

General Plan for Initial Formation

General Chapter 2018

Criteria and orientations
for Initial Formation

CONGREGATION OF THE
SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

Edition corrected by the Initial Formation General Commission

Rome 18 September, 2019

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Dear Brothers,

The General Chapter of 1988 asked the General Government, “to establish a list of general guidelines to make explicit and to complete the dispositions of our Constitutions and Statutes on Formation.” (General Chapter Document, Recommendation 16c) The last General Government took that recommendation seriously and prepared the “General Plan of Initial Formation.” The present document is the result of extensive consultation with formators and formation teams. It was discussed in our General Chapter last September and certain changes were called for as a result. The Chapter entrusted the final redaction to the General Government.

A Congregational plan of formation can serve as a means of communion in the ministry of formation. It calls for initial formation that is consistent with our Congregational vocation and mission and with the particular orientations with which have been chosen in the recent General Chapters. The emphasis in the document is on formation for SS.CC. apostolic religious life. Formators and formation teams should find here common values and orientations around which to develop provincial plans of formation. This document will also be helpful in planning interprovincial programs at the various stages of formation.

The text here presented incorporates most of the changes asked for by the General Chapter. The Chapter members were concerned that a fuller treatment be given the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. Before approving the final version in the General Government we discussed this point. We thought that the Plan as it is presents valuable material on the three vows. Our Constitutions provide a simple and clear explanation of how we are to live the evangelical counsels. This should necessarily serve as a reference. The manual for formators currently under

preparation will also include a section on the vows as understood in the light of our charism. For these reasons, the General Government in its session of March 17, