faculty, therefore, diocesan and religious groups should review their personnel priorities in the light of current and future needs. Gifted students and young priests should be encouraged to do graduate work to qualify themselves for this service. The indispensable condition for seminary renewal is a mature, competent, dedicated faculty. "Give your very best priests to your seminaries and do not be afraid to take them from other positions, which, though they may seem more important, cannot be compared with the primary and indispensable work of the seminary" (Pius XI, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*, n. 67).

**209.** The faculties of seminaries may be strengthened by a system of faculty exchange, to assure the most effective employment of present personnel and to broaden the experience and opportunity of both professors and students; the use of specialists as part-time professors residing in the community; the hiring of competent lay persons, whether men or women, as full-time faculty members.

**210.** In addition to maintaining professional competence in their field of specialization, seminary professors should take a deep personal interest in the intellectual and spiritual development of their students.

**211.** Since professors ought to demonstrate a pastoral orientation in the presentation of their subject matter, some involvement in parish ministry or in other apostolic activities will prove helpful. They should not be unduly burdened by pastoral responsibility; rather a prudent balance of



academic professionalism and pastoral concern should be considered the norm. As an operating principle, the demands of the seminary are to be given priority. To insure effectiveness in the seminary and still allow time for pastoral involvement, the individual faculty members are not expected to assume a teaching schedule greater than is customary in similar academic institutions.

**212.** Priest faculty members are to be appointed by the Ordinary on recommendation of the Rector, who will consult with the head of the appropriate department and the Academic Dean. If the faculty member is a lay person or is a priest or religious who is not a member of the diocese or religious community responsible for the seminary, there should be a formal, written agreement specifying the terms of employment. These agreements should determine salary scales, conditions of tenure, fringe benefits, procedures for dismissal and conditions for sabbatical leave.

**213.** Conditions of tenure, in accordance with professional standards, are to include a probationary period during which the faculty member demonstrates his competence and dedication. Tenure will always be subject to continuing evaluation by an impartial Committee of Review. This committee will weigh the professor's academic competence, personal commitment to the goals of the seminary, and in the case of Catholic professors, his compliance with the laws of the Church. Tenure for clerics or religious is always limited by their prior commitment to the Church's general apostolate, to which they may be called at any time by their competent Superiors.

## **2. The Faculty: Organization**

**214.** The actual organization of the faculty will vary according to the specific needs of the individual seminary. But regularly scheduled meetings of the full faculty are essential for establishing and maintaining united effort. Both standing and *ad hoc* committees should meet regularly with reports presented to the full faculty. The faculty should engage in a continuing evaluation of the programs of the seminary, responding wisely to student needs, observing the accepted norms of higher education, and seeking to improve the seminary program to the best of their ability and resources. Communication among the members of the faculty themselves and with academic and ecclesial groups outside the seminary is considered indispensable for a quality program.

**215.** Faculty unity is especially imperative in spiritual direction and counseling. Although a number of priests will be necessary to establish personal rapport with each student and thus lead him to greater maturity, a consistency in policy and practice is essential if students are not to be confused and their formation misdirected. Hence, one priest, customarily called the Spiritual Director, will serve as coordinator who, in fraternal cooperation with his associates, will give unity and direction to the program of spiritual development (cf. *supra*, n. 156).

**216.** In the faculty's academic work, appropriate freedom should be granted them as professionals. This freedom must be understood in the context of seminary purposes and balanced by the rights of the student, the institution, and the concerns of the Church.

**217.** In the theological exposition and investigation of the data of revelation and "those principles of the moral order which have their origin in human nature itself" (*Declaration on Religious Freedom*, n. 14), professors, ever mindful of the varying degrees of theological certainty, should carefully distinguish between their own insights, developments, and speculations on the one hand and certain Catholic doctrine on the other. A fundamental task of the teaching faculty is to set forth Catholic doctrine as formulated by the authoritative teaching of the Church (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 25).

**218.** Despite all good will, there may be conflicts arising from statements or reported teaching of the faculty. To meet this situation in cases that cannot be handled by a conference of clarification, some clearly defined procedure should be established—such as a mediation board composed of members acceptable to the parties in conflict.

**219.** While final responsibility for decision remains with the administration and faculty, students should contribute to the decision-making process in proportion to their maturity and background. They will profit from sharing with faculty members the experience of exercising responsibility. Such collaboration presumes some structured form of meetings between faculty and student representatives (cf. *infra*, n. 245). Administration and faculty will necessarily retain the major role of evaluating students for promotion, especially to Holy Orders, yet consultative votes of the students about their peers can be helpful (cf. *infra*, n. 237).

### **3. The Rector**

**220.** Like other members of the faculty, the Rector (President) should "be carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience and special spiritual and pedagogical training" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 5). More than others, the Rector influences the direction and tone of the seminary program. "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 may be one . . .'" (*ibid*). By creating a climate of mutual confidence and trust, he will elicit the full cooperation and involvement of faculty and students.

**221.** The Rector is to be appointed by the Ordinary, who should seek the advice of the Seminary Board and other interested parties, especially the faculty. The Rector is responsible to the Ordinary and, if so determined, to the Seminary Board.

**222.** As chief administrative officer, the Rector is ultimately responsible for all aspects of seminary life. Because of the scope and complexities of the seminary program, he will share definite responsibilities with other members of the faculty, observing principles of collegiality and subsidiarity. A faculty handbook, specifying such responsibilities and their corresponding authority, seminary policies, and all information necessary for an orderly functioning of the program, is indispensable. The Rector will be attentive and responsive to faculty and to students.

**223.** The Rector represents the seminary to the general public, to educational groups and agencies. In general, he speaks for the seminary. All in the seminary should be conscious of public relations. Where possible, the Rector should share this responsibility with a specific officer.

#### **4. Other Administrative Officers**

**224.** a) The Academic Dean bears the chief responsibility for implementing educational policies. He is responsible for curriculum, courses, methods of instruction, the quality and performance of faculty and students, consultation with committees and department heads, and the improvement of the academic program. He may be assisted by a Registrar, who will attend to details of assigning and classifying students and to keeping scholastic records.

**225.** b) The Dean of Students is responsible for co-curricular programs and for the daily life of the seminarians, especially their conduct as it befits men preparing for the priesthood and as it contributes to a wholesome spirit of the community. He will be guided by the statement in the *Decree on Priestly Formation* in which the Council Fathers urge that norms of discipline be applied according to the age of the students so that "they themselves, as they gradually learn self-mastery, may become accustomed to use freedom wisely, to act spontaneously and energetically, and to work together harmoniously with their fellows and with the laity" (*ibid*, n. 11). A student handbook should publicize and clarify suitable directives for community living (cf. *supra*, nn. 171-194).

**226.** c) The Director of Guidance is to be responsible for psychological testing and for counseling programs in areas distinct from spiritual direction. He may be a layman, professionally qualified and personally oriented to understand the emotional and personality development of candidates for the priesthood. In all events, his counseling is to be consistent with the policy and practice of the total seminary program.

**227.** d) The Director of Field Education will supervise the apostolic activities of the students so that they engage effectively in pastoral programs, reflect upon this work and gain deeper insights into the mission of the Church in the modern world. Thus they can mature

to the degree necessary for the exercise of the diaconate and then of the priesthood. The director will need sufficient personnel, including psychologists and religious sociologists, so that students may have adequate supervision. He will make an evaluation of their work, calling attention to their strengths and their potential for specialized ministries (cf. *supra*, nn. 94-122).

- 228.** e) The Treasurer is responsible for the financial and physical aspects of the seminary. He supervises non-academic personnel and strives for an efficient management of property and services. He solicits budgetary recommendations from the faculty and staff. With the Rector he prepares a budget for consideration by the Seminary Board. Budget projections should include contributed services of clerical and religious staff. The Treasurer administers the approved budget with responsibility for the receipt and disbursement of funds. He will prepare regular budget and cash flow reports, indicating the percentage of budget allocations spent during a given time. He should have proper professional preparation.
- 229.** f) The Librarian, enjoying faculty rank and status, is responsible for the proper development of a balanced collection of books, periodicals, microprint, and related materials. He should have acquired a professional degree in library science and should administer the library according to the norms of the profession and the respective accrediting and educational agencies. He should encourage suggestions from the faculty and students in the selection of materials to support the curriculum, to aid students in their moral, religious and cultural development, and to help faculty and students pursue their co-curricular and recreational interests as well as their scholarly goals. He may care for the audio-visual materials of the institution. He should cooperate with other libraries in the area. In all this he should be provided with an adequate budget and assisted by the clerical help appropriate to the library's central importance in the seminary.

**230.** An appropriate staff of typists and secretaries should be provided for the faculty and administration in order to free them for the more essential tasks of their assigned offices and for personal renewal, creative scholarship, and student direction.

## **Article Five: Students**

### **1. Admission Requirements**

**231.** In addition to canonical requirements (cf. *C.I.C.*, 1363), the priestly candidate must give evidence of an over-all balance and aptitude of personality. Encyclicals throughout this century and Vatican II's *Decree on Priestly Formation* have defined this aptitude. It includes spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical qualities. It also presumes the proper motivation, or right intention, which may be described in the words of

Pope Paul VI, "as the clear and determined desire to dedicate oneself completely to the service of the Lord" (*Summi Dei Verbum*, NCWC trans., p. 10).

**232.** Hence students applying to the seminary for the first time should undergo a thorough screening process. Personal interviews with the candidate and his parents, home visits, evaluations from his pastor and teachers, academic record, and intellectual potential as indicated by standardized tests—these are components of an effective admissions program and must be weighed with a judgment as to the candidate's apparent motivation.

**233.** Following the lead of Vatican Council II's *Decree on Priestly Formation* (n. 2) that "no opportune aids are to be overlooked which modern psychological or sociological research has brought to light," seminary administrators should consider psychological assessment as part of the admissions procedure, especially for those entering the seminary for the first time.

**234.** Intellectual fitness for college studies should be evaluated by standard criteria. Consideration should be given to the student's total academic record and testimony from his high school principal or counselor concerning his potential for college achievement. Participation in national tests, e.g., College Entrance Boards, is recommended.

**235.** The theologate in its turn will require a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, preferably from an accredited institution, with adequate courses in philosophy and theology in the light of the program which the theologate itself offers. If the applicant has already been in a seminary, much weight will be given to his performance in that seminary and to the faculty's evaluation of him. No seminary will accept such an applicant without carefully reviewing his academic and personality record. An especially careful investigation, with reference to all authorities concerned, must be made before accepting a seminary student who has been dismissed, or who has transferred in mid-course, from another seminary.<sup>1</sup>

## **2. Continued Evaluation**

**236.** Since education and growth are gradual processes, continuing evaluation of student development is needed. Such evaluation is the responsibility first of the seminary faculty. This responsibility should be shared progressively with others who are involved in the work of formation, including the candidate himself. Personality testing and counseling should be employed whenever warranted. The substance of the periodic review by the faculty should be communicated to the student in a constructive way.

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<sup>1</sup> By a letter dated April 6, 1970, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education stressed again the provisions of the Decrees "*Solemne Habet*" of July 12, 1957 and "*Consiliis initis*" of July 25, 1941 concerning the readmission of ex-religious and ex-seminarians into the seminary. For the text of these decrees, consult *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 24, p. 640, and vol. 8, p. 371.

**237.** The advantages of peer evaluation should be explored. A student's acceptance by the seminary community is a hopeful sign for his future priesthood. His cooperation in the confidential appraisal of his classmates affords him an opportunity to exercise genuine responsibility.

**238.** When doubts arise about the readiness of some students for advancement to Orders or about their progress in achieving maturity, consideration can be given by the Ordinary to a period of probation away from the seminary.<sup>1</sup> However, appropriate supervision is necessary so that the leave of absence or deferral of Orders can bring about needed growth and the information on which to base a judgment. The seminary should be flexible enough to allow for individual growth towards the permanent commitment demanded of the priest.

**239.** A conscientious evaluation of each seminarian by his pastor is required at the close of each summer and before ordinations. This procedure achieves its purpose only to the extent that pastors know their students and that seminarians make themselves known. Reports about his performance in apostolic activities and the deacon internship will prove invaluable in measuring progress as the seminarian advances.

### **3. The Ordinary and Promotion to Orders**

**240.** It is the prerogative of the Ordinary to make the final judgment on the student's fitness for Holy Orders. Consequently the seminary shall send regular evaluative reports (*scrutinia*) to the Ordinary. In accordance with the norms of Vatican II, the Holy See, and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, he will look for these qualities in a candidate for Orders:

- a) a knowledge of, and a fidelity to the Word of God and the authentic teaching of Christ's Church;
- b) charity, zeal for souls, and lifelong dedication signified by celibacy according to the tradition of the Western Church;
- c) competence in pastoral skills, especially in the proclamation of God's Word and in leading divine worship;

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<sup>1</sup> (Cf. *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 42 b) "During the said course, an interruption of residence in the seminary is possible, e.g., for a year or six months, during which the student breaks off either both his studies and his living at the seminary, or just his living at the seminary while pursuing his studies (of philosophy-theology) elsewhere. During this interval, under the guidance of a skilled priest, he gives help in the pastoral ministry, learns about men and the problems and difficulties among which he will have to work, and tries out his own fitness for the priestly life and ministry. Testing or experience of secular life in manual work, or in military service, where that is obligatory, are not ruled out.

"Or after the first year of the Major Seminary the students may be given permission either to enter the second year, or to take up secular studies in a university, or to pursue study of some special subject outside the seminary. In this way the student, after completing his first experiences in the seminary, will be offered a period of real freedom both interior and exterior to develop his vocation more solidly and with greater effort."

- d) a sense of responsibility and commitment to the people entrusted to him and an ability to communicate with them;
- e) personal initiative and capacity for courageous leadership together with prudence and decision in action;
- f) willingness to subordinate personal preferences in the interest of cooperative effort.

**241.** The Ordinary should weigh the opinions of the People of God about an individual candidate, noting the qualities they judge essential for effective ministry today. He will establish a suitable structure to elicit such evaluation.

**242.** As recommended in Chapter Three, "Pastoral Formation," the candidate should undergo a suitable period of exercise of the Diaconate in the parochial ministry or other apostolic work (cf. *supra*, nn. 110, 117-120). Careful attention should be given to reports from all forms of supervised pastoral activities.

**243.** In dioceses employing a period of diaconate extended beyond the eight semesters of academic and field education work, there should be additional consultation before the conferral of Orders. After a suitable period in the diaconate, the candidate himself should request ordination. If judged ready by himself, his pastor, the Director of Field Education, the people, and the Ordinary, he would then be ordained a priest. Ordination would thus come by reason of personal readiness and community approval rather than by class promotion.

## **Article Six: Student Life and Activity**

### **1. Student Participation**

**244.** To achieve the goals of priestly formation, constant student involvement is necessary. Hence, according to their competency, the students should be involved in implementing the goals of the seminary.

**245.** Effective understanding and collaboration in carrying out decisions may be achieved by participation in the decision-making process. A faculty-student dialogue, as envisioned in n. 219 above, will achieve some of the goals of the seminary, because:

- a) it permits open exchange between faculty and students in areas of concern to both and shows the value of both authority and freedom;
- b) it selects the leaders of the group and develops their potential for articulating community thought;
- c) it permits a progressively broader scope of responsibility as the student advances;
- d) it enables seminarians to understand the stages of prudential judgment and actions, and to live with decisions once made;
- e) it can bring them to a sense of financial responsibility in expenditure of funds.

## 2. Social Programs

246. The seminary administration and the individual student share the positive responsibility of developing a truly dedicated servant of God. The social, recreational and cultural interests of the student are important factors in this development for future priestly service. The celibate priest is dedicated to the love and service of all people, and therefore a life-style realistically appropriate for the priesthood cannot be developed if the seminarian engages in an exclusive relationship with a woman. Throughout the seminary college and theologate, positive growth in celibacy and commitment to vocation precludes any relationship which would normally lead to marriage, i.e., that relationship in our society termed "dating." The seminarian, dedicated to a life devoid of exclusiveness, will, as a practical norm, relate to women in the same manner as a Christian married man relates to all women other than his wife.

### Article Seven:

#### Helps for the Seminary to Achieve Its Purpose

247. Physical structures and facilities are to be provided adequate to the seminary's needs and comparable to those customary in educational institutions of similar purpose. Attention must be paid not only to the buildings themselves but to the atmosphere they create. This must be conducive to reflection and research, to association and discussion, to spiritual, intellectual, and social growth.

248. The need to achieve maximum use of limited resources and to provide student bodies sufficiently large to make possible a dynamic and varied academic program points toward a policy of amalgamation rather than proliferation of seminaries. To these academic reasons, financial arguments can be readily added. The *Decree on Priestly Formation* states,

**Where individual dioceses are unable to institute their own seminaries properly, seminaries for many dioceses or for an entire region or for a country are to be set up and developed, so that the sound training of the students, which must be considered the supreme law in this matter, can be taken care of in a more effective manner (n. 7).**

In view of spiraling construction costs and the existing surplus of seminaries, the foundation of new seminaries should be avoided. The extensive renovation of institutions should be weighed against the advantages of sending students to larger and academically stronger institutions.

249. Operational costs and the advantages of cooperation with other institutions suggest that every effort be made to avoid duplication of available facilities and to place seminary resources at the service of the religious and secular community. Sharing laboratory and instructional aids, inter-library agreements on purchases and loans, access to classes in comparable institutions, an arrangement sometimes called a "con-



sortium," an exchange of teachers—all these cooperative efforts may provide an opportunity for substantial savings while promoting cooperation and community understanding. It is also possible that professional expertise in planning, budgeting, and financial management can heighten economic efficiency.

**250.** Consideration should be given to additional sources of income. Foundation grants and similar assistance may be available for some seminary programs, either existing or planned. Interdiocesan or inter-seminary cooperation may advantageously engage funding consultants.

**251.** Students may rightly be asked to assume a greater portion of the actual cost of their education. As seminaries increasingly offer degree programs in accredited institutions that equip the student for remunerative positions if he withdraws, it seems just to expect him to pay a proportionate share of his education, or to commit himself to an obligation of repaying the expenses rather than accept the education at little or no cost as a vocational inducement. In this, government loan programs are to be investigated.

**252.** Ability to pay must not become a vocational prerequisite; however, willingness to repay for services rendered by the seminary provides an insight into the attitude of the candidate and evidences a necessary sense of responsibility.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: ECUMENICAL DIMENSION IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

### Introduction

- 253.** All Christians should be of an ecumenical mind, but especially those entrusted with particular duties and responsibilities in the world and in society; hence the principles of ecumenism sanctioned by the Second Vatican Council should be appropriately introduced in all institutions of advanced learning (*Ecumenical Directory Part II, Introduction*).
- 254.** In order to fulfill their pastoral responsibility to promote Christian unity and provide leaders in the ecumenical movement, the bishops issue these guidelines for ecumenical education in the four years of theological training required for ordination. For it is significantly in the seminary that the future priest receives his preparation for the work of ecumenism.
- 255.** Since the priest is ordained to serve as a mediator and an instrument of unity in Christ's truth and love, his ecumenical mission springs from the basic character of his priesthood. The priest must strive to build up the community of the Catholic Church, to work for the unity of all Christians, and indeed for the unity of the entire human family.
- 256.** The religious pluralism characteristic of American society has influenced the religious experience and the social relationships of our people. Thus candidates for the priesthood enter theological study already conditioned by experience for formal training in ecumenism. Norms for ecumenism in seminary education should take advantage of this fact of American life.
- 257.** In this regard the *Decree on Priestly Formation* distinguishes two tasks to be carried out by the seminary (n. 16). The first is the preparation of the candidate for the work of reestablishing unity among all Christians. The second is the introduction of the seminarian to a knowledge of the non-Christian religions represented in a particular region. This chapter gives primary consideration to the first task; however, some of the following principles will prove helpful in developing a genuine appreciation for non-Christian religions and value systems, especially the secular humanism so prevalent in our country.
- 258.** In Catholic theological education special attention should be given to the heritage Christians have received from the Jews, to contemporary theological understanding of the Jewish people, to the often tragic Jewish-Christian relations, and to the contribution of Jews to contemporary culture. It is important that the future priest, in accordance with the emphasis of Vatican II, know how to instruct the Catholic people on the positive relationship to be fostered between Catholics and Jews.

**259.** All seminaries should examine their total program in the light of the *Ecumenical Directory Part II* and of these guidelines, not only to determine whether present ecumenical endeavors are in conformity with established norms, but also to determine whether a truly ecumenical spirit pervades all areas of seminary formation.

## **Article One: General Principles**

### **A. Values of Ecumenical Formation**

**260.** Ecumenical formation should assist the student to develop the priestly qualities necessary for his personal life and for his service of the People of God in the United States. The increased exposure to the problems of faith and theology which divide ecclesial communities will broaden the student's theological training, and can contribute to his spiritual formation.

### **B. Factors in Ecumenical Cooperation**

**261.** Ecumenical cooperation, study and dialogue must rest on firm foundations. The *Ecumenical Directory Part II* lists the following:

- a) Sound knowledge of one's own faith and fidelity to it;
- b) A sincere desire to deepen this faith by a study of all the streams of Christian tradition;
- c) Determination to seek Christian unity through greater fidelity to the Gospel;
- d) Consultation and cooperation with ecclesiastical authorities and due deference for their directions and advice;
- e) Acknowledgment that the best spokesman for any tradition is usually one committed to that tradition in life and belief;
- f) Respect for the conscience and convictions of others;
- g) Humility in the face of the trials to which faith is subjected in controversy;
- h) Readiness to acknowledge that not everyone is equally equipped for dialogue.

**262.** There are some risks in ecumenical cooperation. The *Decree on Ecumenism* states:

**. . . it is our hope that the ecumenical spirit and mutual esteem will gradually increase among all men. It must be admitted, however, that in these churches and ecclesial communities there exist important differences from the Catholic Church, not only of an historical, sociological, psychological and cultural character, but especially in the interpretation of revealed truths. . . . This most Sacred Synod urges the faithful to abstain from any superficiality or imprudent zeal, for these can cause harm to true progress toward unity (nn. 19, 24).**

**263.** Some problems involved in ecumenical cooperation in theological study stand out:

a) The first problem is that the effort to do too much may lead to superficiality and eclecticism. When exposed to a range of theological controversies and subject to a multitude of unassimilated experiences, the student may become indifferent to the importance of sound doctrine or deep personal conviction. This problem can best be met by careful planning of ecumenical studies, so that the student better understands the strength of his own Catholic tradition, the difficulties that are common to all Christian churches and communities, and the value of common Christian witness.

b) Even more serious is the possibility that the Catholic student may not acquire a thorough understanding of the Gospel as this has been transmitted under the guidance of the Apostolic See and the whole *magisterium*. This problem can be met only if ample time is given to studying and living the Catholic tradition under the guidance of Catholic professors (cf. *infra*, n. 284), so that the student will have heard and pondered the Word of God in its fullness.

c) Finally there is the danger that while broadening his experience of the many traditions of Christian life and worship, the student will not be thoroughly formed in the Catholic tradition of Christian community life, with its full liturgy, spirituality and ascetic discipline. This problem will be met if the norms of Chapters Four and Five on spirituality, liturgy and community life are observed.

### **C. Pastoral Responsibility**

**264.** It is the responsibility of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to establish guiding principles concerning the ecumenical formation of seminarians. It is the responsibility of the local Ordinary to apply these principles in his own diocese and to foster the ecumenical movement as determined by the Second Vatican Council (*Ecumenical Directory Part II*, Introduction).

**265.** The norms for ecumenism in seminaries will be applied differently in various dioceses and geographical areas due to differences in social and religious circumstances. In applying norms and establishing general policies for individual seminaries, the competent authority will be different according to the particular type of seminary involved.

a) In diocesan or inter-diocesan seminaries, the competent authority is the local Ordinary or a governing board of bishops;

b) In religious seminaries established for the academic and personal formation of members of a religious community, the competent authority is the major religious superior, saving the rights of the local Ordinary in those pastoral, liturgical, and other matters which affect the general life of the diocese as described in the *Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church*, n. 35.

c) In a religious seminary with diocesan seminarians, or in Catholic schools of theology, there are different areas of responsibility

according to the particular character of the institution. The local Ordinary, the major religious superior and the chief administrator of the school should cooperate in determining precise areas of competence so that a program of ecumenical formation will be developed in accord with the norms of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**266.** The competent authority should consult, in addition to the diocesan ecumenical commission, seminary administrators, faculty and, when appropriate, seminarians, as well as other lay, religious, and clerical experts in ecumenism to advise on the types of ecumenical cooperation suitable for the seminaries in his jurisdiction.

**267.** The direction of the ecumenical formation of the seminarians is normally entrusted to the administration and the faculty of the seminary. They will be guided by the general policies established by the competent authority.

**268.** If difficulties arise regarding the interpretation and application of the *Program* in the area of ecumenical cooperation, the matter shall be referred to the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation which, in consultation with the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, will study and recommend a procedure for solving the difficulty. If the seminary involved is a religious seminary devoted to forming only religious seminarians, a representative of the Conference of Major Superiors of Religious Men will also be consulted.

## **Article Two: Ecumenism in Seminaries**

### **A. The Faculty and Ecumenism**

**269.** Every member of the seminary faculty, no matter what his specialty, is expected to demonstrate an ecumenical awareness in attitude and teaching, and a sympathetic respect for other religious traditions. He should heighten his ecumenical awareness not only by familiarity with the scholarship and traditions of other Christians, but also by personal contact.

**270.** In teaching about other religious traditions, the faculty should encourage the seminary student to view these traditions as their own adherents understand them, rather than in a negative or polemical manner. Similarly the faculty should make themselves available to express the Catholic heritage to others.

### **B. Students and Ecumenism**

#### **1. SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND ECUMENISM**

**271.** Ecumenism lives and grows by a spirit of personal renewal and holiness. The *Decree on Ecumenism* states:

**Let all Christ's faithful remember that the more purely they strive to live according to the Gospel, the more they are fos-**

tering and even practicing Christian unity. . . . This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and can rightly be called "spiritual ecumenism" (nn. 7, 8).

**272.** Baptism creates a fundamental bond with other Christians. Through the waters of baptism the Holy Spirit at once binds Christians together and impels them to make real and manifest their unity in Christ and their love for all men.

**273.** In the light of this baptismal consecration, a program for fostering spiritual ecumenism should be developed in the seminary. In accord with diocesan directives and in proper consultation with the seminary administrators, faculty, and students, the Spiritual Director should choose among the following suggested means those which are best adapted to serve this purpose.

**274.** With reference to spiritual reading, care should be taken:

- a) to emphasize the Bible as a bond of unity and a common source of prayer with other Christians;
- b) to provide, in addition to basic Catholic ascetical and mystical writings, some systematic introduction to selected writings of all Christian traditions.

**275.** With reference to public prayer, efforts may be made:

- a) to participate on occasion and within permissible limits in liturgical celebrations with Orthodox, Anglican, and Protestant faculty and seminarians;
- b) to promote ecumenical services for particular occasions: votive masses for unity, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, as well as appropriate services that are jointly prepared and held in each other's seminaries.

**276.** With reference to personal prayer, efforts should be made:

- a) to develop a deep concern for healing divisions within Christendom and within the human family, thus reflecting Christ's prayer that all may be one;
- b) to develop the habit of spontaneous vocal prayer, a type of prayer that is familiar to Protestants.

**277.** With reference to community life, the students might be brought:

- a) to understand that the effort to build community in the seminary mirrors the struggle to build Christian unity and prepares the future priest for this task;
- b) to share seminary life, from time to time, with Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant seminarians by reciprocal visits and common prayer;
- c) to find occasion for a special joint retreat under proper guidance.

## 2. ACADEMIC FORMATION AND ECUMENISM

**278.** The theological curriculum must be shaped in the light of the fact that the great central truths of salvation form a common Christian heritage and are, indeed, bridges between various traditions. The seminary student must know his faith well, be able to appreciate the hierarchy of revealed truths, be able as well to distinguish between Catholic doctrine and theological opinion, and between truth and its manifold expressions (cf. *Decree on Ecumenism*, n. 11; *Ecumenical Directory Part II*, II, n. 5). He must be acquainted in particular with the history and teachings of the Christian communities with which his future ministry will bring him in contact. He must also have a knowledge of the history of ecumenism and of the theological principles which serve as a foundation of true ecumenism (cf. *Reflections and Suggestions on Ecumenical Dialogue*, IV, 4 d).

**279.** The general approach to all theological instruction should include the following:

- a) The elements of truth and holiness shared by all churches and Christian communities, though they are given different theological expression;
- b) The spirituality and doctrine which each Christian community stresses;
- c) Those factors which cause dissension and division; the attempt to solve these problems can lead to a more profound examination of the Word of God.

**280.** To ensure that ecumenism be not just an addition to the curriculum but rather an integral part of it, the following recommendations are offered:

- a) Ecumenism should bear on all theological discipline as one of its necessary determining factors;
- b) Systematic presentation of the Catholic principles of ecumenism is to be given early in the theological program;
- c) Special lectures, conferences, and elective courses in ecumenical topics may be offered during the course of the seminary program;
- d) In treating theological questions the opinions of Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant theologians should be included so that their specific contributions can be appreciated (cf. *infra*, n. 285).
- e) Contact and discussion with students from other religious traditions will foster in Catholic seminarians a spirit of sharing, mutual understanding and dialogue.

## 3. PASTORAL FORMATION AND ECUMENISM

**281.** The formation of the seminarian for an effective pastoral ministry has been treated above (cf. nn. 94-122); the Second Vatican Council, however, highlighted the need of shared Christian witness and service in the world:

**Cooperation [in social matters] among Christians vividly expresses the relationship which in fact already unites them, and it sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the servant (*Decree on Ecumenism*, n. 12).**

**282.** Areas in pastoral formation which may lend themselves to ecumenical cooperation are:<sup>1</sup>

- a) The study of social legislation concerning civil rights, health, education and welfare;
- b) Social action programs, such as work in disadvantaged areas and with community organizations;
- c) Special ministries to the sick, aged, migrants, urban poor, to business, industry, and campus.

**283.** All these ecumenical endeavors will be especially fruitful and spiritually beneficial when supported by personal and shared theological reflection.

### **Article Three:**

#### **Special Considerations on Ecumenical Cooperation**

**284.** In order to satisfy the requirements for their general theological training, students must follow the entire *Program of Priestly Formation* as regards academic, pastoral, and spiritual formation. This provision is to guarantee that they receive a thorough knowledge and experience of their Catholic heritage under the guidance of Catholic professors and counselors. This Catholic heritage is especially to be found in such disciplines as Introduction to Sacred Scripture, Exegesis, Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, and Sacred Liturgy.<sup>2</sup>

**285.** However, during the period of general theological training, students are to be introduced to other religious traditions in a systematic way. The study of these religious traditions may be made with the help of teachers committed to those traditions. Religious and academic authorities who counsel students interested in registering for such courses are to take into consideration the following (cf. *Ecumenical Directory Part II*, IV, n. 13):

- a) The contribution which each course will make to the student's general theological education. Here the principal consideration is that such courses shall not displace the fundamental studies under Catholic professors mentioned in n. 284 above, especially those of specific doctrinal significance to Catholics;

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<sup>1</sup> "The work of preparing and reconciling those individuals who wish for full Catholic union is of its nature distinct from ecumenical action. But there is no opposition between the two, since both proceed from the wondrous Providence of God" (*Decree on Ecumenism*, n. 4).

<sup>2</sup> The content of the required studies is described in nn. 42-44, 49-53, 59, and 64-75 of this *Program* (cf. *The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, nn. 86-89, also *Ecumenical Directory, Part II*, IV, n. 13).



- b) The special competence and ecumenical spirit of the teacher;
- c) The spiritual, psychological, and academic maturity of the student.

**286.** For the sake of better theological education, for better use of resources, and at times for the sake of ecumenism, some Catholic seminaries are entering into cooperation with each other and with other institutions of higher learning. Cooperation between institutions which will further ecumenical formation may take various forms, provided that the precautions of n. 287 below be observed:

- a) Occasional exchange of faculty, special lectures, workshops, team teaching and the like;
- b) Formal association between Catholic and other theological schools by which students are permitted to take accredited courses at the member institutions, under the conditions stated above in nn. 284-285;
- c) Formal association in which member schools share facilities such as libraries, classrooms, and other resources, while maintaining their own basic programs;
- d) Formal membership in associations designed to raise the standards of theological education and training for the pastoral ministry.

**287.** In such cooperation three special precautions are to be observed:

- a) The autonomy of the Catholic seminary or theological school is to be preserved in such a way as to guarantee its freedom to pursue its own purpose, abide by the rules laid down by legitimate ecclesiastical authority, and control all requirements of priestly formation called for in this *Program*;
- b) Care must be taken by contract or other written agreement to protect the consciences and obligations of all parties to such cooperation, and to provide due process by which any difficulties which may arise can be settled in a Christian manner;
- c) Before entering any ecumenical arrangement, consideration should be given to the norms and authority of other ecclesial communities.

**288.** Students who have already completed their general theological education have more extensive opportunities for fruitful ecumenical cooperation (cf. *Ecumenical Directory Part II*, IV 6-9). Besides seminaries, other Catholic institutions may offer a wide variety of ecumenical programs (cf. *ibid.*, n. 15).



# PART TWO:

## COLLEGE FORMATION

### CHAPTER ONE: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### Article One: Aim of College Formation

**289.** The immediate aim of college level formation for the candidate for the priesthood is to help him to mature as a liberally educated human person, committed to Christ and to the service of his neighbor.

**290.** The college student is still involved in the crisis of growth which involves his personal commitment to God and his final choice of a vocation of service. He must be assisted to understand fully the options open to him, to discover his own identity, to relate himself personally and functionally to the Church and the world, and to integrate the diverse aspects of his personality for effective action.

#### Article Two: Objectives of College Level Formation

##### A. Personal Formation

**291.** The program of personal formation in college should include the promotion of physical and mental health, intellectual and spiritual growth, and a proper balance between self-identity and social adaptation. The student must be assisted to make the transition from dependence on family, tradition, and his age group to personal autonomy and stability of character. He must have made serious progress in finding his identity in his sex, his personal moral standards, his social and vocational role, and his commitment to his faith, in such a way that he acts from interior principles, not from external imposition. He must have achieved this self-identity not by becoming set in a rigid mold, but by being open to the future, to growth, change, and creativity. Above all, he must, like the Savior, be truly human so that "he can sympathize with those who are ignorant or uncertain because he too lives in the limitations of his weakness . . ." (*Hebrews 5:2*).

**292.** His academic education must form an integral part of this personal formation, helping him to balance his intellectual and emotional life, his search for personal identity and his effort to acquire professional competency. He must learn to value disciplined human intelligence as contributing to a mature Christian faith, and to have no fear of constant critical inquiry and research in any field of thought. His study, as well as his prayer, should not remain superficial, but should give him a profound respect for the mystery of God and for the mystery and dignity of the human persons he is preparing to serve.

## ***B. Academic Formation: Degree to be Pursued***

**293.** In view of the requirements for entrance to a theological school, the priestly candidate should achieve a bachelor's degree from a college accredited by a recognized accrediting association. However, it should be recognized that since God, for the good of His People, calls men to the priesthood from every race, social class, and cultural background, it is vital that educational standards should not be so rigid or so distinctive of the mentality of a particular social group that they close the door of opportunity to others, especially to the culturally disadvantaged. Rather, special care should be taken to attract and assist such students to fulfill their divine vocation.

## **CHAPTER TWO: ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

### **Article One: General Areas of Study**

#### **1. *The Study of Man***

**294.** The central study of a humanistic education is the study of man himself in the context of world history and world culture. This requires an introduction to several fields of study and their close integration, namely,

**295.** a) the behavioral and social sciences, especially psychology, sociology, and economics, which by their empirical methods are so rapidly expanding our understanding of human behavior and of the processes of social change;

**296.** b) the history of man and his cultural heritage, which helps the student to appreciate man's creativity, the manifold influences that touch on his life, and the cultural horizons within which he thinks and acts;

**297.** c) the philosophical and theological reflection of man on his own nature and future in view of the findings of the social sciences and of history, by which he can develop an authentic system of ethics and a dynamic world-view, open to God.

**298.** At the college level, the student's natural preoccupation with this question of the nature of man, raised for him by his own need to discover himself, must be given full weight. For students from too parochial a background this must be a time for a balanced "humanization" and "secularization." For those coming from a secularistic background, this must be a time to discover the importance of the religious dimension of man.

#### **2. *The Natural Sciences and Mathematics***

**299.** Contemporary man lives in a world where science through technology has given us increased control over our environment and even over our human nature. But science has much more than a technological significance. Today science provides the most influential theoretical interpretation of the meaning of man and his world. Between this interpretation and that provided by the traditional humanities and by religion, the gap seems very great, and there is a temptation to present science and its world picture as antihumanistic.

**300.** It is essential that the student come to appreciate the scientific and mathematical modes of thought and the importance and limits both of its pure and of its applied phases. He should see it not as the enemy of humanism, but as an important component of human culture. For this appreciation, the study of philosophy and of the history of science, as well as some acquaintance with the methods and achievements of contemporary science, is fundamental.

### 3. Philosophy

**301.** Catholic education has traditionally placed strong emphasis on the importance of philosophical reflection for the formation of a culture which is both human and Christian. The pressures of an excessive positivism and pragmatism, subjectivism and relativism, should not be permitted to overwhelm this sound tradition which is especially needed today in a world where insufficient attention is given to this critical reflection.

**302.** In order that philosophy may play this vital role, however, it must be freed from its curricular isolation and narrow traditionalism, and given an interdisciplinary and integrative role, especially by helping the student relate all his studies to a deeper understanding of himself and of other men, and of the relation of man and his universe to God. (Note: *Details on the integration of philosophy with theology are contained in Appendix II.*)

**303.** In particular, the student should be confronted with the epistemological and ontological presuppositions which underlie all the sciences and humanities and with the historical context of human knowledge. Without such an awareness man easily becomes the victim of his own time and culture, unable to criticize or transcend it. For this reason genuinely humanistic education must continue to emphasize the philosophical dimension of all that is studied, not only in the separate courses in philosophy but also in the other disciplines.

**304.** Special care should be given that the student gain an appreciation of both (a) the historical development of philosophy, and (b) the perennial value of philosophy in assisting man to meet the great problems of human life, including the religious, humanistic and secularistic views of existence. The *Decree on Priestly Formation* (n. 15) insists on the complementary relation between the "philosophical patrimony which is perennially valid" and "contemporary philosophical investigations, especially those exercising special influence in their own country, and with recent scientific progress." It is one of the great achievements of genuine philosophical insight to see that the truth of the past is renewed in the present and that it is open to development in the future, provided the student pay the price of a creative effort. In this context, the student should have St. Thomas Aquinas as one of the greatest teachers, but not to the exclusion of other influential thinkers of the past and present.

**305.** While philosophy is of great importance in its own right, it has special value for the student of theology. In order to develop suitable depth and the critical awareness required for the theological study of the Word of God, the student should be formed in a philosophical discipline of mind. "If philosophy and theology are taught at separate times, an attempt should be made to coordinate subjects in philosophy with those of the theology, particularly Natural Theology with the tract in Dogma concerning God, Ethics with Moral Theology, the History of Philosophy with

Church History and the History of Dogmatic Theology, etc.” (*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 61 b).

#### **4. Religious and Theological Studies**

- 306.** a) Today the Christian has to see the Gospel in the context of the many religious and non-religious systems of belief and value which influence contemporary man. The Catholic must see his faith and his Church in their ecumenical or interreligious relation with other Christian churches and ecclesial communities, with the Jewish tradition, and with other religions and antireligions.
- 307.** b) The growth of the student toward a mature theological knowledge of his own Christian faith cannot be left to the school of theology; during the college years his theological knowledge must keep pace with his growth in other fields of study. He must recognize his place in salvation history as presented in the Sacred Scriptures, and he must understand his own life as a participation in the work of the Spirit of Christ in today's world and that of the future, as it is portrayed in the documents of Vatican II. Moreover, his study of religion must not be merely from books, but must involve participation in the life and worship of the Christian community and in its mission and social action in the secular community.
- 308.** c) The primary objective of religious and theological study at the college level is the student's growth as a person. Although this objective should not be sacrificed to pre-professional theological study, opportunities may be provided for such pre-professional theological studies, emphasizing the Sacred Scriptures and the history, tradition, and mission of the Church.

#### **5. The Skills of Thought and Learning, Creativity and Communication**

**309.** The student cannot profit from the human studies unless he is equipped with the skills and methodologies through which they have developed. At the college level, the ability to learn, to think, to read and evaluate a text, and to communicate is more important than the mastery of extensive information. Therefore:

- 310.** a) The curriculum should provide the opportunity for the student to complete his training in basic skills so that he is able (1) to think clearly, precisely, logically, imaginatively, and effectively; to study and learn from others; to discuss and debate; to consider opposing views sympathetically; to handle diverse modes of thinking; to carry on basic methods of research; and to arrive at stable personal judgments; (2) to communicate with others, both at the intellectual and emotional level, both verbally and non-verbally, so as to be able to join in the social achievement of truth. This requires a bal-

anced development both of the communications skills proper to the humanities, and the mathematical skills proper to the sciences.

- 311.** b) Fundamental to this ability to communicate is the knowledge of English. Other languages are also of great importance if the student is to continue theological growth, to transcend the limits of American culture, and to be prepared to minister to all who need his help. A merely formalistic study of languages, however, as if this were a sign of culture, is to be repudiated. Language skills should be studied in view of actual use. Modern methods should be used to teach these language skills, and academic requirements should be expressed in terms of actual proficiency rather than the number of courses.
- 312.** c) All students entering Catholic schools of theology should be able to use Latin sufficiently to make use of theological, ecclesiastical, and liturgical sources in that language. In order to open the way to continued theological growth, students should be counseled to learn to use the biblical languages and French and German. Opportunities to study Spanish and other languages useful for the ministry should also be provided.
- 313.** d) Sensitive appreciation and appropriate skill in the non-verbal modes of communication and in the creative arts, the theater, the film, and the mass media of communication are also essential to the appreciation of the culture of modern man and should be required elements of humanistic education.
- 314.** The fine arts have a value not only as modes of communication but as leading the student to a contemplative vision of life, and awakening in him gifts of creativity and innovation so important in a world that looks to the future.
- 315.** The value of these arts as instruments of thought and learning should not obscure their intrinsic value in giving joy and richness of experience to human life, nor their very great importance in helping man achieve a deeper understanding of his own existence. The future priest, who is called to help man become both more truly human and more open to transcendent values, needs especially to appreciate the power of words and symbols in shaping man's life, and to use this power with sensitivity and reverence.

## **Article Two: Area of Concentration**

- 316.** To be liberally educated a student must not only be introduced to the broad areas of learning just described. He also needs an acquaintance in depth with some particular field of concentration in which he can come to an appreciation of the special methodology and discipline without which progress in human understanding is impossible.
- 317.** Traditionally, philosophy has been considered the most appropriate



area of concentration for a pre-theological student. It still remains a highly recommended choice, and every seminary should offer its students this opportunity. Today, however, psychology, the social sciences, and the communications arts also seem appropriate fields of concentration for some students. The possible fields should be judged by their contribution to the student's full human development, by his personal gifts and interests, and by the special ministries in which he may engage as a priest. If, however, he chooses a field of concentration other than philosophy, he is still required to complete philosophical studies equivalent to eighteen semester hours of course work.

### **Article Three: Integration of Studies**

**318.** The course of studies followed by each student should form an integrated whole, made up of basic studies required of all students, electives chosen to complete these studies and a field of concentration. They should be integrated by the emphasis on an understanding of man, and by philosophical and religious reflection as indicated above. (Note: See also *Appendix II: Relation of Philosophy and Theology.*)

**319.** The student's integration as a person, however, depends on more than the classroom. The Christian school should continue the work of the Christian family. It should be a true community which provides the student with an experience of Christian life, worship and comradeship. It should foster stimulating intellectual debate, a commitment to truth and the discipline and hard work necessary to attain it. In this community the student should deepen his appreciation of his Christian and national heritage. Opportunity should be provided also to develop physical skills, hobbies, and forms of recreation appropriate to his personality and style of life.

**320.** At the same time that the school community is fostering the student in his growth toward maturity, it should help him to transcend the limitations of his background and the prejudices of his class and culture. It should aim to make him aware of the needs of other men at every social level and in the world community and to understand his kinship with them. It should support this growth with suitable co-curricular and extracurricular activities, a widening sphere of experience, and actual participation in Christian service to the secular community.

## CHAPTER THREE:

### OTHER ELEMENTS OF FORMATION

**321.** In whatever type of institution the priestly candidate prepares at the collegiate level, he must be assisted with programs of spiritual formation, community life and discipline, and practical apostolic experience, in keeping with the general principles laid down in Part One, Chapters Three to Five, and the objectives stated in nn. 291-293.

#### Article One: Spiritual Formation

**322.** As the college seminarian grows from adolescence into responsible manhood and strives to recognize his vocation from God, appropriate spiritual direction is of fundamental importance. Under the Rector and with the cooperation of the seminary faculty, the Spiritual Director has the role of coordinating and implementing the Christian formation program of the seminary (cf. *supra*, n. 156).

**323.** In the fulfillment of his role, the Spiritual Director should strive to help the students integrate their study, prayer and apostolic activity. He should inculcate the ideals of priestly service to the People of God. These responsibilities must be fulfilled with due regard for the various levels of educational and personal development of the college students and for their diverse backgrounds of Christian formation. Thus their commitment to an authentic priestly vocation will be gradually discerned, strengthened, and increased.

**324.** By his conferences to the students, by his example, and especially by his individual direction, he encourages this spiritual formation. He should be available for the personal spiritual needs of the students and be alert to all counseling resources inside and outside the seminary community. Furthermore, it is his responsibility to coordinate the religious activities of the community. To satisfy adequately these responsibilities, the Spiritual Director must be free to dedicate his full time and energy to these objectives. By these efforts and this spiritual leadership, that morale which is the effect of true Christian charity is fostered and fortified.

**325.** As indicated in nn. 157-160, the seminary spiritual formation program should involve the collaborative effort of the whole faculty. It is advisable, therefore, that there be periodic consultations among the members of the faculty to implement this goal. Where all in the seminary, both faculty and students, by their example give true witness of Christian community, individual spiritual growth is greatly fostered. The seminarian will thus learn the importance of personal commitment of service to the larger Christian community.

**326.** Since the Mass is the center of Christian spiritual formation, daily participation is expected of a student preparing for the priesthood. The

responsibility for this participation should rest upon the student's conviction of the central role of the Mass in the development of the priestly life.

**327.** The community is the proper setting for liturgical activities. Meditation and other exercises of private prayer need not be done in common. In this regard the principle of gradualism should be applied at the college level so that the scheduling of time and place be progressively diminished. Thus the maturing student would become more responsible for the personal prayer needed for his transformation in Christ.

**328.** One must be a good Christian man before he can become a good priest. Especially on the college level, therefore, he should develop those qualities and virtues which "are highly regarded among men and speak well of a minister of Christ. Such are sincerity of heart, a constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's word, courtesy of manner, restraint, and kindness in speech" (*Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 11). The seminarian will be helped to grow in these social virtues if he is given real and substantial opportunities to exercise them.

## **Article Two: Community Life and Discipline**

**329.** As stated above in nn. 171-194, an important part of priestly formation takes place through the experience of living in the seminary community, where there is an organic network of personal relationships based on physical and emotional presence. This community living, likewise, requires some regulations for day-to-day living. In establishing such regulations, it is the role of authority to listen to all the voices within the community through properly established channels, to appraise the facts, and then to articulate policies and standards. The rule of the seminary should be simple in structure and sufficiently general to allow for personal initiative and responsibility in accordance with the level of development of the seminarian.

## **Article Three: Apostolic Experience**

**330.** The practical experience in the apostolate appropriate to the college level is primarily that of a layman engaged in the lay apostolate, rather than an anticipation of the strictly pastoral training undergone at the professional level. It should aim at:

- a) experience with the layman's role in the mission of the Church, especially through participation in catechetical activities, community and church organizations, and active liturgical participation;
- b) an acquaintance with the modern techniques furnished by the behavioral sciences and communication arts in the renewal of the religious and social order;
- c) broad acquaintance with the actual conditions of human life in our society, with special concern to understand the major prob-

lems of social justice, and the difficulties of minority and under-privileged groups in our society;

d) an ecumenical acquaintance with the situation of different religious groups and of those who pursue a way of life without religious commitment.

**331.** In these apostolic activities expert supervision (as described above in nn. 104-114) is essential, lest these experiences become a source of mere activism or even of discouragement. At the same time students should be encouraged to show initiative in discovering and meeting the needs of the world, since, according to the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 31, this is proper to the apostolate of the laity.

## CHAPTER FOUR: SEMINARY ADMINISTRATION

**332.** In the present circumstances of the Church in the United States, college level formation for future priests may be provided by several types of institutions. Because they are training men for the work of the Church, Ordinaries and religious superiors should make use of the best educational facilities available. Generally speaking, these institutions may be divided into three classes:

- a) The seminary college as a separate institution providing a complete program of academic and spiritual formation;
- b) The seminary college associated with another educational institution (normally but not necessarily Catholic) in whose program it participates. In this case the seminary college provides for the personal and spiritual formation of the student;
- c) The liberal arts college which is not a seminary, but which provides a program which meets the principal academic objectives set forth in these guidelines.

**333.** The seminary college of the type described in n. 332 (a) will have the same type of administrative organization as described in nn. 195-252. Other types should conform to the principles there given with such modifications as are necessary. It is the responsibility of the Ordinary, in consultation with the authorities of the other educational institutions involved in a cooperative program, to provide that the candidate for the priesthood under his charge receive a preparation substantially in accord with this *Program*.

**334.** Vocation directors or others appointed by the Ordinary have the responsibility of providing guidance and counsel to candidates for the priesthood concerning the objectives of priestly formation contained in these guidelines. They should also see that those candidates who are not yet resident in seminaries have assistance in the kind of spiritual and academic guidance that will best prepare them for entrance into a theological school.

**335.** The faculty of a Christian college ought to be made up of dedicated men and women—clerical, religious, or lay—who are highly competent in the special field of learning in which they teach and do research. There is no substitute for a teacher's professional competency, systematically evaluated by his peers and students.

**336.** The typical faculty member of such a college, however, should also be a person dedicated to the total formation of the students, willing to form with them a genuine community of learning and growth. Young men mature through identification with persons rather than by learning abstract principles or by exterior discipline. Faculty members must therefore be persons who exemplify the humanistic and Christian values and truths which are to be formative of the students.

**337.** The administration must share in these same qualities of personal fitness and academic competence, and with both faculty and students

must form a community of life and intellectual interests. Although their responsibility is to care for organization, finances and the public relations of the college community, administrators must be concerned primarily with helping the faculty in the work of education.

**338.** This implies:

a) The administration must recognize and support the primary responsibility of the faculty for academic standards;

b) In the statutes and school procedures the administration must provide for the rights of the faculty, including tenure and academic freedom, and carefully observe these rights, to be enforced equally for clerical, religious, and lay members of the faculty.

**339.** The administration also has the responsibility to maintain the rights and standards of the school as an educational corporation answerable to accrediting associations, the teaching profession, the students themselves, and the public. In protecting this educational integrity of the school, it has also the responsibility of mediating between the school and ecclesiastical or public authorities who may have some rights of supervision over, or rightful interest in, the school or its students.

**340.** An academic institution is by its very nature a community of persons mutually assisting each other in the pursuit of truth. Hence the students as well as the faculty have a right to a genuine participation, proportionate to their maturity, in the processes by which the academic and disciplinary programs of the school are determined. Each school should provide for this participation according to its circumstances, but in a manner which is genuine and not merely formal.

**341.** Where candidates for the priesthood receive all or part of their college education in colleges which are not Catholic, the provisions of n. 334 must be observed.

**342.** This type of humanistic education needs library facilities of high quality, as required by accrediting agencies, as well as laboratories and the other devices of modern technology so valuable to the learning process. It also demands the planning of school buildings well equipped for community living and worship as well as for study and discussion in small groups.

**343.** At the same time, it should be kept in mind that the fundamental resources of a school are the faculty and the student body. The development of the college seminary should be in the direction of flexibility as regards plant, and toward the maximum utilization of other opportunities in the community, and away from isolation. In particular, it should plan for increasing cooperation with other educational institutions, or, where such resources are not available, for suitable relocation.

# PART THREE:

## HIGH SCHOOL FORMATION

### CHAPTER ONE: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

**344.** The *Decree on Priestly Formation*, n. 3, commends the high school seminary but permits a diversity of programs. Such a diversity exists in the United States of America and is recognized as both necessary and useful. Each system aims at developing the seeds of priestly vocation, but differs somewhat in its particular educational objectives. Among the possible provisions are:

**345.** a) *The seminary high school.* This is an educational institution uniquely for adolescents who cherish at least a tentative desire for priestly service. The students are furnished an intensive spiritual, intellectual, and apostolic experience in which they may mature and nurture their initial desire to serve the Church as priests. These students should be fully prepared to transfer to other high schools if they decide upon a different vocation in life.

**346.** b) *A modified seminary high school.* This is an educational institution primarily for those who have at least a tentative desire for priestly service. It recognizes, however, that many of those who enter will change their vocational choice before the end of the high school course. But the institution encourages all students to continue their studies, despite the different vocational choice, so long as they maintain a suitable dedication to the Christian life, and observe school regulations. It sometimes happens that such students after reconsideration, reaffirm their choice to continue to the priesthood.

**347.** c) *A school of Christian leadership and service.* This is an educational institution for young men who aspire to various forms of Christian leadership and service. These students include those who wish to study for the priesthood.

**348.** d) *A residence home of formation.* In this arrangement the students live in a residence hall, receive spiritual guidance, counseling and supervision from seminary personnel. Their academic work is taken at a neighboring Catholic high school.

**349.** e) *"Pre-Seminary" programs.* In this system the students live at home, attend local high schools, either Catholic or public, and have assigned spiritual directors with whom they confer periodically. They gather for regular retreats, conferences, and workshops.

## CHAPTER TWO: ELEMENTS OF FORMATION

### Article One: Academic Formation

**350.** In general the goal of the high school curriculum should be that of a college preparatory program with a wide base in the humanities. The orientation of the past, with its heavy emphasis on language, should be realigned to conform with today's needs.

**351.** The Conciliar *Decree on Priestly Formation* requires students:

**. . . to achieve a knowledge of Latin which will enable them to understand and to make use of the sources of so many sciences and of the documents of the Church. The study of the liturgical language proper to each rite should be considered necessary . . . (n. 13).**

A course of at least two years' duration and suited to the ultimate achievement of these goals shall be offered in all seminary high schools.

**352.** Local seminary administrators are urged to consult with parochial and public school officials of the area so that the seminary courses, as far as possible, may be integrated with the educational programs of the vicinity. Some sharing of facilities and staff between seminary and local high schools may also be advisable.

**353.** In planning the curriculum, the seminary high school should take into account local or state requirements and the recommendations of state or regional accrediting agencies.

### Article Two: Spiritual Formation, Community Life and Discipline, and Apostolic Experience

**354.** The total faculty, especially all the priest faculty members, should be involved in formulating policies regarding spiritual direction, guidance, community life and discipline.

**355.** Special emphasis should be placed on the quality and content of spiritual direction. The spiritual program must be one designed for the needs of an adolescent, and not as though prematurely designed for a priest. As a baptized Christian, the seminarian is called to grow in the supernatural life of Christ's virtues and gifts. However, the natural virtues and those human values on which grace must build should be given due attention.

**356.** Spiritual directors should have adequate preparation, particularly in such disciplines as contemporary theology and counseling. They should also be persons with whom the students can experience suitable rapport. Where a large group of students so warrants, the use of multiple spiritual directors is desirable. If there are many spiritual directors involved, there should, however, be due coordination in the



spiritual program, so that each student may have the advice and help of a qualified priest.

**357.** The work of spiritual direction should be viewed as one wherein the director relates spiritual values to the total development of the adolescent boy.

**358.** Since the Mass is the center of Christian spiritual formation, daily attendance is expected of all. Every effort should be made to make this a completely meaningful experience for the adolescent. Music and liturgy should, as far as permissible, be adapted to the particular needs of this group.

**359.** The utmost attention must be given to fostering and maintaining a real and vital relationship with the family. Suitable periods at home with the family are especially encouraged.

**360.** Works of Christian service and apostolic experience suited to the student's maturity and development should be an integral part of the program of priestly training.

**361.** Participation in area events of a civic and cultural nature and also interscholastic competition on an academic and athletic basis are recommended.

**362.** The seminarian, as a Christian adolescent with the aid of spiritual direction and guidance at school and at home, will seek to grow in commitment to his life's vocation through a normal maturation process. The school, through positive formation rather than through confining restrictions, will seek to enhance the student's personal development.

**363.** When a boy aspires to Christian leadership as a celibate priest, he is responding to a call to grow in love for others without becoming exclusive in association. Social involvements which prematurely narrow one's interests conflict with this call. The students' parents, parish priests, and seminary counsellors should guide the students in making selections of activities and companions which will help them toward the goal of personal development.

## CHAPTER THREE: SEMINARY ADMINISTRATION

**364.** Approval or its equivalent on a state level shall be required as a minimal condition of operation. Accreditation on the regional level should be a goal of all such schools. In the event that such accreditation is judged beyond the resources of the institution in terms of man-power or money, urgent thought should be given to amalgamation. It should be emphasized that the religious purpose of the high school is no substitute for academic quality.

**365.** Seminaries should be located so that the students can have reasonable contact with their families and can share in educational, cultural, and social advantages beyond those of their own school.

**366.** Admission standards should require reasonable academic ability, keeping in mind the subsequent demands required on the college level. Particular emphasis should be given to the character of the prospective student. In evaluating his character, special attention should be paid to his family background, psychological health, potential for leadership and for generous service to the Church.

**367.** In the seminary high school, the priest has a very special role on the faculty. Nevertheless, religious sisters, religious brothers, lay men and women on the faculty can likewise contribute significantly to the program.

**368.** In choosing priests for the seminary, the appropriate authority should consider, among other factors, the willingness of the priest to engage in this form of apostolate and his genuine stability with regard to temperament, psychological health, and maturity. As a rule, he also should have some years of appropriate parochial or pastoral ministry. If not inconsistent with their obligations in the seminary, the professors should maintain a continuing experience of pastoral work.

**369.** A suitable method of communication should be established within the seminary by which the students may make appropriate suggestions to the seminary authorities. This has been shown to be helpful in the good functioning of the school and to provide the students with many opportunities to exercise responsibility and initiative.

**370.** School authorities should endeavor to maintain a close association with the parents of the students. The organization of parents' groups could be helpful to this purpose.

**371.** Advisory boards, involving both clergy and laity, are strongly recommended. These boards can be useful in promoting a more widespread interest and appreciation on the part of the Christian community regarding the seminary program.

# PART FOUR:

## THE RELIGIOUS PRIEST'S FORMATION<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER ONE: NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

#### Article One: Religious Life in General

**372.** Religious life in the Church, historically and traditionally expressed by commitment to the evangelical counsels, belongs inseparably to the life and the holiness of the Church (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 44). Though it is an ecclesial life-style which most often finds expression in a community living embraced for the sake of the kingdom, religious life does not belong to the hierarchical structure of the Church (*ibid.*). Nor is the grace of religious life the fruit of any sacrament. Rather, the grace of religious life is a charism of the Spirit which is quite distinct from the grace of office in the hierarchical Church and quite distinct from the grace of any one sacrament. As a sign of and a witness to the charismatic graces of the Holy Spirit (*Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life*, n. 2), religious life exercises a prophetic function in the Church. It offers to those who respond to these charismatic graces the possibility of a greater freedom from earthly cares and a more disinterested response to the urging of the Spirit toward the future (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 44), whether that future be the "tomorrow" here on earth or the future in the eschatological end-kingdom.

#### Article Two: Distinctive Religious Families

**373.** Throughout the history of the Church, religious families have been formed and approved by the Church as expressions of the charismatic graces. Distinctive marks have characterized these religious communities according to the insights of the founder and the historical development through discernment by his followers. What characterizes some communities is simply a total commitment to the life-style inspired by the evangelical counsels; what characterizes others, is some aspect of one of the counsels, or some central apostolic service.

**374.** Consequently, the total formation of religious priests has two goals: to deepen their understanding of religious life and to respond to the graces of that life in the particular context of their religious families.

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<sup>1</sup> The text of "Part Four: The Religious Priest's Formation" was supplied by the Formation Committee of the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men, and is published with a *nihil obstat* of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, pending publication by that Congregation of a *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Religiosae*.

## CHAPTER TWO: COMMUNITY LIFE

**375.** Canonical religious life is constituted by the vows lived in community, or, more specifically, by celibate community. Religious life is, thus, essentially a community life in imitation of the apostolic church at Jerusalem, which "continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in the communion of the breaking of the bread and in the prayers," which "held all things in common" as a sign of unity and a way of sharing their possessions with those in need (*Acts 4:42-45*). This section attempts to state briefly the formative role of community life in the religious seminarian.

**376.** By community life we mean both the structures of the common life and communion (*koinonia*) in faith and charity. Structures vary; the monastic life-style, for example, is different from that of an apostolic congregation. But the underlying goal of all Christian community is basically the same. It is not mere togetherness but mutuality; it is living in the bonds of charity, in reconciliation, sharing, and bearing one another's burdens.

**377.** It is man's very nature to live in community. As a being open to other beings, man is never being-unto-himself; he never merely exists; he co-exists, and he co-exists to the fullest degree in his relationship with other persons. Thus, as a being-in-relation to other persons, the individual finds community a needed milieu in and through which he becomes himself, fully human, fully a person. Personhood and community are correlatives.

**378.** This relationship does not compromise individuality; community heightens the uniqueness of the person. Freedom, tolerance, pluriformity are marks of a mature community. Yet the ways members communicate, interact, and relate to each other and to authority are deeply and pervasively formative of the individual. This is so, because men become themselves through their life together. Community is an event that takes place on the level of shared values and shared concern, and it is on this level that a man becomes the person he is.

**379.** Sharing values with one's brothers is the primary source of the seminarian's personal growth. Participation makes the difference. By participating in the reflection and decision-making, by accepting the responsibilities and common goals of the group, the religious seminarian takes on a new self-awareness and self-realization. It goes without saying that the values and goals in question are the authentic and legitimate ones for the religious priesthood. They are centered in Christ, the perfect Man, who authenticates what is truly human and incarnates what is genuinely religious. While religious forego certain human goods "for the sake of the kingdom" (*Matthew 19:12*), they are pursuing their own project of human development and are seeking a transcendent human fulfillment in Christ (*Development of Peoples*, n. 16). Religious are neither more or less Christian than their married brothers and

sisters. They simply have their own way of expressing the primacy of Christ in their Christian lives.

**380.** The religious seminary will mirror the type of community life that is the particular order's ideal. In general, however, there should be both an emphasis on the human qualities of community and the effort to build a community of faith. Religious life has its own genius. It is not exactly family life; nor is it purely functional and institutional. It is neither totally task-oriented nor entirely person-centered. It is its own way of life. So, for example, it encourages warm, human relationships, but it does not expect friendship to occur with every member; it studiously avoids exclusive attachments that destroy the freedom to love and nourish egoism. Religious strive to anticipate individual needs, to understand and to accept each other, to be open and communicative, to support and encourage one another; yet they continue to place the common good above the private good. The religious seminary seeks a participatory rule, but it does not equate democracy with egalitarianism. At the present time it is not clear which structures best implement these goals. Each community must make its own choice between the traditional seminary-institution and small group-living, between the seminary apart from or integrated with established communities in other apostolates, between residing alone with members of one's own congregation or living in clusters with other religious groups. Whatever the physical conditions, the real possibility of authentic human living is the criterion and goal.

**381.** The religious community is also a community of faith. It is founded on a common experience of the faith and leads to the celebration of that faith, especially in the common Eucharist and other prayers together. Today especially the community is seen as the point of departure for a life of prayer; prayer grows out of the sincere effort to live in peace and charity under God, and common prayer is the celebration of that life. Community is also the school for the apostolate, since the priestly ministry particularly consists in building community. The extension of the kingdom of God is the spread of the rule of charity on earth. Community life prepares the future priest for this vocation and is, in short, the key to the personal formation of the priest.

## CHAPTER THREE: COMMITMENT TO THE COUNSELS

### Article One: Evangelical Counsels

**382.** From the early days of the Church, there have been men and women who have committed themselves totally to Christ by means of the counsels, especially chastity, poverty and obedience. The Church blessed communities of such dedicated people where a sense of mission found expression in a greater service to the family of man. Thus, in this context of apostolic activity, corporate mission, community, and communal witness, the religious seminarian comes to understand the life of the counsels. For the counsels are charismatic graces given to the religious but for the good of the entire People of God, for the good of the community. In this context the religious seminarian realizes that his commitment is a sign and a witness to something beyond the grace of baptism and different from the grace of Orders.

### Article Two: Chastity

**383.** Throughout his formation the young religious should come to appreciate that religious life is a specific kind of total commitment. Because religious life is an all-inclusive or universal commitment to love, it is not too difficult to see the importance of virginity (consecrated celibacy), that "precious gift of divine grace" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 42). For religious, virginity must be of prime importance for it is by this commitment that it is possible for them to imitate by their life of love the all-inclusive love of the risen Christ. From the first moment of their response to charismatic grace, then, young religious should realize that they are professing to keep themselves open to anyone and to everyone whom their apostolate brings into their lives. This would extend first and immediately to those with whom they form community and then to all others.

### Article Three: Obedience

**384.** For the religious, obedience takes on a meaning much more significant than mere execution to the dictates of a superior. Affectively committed to an all-inclusive love, young religious learn that they bind themselves to a process of community dialogue and discernment which terminates with the decision. To responsibly engage in a process that seeks to discover the promptings of the Spirit, demands both a response to these promptings and their effective execution which is obedience. Like virginity, obedience is informed by love, for it is only under the promptings of fraternal charity that genuine dialogue and discernment can take place. It is only in charity that one can put himself at the disposal of the Holy Spirit for the good of any and all in the kingdom.

### Article Four: Poverty

**385.** Our riches in religious life, then, become what they have been and are: the riches of Christ and the things of the end-kingdom. What we

gain and what we earn and what we possess, all are for Christ and for His kingdom. But since we have committed ourselves to discernment through and with the community, so it is only through and with the community that we live out our commitment to poverty. Here, too, the young religious candidate for the priesthood should come to see that commitment to poverty means an offering of the totality of one's talent, energies, interests, productivity, and time. Along with the other counsels, this commitment is part of the total dedication which patterns "the Christian man after that manner of virginal and humble life which Christ the Lord elected for Himself" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 46).

## CHAPTER FOUR: EARLY TRAINING: NOVITIATE

### Article One: Introduction

**386.** The principal purpose of the period which has traditionally been called the novitiate, is to initiate the young man into the essential and the primary requirements of the religious life, especially in regard to chastity, poverty and obedience as lived in community. Obviously, then, men who are accepted into the novitiate should be emotionally mature, sociable, responsible, and already aware of a true Christian dimension in their everyday lives (*Instruction on the Renewal of Religious Formation*, nn. 4, 13). Rather than being a time of protection, the novitiate should be a period of one's religious life set aside to foster and to deepen these qualities already present in the young man and to deepen one's commitment to the life of the evangelical counsels.

**387.** In five areas in particular development should take place: prayer, creative initiative, responsibility, community experience and formative academics.

### Article Two: Areas of Formation

#### 1. Prayer

**388.** Right from the start of one's religious life, the young men should be guided to a deeper appreciation of a Christ-centered existence and to those means that will keep his prayerful communion with God alive. A realization of the integration and the concomitant tensions that arise from the effort to unite prayer with work, study, social and apostolic contacts, must be challenges of every moment of this period of his life (*op. cit.*, n. 5). He must come to realize that there are several ways to pray, become experienced with them, and learn to be comfortable in all of them—liturgy, communal prayer, individual and private prayer, the recognition of Christ in others, meditative reading, Scripture services, etc. He should learn how to arrange a proper balance between periods set aside for solitude with God and periods devoted to activity and to the human contacts that this activity involves (*Instruction on the Renewal of Religious Formation*, n. 5).

#### 2. Initiative

**389.** To make growth and maturity possible, freedom is a prerequisite—freedom to choose many of the means and ways to develop oneself. In practice, many of the works undertaken during this period of formation should come from the initiative of the young man himself (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, n. 46). In this way, he will come to learn how to discuss and to collaborate with superiors and with other members of the community. It is in a growth-climate of this kind that one learns the inner freedom to accept the tensions, pressures, and the ordered discipline over which one has no command. Here, too, the young



man must learn how to discern between the individual and the common good.

### **3. Responsibility**

**390.** The risk of personal responsibility with all the possibilities for learning through mistakes, with the difficulty of seeing a job through to the finish, with the tensions that come with responsibility must be allowed the young man during these years also (*Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life*, n. 15). This applies to jobs within the community, to apostolates, and experimental periods within and without the community (*Instruction on the Renewal of Religious Formation*, nn. 5, 25). All these should be planned by the director of the program and carried out with a view of forming the young man and even in some instances of testing his aptitude for the life of religious community.

### **4. Community Experience**

**391.** From the start, the young man should be helped to sense that he has entered a home in which he is fully appreciated as a mature and dedicated member who contributes to the happiness and the effectiveness of the community. He should experience a general feeling of support from his peers and also from the total community into which he has been accepted (*Norms for Implementation of Four Council Decrees*, II n. 36). From the start, too, he must be able to experience belonging to an active, apostolic group much larger than merely the class of peers with whom he has entered the religious life.

### **5. Academics**

**392.** The early years of religious life should not be devoid of an intellectual and academic formation. This period should include study and meditation on the Scriptures, on doctrinal topics, and on the nature of religious life as well as the Constitutions of one's own religious family. All these are necessary for the total development as a person, a Christian, and a religious (*loc. cit.*, nn. 33, 36). Even though these courses may not be formal academic courses, they should be substantial. During this period, too, the "asceticism of the academic" should be stressed (*Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life*, n. 15). The young man should learn how the pressures, tensions, cares, discipline, competition, and demands of study form the grist for ascetical practices.

**393.** All in all, then, the initial stage of formation should be a time both of probation and of formation (*loc. cit.*, n. 31) during which the grace of vocation should be cultivated and one's personal commitment to the religious life should manifest itself with definite signs of growth.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ADMINISTRATION

**394.** The administration of religious seminaries is often governed, to a greater or lesser degree, by the constitutions and other legislation or directives of the religious institutions. It is also affected by studies made either within the whole religious order or congregation, by studies made within a province and by discussions and studies within the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men. The Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men encourages such studies and restructuring of seminary education, especially in the light of the particular needs of the Church in the United States. At the same time, it understands the need of individual religious orders and congregations to preserve whatever is distinctive in their own seminary administration.

**395.** Areas in which such distinctive administrative procedures are more likely to appear are in the appointment and duties of the various officers of administration, admission requirements, evaluation techniques, especially in connection with the novitiate, and the special relationships of students with administrators which arise from vows and community life.

**396.** The Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Men, therefore, accepts the guidelines of *The Program of Priestly Formation* of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in regard to seminary administration (cf. *supra*, nn. 195-252; 332-343; 364-371) except insofar as otherwise provided by the distinctive regulations of each religious order or congregation.

## APPENDIX I

### MODEL CURRICULA FOR THEOLOGATE AND SEMINARY COLLEGE

#### 1. MEANING OF "MODEL CURRICULUM"

The following description of "Model Curricula" is intended only as the outlining of some possible ways of implementing the academic portions of *The Program of Priestly Formation* on the theological and college levels (nn. 23-76; 294-320). These curricula are not proposed as models in the sense of ideal solutions which other curricula should imitate. They are not proposed as obligatory nor as descriptions of what is being done in any seminary. Rather the term "model of a curriculum" is used in the standard meaning of that phrase in American educational practice, i.e., a model curriculum is one way of organizing the learning experiences associated with different fields of knowledge and their proper methodologies, in order to achieve the goals that have been set forth in the school's statement of objectives. *The Program of Priestly Formation* states (n. 39) that it is the responsibility of the individual seminary's administration and faculty to determine their own program in view of the objectives, resources, and needs of students, of the individual seminary. This responsibility, however, must be exercised in proper submission to the prior responsibility of the Ordinary and the Seminary Board (cf. nn. 202 and 205).

#### 2. MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL THEOLOGICAL CURRICULA

##### A. *Basic Requirements to be kept in mind*

An analysis of *The Program of Priestly Formation*, nn. 23-76, and a study of American educational practice indicate several basic requirements in the structure of the seminary's professional theological curriculum.

1. The four years of the theology program should normally involve approximately one hundred and twenty credit hours, including the academic credits that are given in connection with the Field Education Program. These credit hours should be distributed, according to recognized practice of American education, to the several required fields of knowledge and their methodologies of studying reality, to elective courses, and to the Field Education Program.

2. American educational practice recognizes that at least twenty credit hours of elective courses should be left to the student's free selection, under the guidance of the Academic Dean.

3. *The Program of Priestly Formation* lists the principal fields of theological knowledge to which the student must be introduced and their proper methodologies in which he must be exercised. They are biblical studies, historical studies, studies in systematic theology, liturgical studies, and training in practical pastoral skills. The *Program* also insists that, in accord with American professional edu-

cation, the student undergo a variety of educational pastoral experiences in the Field Education Program and that these be properly supervised. *The Decree on Priestly Formation* suggests that he complete his philosophical formation by studying philosophical problems that are closely connected with theological matters, and that he thus form a vital integration of philosophy and theology.

With these observations in mind one might construct a model of a professional theological curriculum as outlined below. In this outline there is no attempt to indicate the year or semester of teaching a particular course. When a number of credits are listed for a course, this is not intended to mean that this is the ideal number of credit hours to be allotted.

## **B. Model Curricula for Professional Theological Formation**

### **First Example**

*Prenote:* Courses marked with an asterisk (\*) might be taken during the college years; if completed satisfactorily on that level, they need not be taken again on the theological level.

*Biblical Studies* 18 Credit Hours

- \*Introduction to Biblical Studies
- Biblical Themes
- Exegesis of Old Testament
- Exegesis of New Testament

*Historical Studies* 15 Credit Hours

- \*Methodology of History
- \*Survey Course in Church History
- Course in Special Period of Church History
- History of Development of Doctrine

*Studies in Systematic Theology* 36 Credit Hours

(The student must acquire and demonstrate a competence in all areas of theology listed below, whether by survey courses, required or elective, by required reading-and-examination courses on a pass-fail basis, or such methods; at least several of these courses should be taught in such a way that there is integrated in the treatment of the subject matter the biblical, historical, liturgical and systematic approaches of theology.)

- \*Fundamental Theology, including a course in Apologetics
- \*God—Creation (could be integrated with Natural Theology, i.e., Theodicy course)
- Christian Anthropology
- Grace and Virtues
- Christology and Mariology
- Church (Mission, Authority, Principles of Ecumenism)
- Moral-Ascetical Theology
- Canon Law

Christian Social Principles and Practice	
Sacramental Theology	
*Theology of Liturgy	
Theology of History, Christian Secularity	
<i>Practical Pastoral Skills</i>	18 Credit Hours
Art of Leadership in Liturgical Action	
Pastoral Psychology (Counseling, Guidance, Group Dynamics)	
Communications Arts (including Catechetics and Homiletics)	
<i>Philosophy</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Field Education Program</i>	7 Credit Hours
<i>Electives</i>	20 Credit Hours
Additional courses in Philosophy	
Additional courses in History	
Additional courses in Biblical Studies	
Additional courses in Systematics	
Additional courses in Ecumenism	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120 Credit Hours</b>

*Note:* No course in ecumenical theology is listed as a part of this "model curriculum." The principles of ecumenical theology are a part of the theology of the Church and may well constitute a formal course. Some opportunity might also be given for special courses among the electives.

## Second Example

### 1. Basic Requirements for All Students

<i>Biblical Studies</i>	21 Credit Hours
Introduction to Biblical Studies	
Synoptic Gospels	
Biblical Literature of Old Testament	
Biblical Literature of New Testament	
Biblical Bases of Doctrine—I	
Biblical Bases of Doctrine—II	
Hermeneutics	
<i>Systematic Theology</i>	21 Credit Hours
Fundamental Theology, including a course in Apologetics	
God, Christ and Redemption	
Grace, Sinfulness and Justification	
General Treatment of Sacramental Theology	
Sacraments of Vocation	
Introduction to Liturgy	
<i>Historical Theology</i>	12 Credit Hours
Religion and the Modern World	
Introduction to Historical Theology	
Course in Special Period of History of the Development of Doctrine	
Modern Protestantism and Ecumenism	

<i>Moral-Ascetical and Pastoral Theology</i>	30 Credit Hours
Theology of Canon Law	
Canon Law of Sacraments	
Parochial Law (special course for students for diocesan priesthood)	
Foundations of Christian Living (Moral-Ascetical Theology)	
Selected Questions in Christian Living (Moral-Ascetical Theology)	
Introduction to Personal and Group Guidance	
Sacrament of Penance and the Art of Confessional Practice	
Ascetical Theology	
Social Morality	
Communications Arts	
<i>Field Education Program</i>	7 Credit Hours
<i>Electives</i>	20 Credit Hours
Additional courses in Philosophy	
Additional courses in History	
Additional courses in Biblical Studies	
Additional courses in Systematics	
Additional courses in Ecumenism	

## **2. Special Concentration Area**     9 Credit Hours

In addition to the basic curriculum outlined above, students will be required to specialize in one of the above areas of theological learning (biblical, systematic, historical or moral and pastoral). This requirement may be fulfilled in one of several possible ways: for example, by three academic courses of three hours each in a relevant field, or by a series of practica, or by an extended supervised project. The student must complete this requirement before he is admitted to the comprehensive examination.

## **3. MODELS OF COLLEGE SEMINARY CURRICULA**

### **A. Basic Requirements to be kept in mind**

An analysis of *The Program of Priestly Formation*, nn. 294-320, and a study of American educational practice indicate several basic requirements in the structure of the seminary college curriculum.

- 1) The four years of the college program should normally involve approximately one hundred and twenty credit hours. These credit hours should be distributed according to recognized practice of American education to the area of major concentration, to the several required fields of knowledge and their methodologies of studying reality, and to elective courses.
- 2) American educational practice requires twenty-four credit hours successfully completed in one's major area of concentration.
- 3) American educational practice recognizes that at least twenty

credit hours of elective courses should be left to the student's free selection, under the guidance of the Academic Dean.

4) *The Program of Priestly Formation* requires that the candidate for the priesthood shall have successfully completed at least eighteen credit hours in the study of philosophy (cf. n. 317).

5) American educational practice in liberal arts colleges requires that the students be introduced to the various fields of knowledge and to the various methodologies of studying reality. In addition to that of philosophy, *The Program of Priestly Formation* lists other fields of knowledge and their methodologies under the following headings: The Study of Man (involving the behavioral and social sciences, and the cultural history of man, cf. nn. 294-298), Natural Science and Mathematics (nn. 299-300), Religious and Theological Study (nn. 306-308, 49), and the Communications Arts and Fine Arts and Language Skills (nn. 309-315).

6) A minimum of credit hours in each area is suggested as being realistically necessary to achieve an introduction to the various fields of learning and an initial formation in the respective methodologies. The minimum is kept low, in order to allow seminaries greater freedom in developing their own programs, and to facilitate the transfer of students from "outside" colleges to the seminary college. Eighteen credit hours are suggested in the study of man, twelve credit hours in religious and theological study, nine credit hours in the study of the natural sciences and mathematics, and fourteen credit hours in the communications arts, fine arts, and language skills.

7) A variety of courses exists in each of these fields of knowledge, and the individual seminary should construct the curriculum according to its objectives, resources, and the needs of its students. We shall indicate some of the alternatives that might be available in several of the areas of learning.

a) The behavioral sciences might include experimental psychology, educational psychology, etc.

b) The social sciences might include an integrated course in all areas of social science, or a course in one or more of the areas of social science, e.g., economics, sociology, political science or anthropology.

c) The history course might treat the development of present conditions, institutions, and culture, e.g., cultural history of Western Europe, cultural history of the United States.

d) The course in natural science might be a general introduction to natural science, or a course, e.g., in physical or biological science.

e) A course in mathematics should be taught in addition to the course on natural science.

f) Courses in the fine arts might include a two-credit course in music, outlining the history of its development and providing some appreciation of this art form, and a two-credit course in

the arts of painting and sculpture and architecture, outlining the history of their development and providing some appreciation of these art forms.

g) Courses in the communications arts might be in speech (pulpit, radio, television), the art of teaching, or of catechizing, homiletics, debate, drama.

h) English language study as a basic tool for communicating might deal with composition, rhetoric, and argumentation. The study of the English language might also be from the standpoint of the humanistic values of literature, or a situation of English literature within the context of world literature.

i) Latin: A reading knowledge of Latin might be an entrance requirement in many seminary colleges; courses might be offered, or tutoring or other methods provided, to supply the deficiency of those entering without this knowledge.

j) Language skills might be required in some seminary colleges in view of the apostolate the students would be expected to exercise; in other seminary colleges, these might be elective courses; e.g., courses in modern languages, such as Spanish, French, German.

k) Elective courses might include many of the courses mentioned above, if they are not already a part of the required curriculum. In addition, there might be elective courses in Classical Latin, in the history of the classical period of Greek and Latin literature, history courses specializing in the ancient, medieval, modern or contemporary periods, courses in educational administration, in modern social problems, etc.

With these presuppositions, a model of a seminary college curriculum might be developed as outlined below. In this construction, there is no attempt to indicate the year or semester of teaching the course, but rather something of the nature of the course and the credit hours spent on it.



## **B. Models of college seminary curricula**

### **First Example**

<i>Philosophy</i>	24 Credit Hours
<i>Religious and Theological Studies</i>	18 Credit Hours
<i>Behavioral Science: e.g., Psychology</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Social Science: Integrated Course in,</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Cultural History of Western Civilization</i>	12 Credit Hours
<i>General Course in Natural Science</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>College Mathematics</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Music Appreciation</i>	2 Credit Hours
<i>Fine Arts Appreciation (painting, sculpture, architecture)</i>	2 Credit Hours
<i>Speech</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>College English and Rhetoric</i>	12 Credit Hours
<i>Electives</i>	20 Credit Hours
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120 Credit Hours</b>

### **Second Example**

#### **For a Bachelor in Science with a Major in Psychology**

##### **a. Required of all students for priesthood regardless of major**

<i>Philosophy</i>	18 Credit Hours
<i>Religious Studies</i>	12 Credit Hours
<i>Latin</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Fine Arts</i>	3 Credit Hours
<i>Psychology of Normal Adjustment</i>	3 Credit Hours

##### **b. Additional courses for one with major in psychology**

<i>Psychology</i>	24 Credit Hours
<i>Biology</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Mathematics</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>Social Sciences</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>History of Western Civilization</i>	6 Credit Hours
<i>English</i>	8 Credit Hours
<i>Communications Skills</i>	2 Credit Hours
<i>Electives</i>	20 Credit Hours
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120 Credit Hours</b>

## APPENDIX II

### RELATION OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

This Appendix to the Academic Curriculum for the College Seminary consists of an interpretation of certain points treated in the section of the *Decree on Priestly Formation* dealing with philosophy (n. 14).

**In revising ecclesiastical studies the aim should first of all be that the philosophical and theological disciplines be more suitably aligned and that they harmoniously work toward opening more and more the minds of the students to the mystery of Christ. For it is this mystery which affects the whole history of the human race, continually influences the Church, and is especially at work in the priestly ministry.**

**That this vision be communicated to the students from the outset of their training, ecclesiastical studies are to be begun with an introductory course which should last for an appropriate length of time. In this initiation to ecclesiastical studies the mystery of salvation should be so proposed that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be helped to establish and penetrate their own entire lives with faith and be strengthened in embracing their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart.**

In applying this to the work of educating candidates for the priesthood in the United States of America, certain questions arise concerning the organization of the curriculum of philosophy, its content, and the methods of instruction. The following are brief guidelines to the solution of these problems:

#### A. WHAT IS "INTEGRATION"?

The term "integration" implies a process by which an organic unity is formed. An organic unity is characterized by (a) the differentiation of parts so that each can perform a distinct and proper function; (b) the interrelation of these parts so that all these functions are coordinated in activity to a common goal. Hence "integration" does not mean "confusion." Although closely related, the roles of philosophy and theology must remain distinct. In Christian education philosophy continues to have a proper role, a value in its own right, which it cannot serve unless it is taught according to its own methods and criteria of truth distinct from those of theology.

## **B. DOES THE STUDY OF PHILOSOPHY HAVE VALUE IN ITS OWN RIGHT IN THE FORMATION OF A PRIEST, OR, ONLY AS A "HAND-MAID OF THEOLOGY"? WHAT IS THIS PROPER VALUE?**

In the formation of a priest philosophy does have an important value in its own right. This proper role is in assisting the future priest to become a mature, liberally educated man. A well-educated person needs some measure of philosophical understanding for three reasons:

- a) Without some philosophical insight he will have difficulty in transcending the limits of his own time, culture and prejudices to have a sympathy and dialogue with the whole human community and an openness to the future.
- b) Without this insight, he will not be able to discriminate and relate the different kinds of knowledge which make up the sum of human learning, and hence will not be able to interpret his study of the sciences and humanities in their significance for man.
- c) The progress of philosophy through the centuries has achieved a deeper and more critical understanding of certain "perennially valid" truths, such as "the nature of our knowledge, the proper meaning of truth, the metaphysical and transcendental principles founded on truth, the teachings on God as infinite and personal, the Creator of all things, or the nature of man, the immortality of the soul, the dignity of the human person, the duties which the natural moral law reveals to man and imposes on him by his very nature" (Allocation of Pius XII at the Gregorianum, October 1953, AAS, 45, 682-690).

## **C. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY AS A PREPARATION FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDY?**

Philosophy performs very important services for theological reflection. In seeking to penetrate the Word of God and express it in terms accessible to human understanding, the theologian finds philosophy a very useful instrument. In turn the philosopher often stimulates the theologian to creative thinking, and usefully criticizes the accuracy of the theologian's language and the rigor of his thought. The student of theology who is not able to profit from these services of philosophy is handicapped in his studies, and even runs the risk of confusing human philosophical speculation with the holy Word of God when he finds these blended in theological writings.

A student who attempts to advance in theological studies without philosophical preparation and concomitant growth in philosophical insight, will find himself unable to grasp clearly many important issues in theology. To achieve a genuine freedom and soundness of judgment, and to make an authentic acceptance of basic principles of thought and conduct, he needs the intellectual discipline required to transcend uncritical opinions (*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 61 b, footnote 148).

Nevertheless, theology is not formally dependent on philosophy. Rather, by the Word of God, it judges the philosophy which it uses so as not to be enslaved by that "vain philosophy" of which St. Paul speaks (*Col. 2:8*). The priest is a man sent by Christ to declare the Word of God, not to teach theology, let alone philosophy. Hence in the formation of priests, it must be kept clearly in mind that the measure of all studies is the priest's responsibility to use the gifts given him by the Spirit to serve God's people. In regard to this sacred ministry, he needs philosophical formation to be a liberally educated man, and he needs theology to have the assistance of its clarifications and formulations, but he is not primarily dependent on these but on the Holy Spirit. This truth, however, is clearly no excuse for laziness or presumption. Such would only lead a candidate for the priesthood to neglect study of disciplines that can assist him in his great responsibilities.

#### **D. WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAJOR EMPHASIS IN THE TEACHING OF PHILOSOPHY?**

Since the fundamental role of philosophy in the seminary curriculum is to contribute to the student's liberal education, the following emphasis should be given:

a) What is vitally important is not "to cover all the topics," but to help the student, according to his capacity, to achieve some genuine understanding of his own nature and existence, his relation to other men, his relation to the world, and his relation to God. This understanding must be a personal assimilation, open to future growth and deepening through experience, dialogue with others, study and reflection.

b) The student should understand philosophy as an historical dialogue between men seeking truth, and this dialogue has already yielded a precious heritage of authentic understanding, although it is always raising new questions, or casting new light on old achievements. Among these achievements the tradition of scholastic philosophy ought to be familiar to all Catholic students for the priesthood.

#### **E. HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PHILOSOPHY IN THE CURRICULUM?**

This philosophical formation can be achieved by the candidate for the priesthood without sacrificing the other necessary elements of an up-to-date liberal education or theological formation:

a) if the seminary college provides a sequence of basic philosophical courses which raise and explore the fundamental questions about man, his world, the validity of human knowledge, and man's relation to God in historical context.

b) if in the seminary college opportunity is given within the courses of the sciences and humanities (or by special seminars) for reflection

on the basic assumptions of these human disciplines and their interdisciplinary relations. This requires an atmosphere of lively interdisciplinary dialogue among the faculty members themselves.

c) if philosophical growth is continued during the years of theological formation.

## **F. WHAT ARE THE "CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS . . . EXERCISING SPECIAL INFLUENCE" IN THE UNITED STATES?**

These are very complex, but they certainly include:

a) Trends of European origin, in particular (1) existentialism, process philosophy, phenomenology, and personalism; (2) analytic philosophy and the philosophy of science.

b) Trends that reflect the growth of the larger world community, especially (1) Marxism and (2) the oriental philosophies.

c) Trends of American origin, especially (1) our tradition of religious freedom and cultural pluralism, and our traditions of democracy and civil rights based on natural law; (2) pragmatism and operationalism. (3) There are also current social problems on the national scene, such as racism, war, poverty, and atheism which raise important philosophical issues that need to be further studied.

Obviously the student cannot explore all these trends, but he should have an appreciation of their influence on American culture and their positive values for man's understanding of himself.

## **G. SHOULD PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES CONTINUE IN THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY?**

After the student has become acquainted with the basic problems and methods of theology, he should have an opportunity in some special courses or seminars to return to a consideration in greater depth of selected philosophers and their influence on theology.

Therefore, it is not necessary that the college program should be comprehensive in its treatment of philosophy; rather it should emphasize genuine understanding of key questions.

## **H. HOW IS THIS PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERSTANDING TO BE INTEGRATED ORGANICALLY WITH THEOLOGICAL STUDY?**

We can summarize the foregoing answers in three principal points:

a) Philosophical study in the college years should aim principally at assisting the formation of the student as a mature human person, and thus should be taught according to its own methods, and for its own proper value, not as an adulterated theology.

b) However, the student himself is a Christian responding to Christ's call to the priesthood. For philosophy to be relevant for him, he must see it as contributing to his Christian vocation. By helping him become a mature person, philosophy helps him to imitate Christ the Man. Furthermore, if the student has developed proportionately in his religious and theological understanding during the college years, he will see the historical development of philosophical thought as a part of human history, which as a Christian he will seek to understand as salvation history. Finally, in his efforts at theological understanding of the dialogue between the various world-religions and non-religious views of life, he will begin to appreciate the value of philosophical accuracy and flexibility of thought.

Thus the student is introduced to philosophy in the context of his life as a Christian. In this sense, at least, we should teach a "Christian philosophy." Helpful to this orientation is the Introductory Course on the Mystery of Christ, required by the *Decree on Priestly Formation* (n. 14) which might be placed in the college seminary program, or for religious congregations, in the novitiate (cf. *The Program of Priestly Formation*, n. 46).

c) Philosophical study should be continued during the years of theological study for its value both as an instrument of theology and as a criticism of theology, as well as for its own proper value. Such courses should be based on questions raised by the theological courses and might profitably be in the form of seminars dealing with: (1) particular topics such as the "God problem," anthropology, the nature of morality, etc.; (2) particular philosophers who have greatly influenced theology in the past or today; (3) methodological questions such as hermeneutics, the philosophy of language, analogy, etc.

## I. HOW IS THE SUCCESS OF A PHILOSOPHICAL PROGRAM IN PRIESTLY FORMATION TO BE EVALUATED?

A philosophical program should be judged not in terms of numbers of required courses, time allotted, or traditional branches of philosophy or topics covered, but in terms of the student's personal growth in philosophical understanding concerning himself, other people, the world and God, in view of his priestly vocation. In the evaluation and examination of a candidate for the priesthood, it should be determined whether in fact he has acquired something of the philosophical point of view. Such questions as the following should be asked:

a) Does the candidate have an explicit awareness of the basic assumptions of his own thinking, and is he critical of them?

b) Is he aware of the diversity of men's views on basic issues, and does he show how dialogue between men of different views contributes to progress in truth?

c) Can he accurately and sympathetically understand philosophical discourse in a written test or in dialogue?

d) Is he courageous and dedicated in his pursuit of the truth and concerned to communicate it when it is found? Is he liberated from scepticism, dogmatism and magical thinking?

e) Is he humble before the facts, and does he have a faith in the power of human intelligence when it is rightly used?

f) Is he aware of the influence of theory on practice and practice on theory? Does he realize the philosopher's duty to criticize the values of the society in which he lives and to influence it for good?

g) As a Christian, does he appreciate reason as a gift of God, and at the same time understand its liability to blindness and perversion, its need of redemption through faith?

## APPENDIX III

### SOME SPECIAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE HIGH SCHOOL SEMINARY

With regard to the seminary high school there are those who say:

- 1) Specialized training on this level can have a tendency to produce vocational doubt and soul-searching that may lead to a premature or ill-considered decision to discontinue priestly studies.
- 2) An unrealistic commitment is expected of the boys during a period of marked adolescent change and uncertainty.
- 3) There is danger of isolation from family and peers.
- 4) Some boys may seek enrollment as a sort of refuge from life's realities.
- 5) The cost of operation compared to the high rate of attrition is a hardship for many dioceses and religious communities.

In favor of the seminary high school the following points were offered by qualified consultants:

- 1) Grades 9-12 are an especially apt time for the students to acquire motives for service in the Church and to develop those personal, moral, and mental habits which are needed by a good Christian leader, and especially by a priest. In the event of discontinuance, these qualities can well serve the Church through the lay alumni.
- 2) The seminary high school is an available means for the adolescent to test his tentative choice of the priesthood, particularly through association with dedicated priests and through an explanation of priestly work. The student is able to obtain a deeper knowledge of himself and a recognition of personal strengths or weaknesses with regard to the priesthood.
- 3) The seminary high school offers peer group reinforcement for development of a desire to serve the Church as a priest. The institution seeks this through the presentation of a common goal, and the preservation of an openness and readiness to achieve that goal.
- 4) The seminary high school can offer a needed antidote to many non-Christian influences observable in many schools and even in many homes professedly Christian. This argument is especially applicable in areas where Catholic influence is limited or almost non-existent in secondary education.
- 5) The seminary high school generally offers a particularly advantageous educational process. Among the advantages in this regard are smaller classes, religious guidance, association with priests, and personal attention.



6) It is usually pointed out that only 15-18% of the ninth grade entrants persevere to the priesthood. It should be noted, however, that a similar attrition is indicated regarding many leading professions. Even though the number of students ordained is relatively small, the seminary high school is recognized by many as a stabilizing influence in the development of priestly vocations.

## APPENDIX IV

### PASTORAL CARE OF VOCATIONS<sup>1</sup>

1. Chief among the pastoral duties of the bishops is that of fostering vocations, not only for their own dioceses but for the Church universal. For this vocation-apostolate they have as principal collaborators the diocesan and religious vocation directors. Each diocese and religious province, if at all possible, should have a full-time coordinator for the work of church vocations (*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 8).

2. Essentially the role of the diocesan director of vocations is to coordinate the total vocation program in the diocese. His concern is not just for the candidates for the diocesan clergy but for the diocese's total vocation-apostolate for the Church. The religious vocation directors do not concentrate their efforts solely on the needs of their own particular community, but also cooperate with the diocesan director as he coordinates all the activity of the diocese regarding church vocations. Vocation directors, as the bishops' principal collaborators, initiate programs that are biblically oriented and that stress the universal call to holiness, the church's role and the life options open to dedicated Christians (*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 6).

3. Vocation directors shall inspire the People of God through preaching and catechesis to collaborate with the bishops in the work of fostering church vocations. Likewise, they shall coordinate efforts so that the organizations within the parish have periodically a program related to church vocations. Christian parents provide the indispensable condition for the flowering of church vocations by creating a home atmosphere where Catholic values prevail. Teachers, religious and lay, collaborate in this apostolate not only by living the Christian life, but by acquainting the students with the needs of the world and the Church and the opportunity for Christians to help alleviate these needs.

4. Conscious of the need for an organization that would encompass vocational efforts on a national as well as a diocesan level, the bishops of the United States in November 1968 established their own permanent Committee on Church Vocations. This Committee, after a serious study of possible avenues of fostering church vocations, proposed the establishment, in cooperation with the Major Religious Superiors of Men and Women, of a National Center for Church Vocations. This proposal was submitted to the total hierarchy of the U.S.A. at their semi-annual meeting in Houston, Texas in April 1969 and was approved. The purposes of this National Center, which has now been established, are:

a) To provide a structure for coordinating throughout the nation the studies, efforts, and activities of vocation directors and organizations concerning church vocations;

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Program of Priestly Formation*, footnote to n. 203.

b) To communicate to the general public the positive value of men and women in the contemporary world dedicating themselves to the service of the Church and finding in that dedication personally rewarding and enriched lives;

c) To formulate guidelines to promote the successful fostering of vocations.

**5.** In speaking of the principal undertakings to foster vocations, particular emphasis must be given to prayer, both private and communal prayer, for church vocations, particularly through the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, inaugurated by Pope Paul VI (*The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation*, n. 9). In addition to the use of suitable psychological and pedagogical means for the fostering of vocations, the Bishops' Committee on Church Vocations recommends scientific research in the theology of vocations and the systematic presentation of the fruits of these studies to those whose charge it is to foster vocations. This presentation must take into consideration the possible candidates themselves for church vocations.

**6.** A close collaboration of vocation directors with seminary administrators and faculties must exist. In this way there can be open channels of communication with all aspects of seminary formation. The communication in turn will lead to a better understanding of the problems involved and an awareness of the dignity and worth of the priesthood and religious life.

**7.** Vocation directors shall coordinate in the vocation apostolate the efforts of the lay organizations fostering vocations in the U.S.A., among which the Serrans and Theresians are very prominent. Solid Catholic lay people have great potential in the important work of vocations because of their experience and desire to cooperate with the bishops and vocation directors.

**8.** While not neglecting traditional values, the vocation directors should also recognize and adapt their apostolate to the present moment of the Church's existence. This concretely will involve renewed efforts to foster vocations among those of more mature age, to adapt to the ministry of the Restored Diaconate, and to greater involvement of the laity in the Church's work. All Catholics, and in a special way vocation directors, must have a world-wide view of the missionary task of the Church, and zealously strive to meet the needs of the entire People of God.

## APPENDIX V

### BISHOPS WHO HAVE SERVED WITH THE COMMITTEE DURING THE YEARS OF DEVELOPING THE PROGRAM

1966-1969

#### *Members of Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation*

John Cardinal Cody  
Archbishop of Chicago

Thomas A. Connolly  
Archbishop of Seattle

John F. Whealon  
Archbishop of Hartford

Ernest J. Primeau  
Bishop of Manchester

Francis J. Furey  
Archbishop of San Antonio

Frederick W. Freking  
Bishop of LaCrosse

John M. Fearn  
Auxiliary of New York

Loras T. Lane, First Chairman  
Bishop of Rockford  
(Deceased 1968)

James A. Hickey, Second Chairman  
Titular of Taraqua  
Rector, North American College, Rome

#### *Bishops Serving on Committee as Advisers*

Joseph M. Marling  
Retired Bishop of Jefferson City

John L. Morkovsky  
Apostolic Administrator  
Diocese of Galveston-Houston

Walter W. Curtis  
Bishop of Bridgeport

Francis F. Reh  
Bishop of Saginaw

John J. Dougherty  
Auxiliary of Newark

Joseph T. Daley  
Coadjutor Bishop of Harrisburg

Bernard M. Kelly  
Auxiliary of Providence

Thomas J. Grady  
Auxiliary of Chicago

1969-1972

***Members of Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation***

John F. Whealon  
Archbishop of Hartford

Ignatius J. Strecker  
Archbishop of Kansas City  
in Kansas

Loras J. Watters  
Bishop of Winona

John J. Dougherty  
Auxiliary of Newark

Bernard M. Kelly  
Auxiliary of Providence

John R. Quinn  
Auxiliary of San Diego

Thomas J. Grady, Third Chairman  
Auxiliary of Chicago

***Bishops Serving on Committee as Advisers***

Edward A. McCarthy  
Bishop of Phoenix

Edwin B. Broderick  
Bishop of Albany

James A. Hickey  
Titular of Taraqua  
Rector, North American  
College, Rome

Thomas J. Welsh  
Auxiliary of Philadelphia



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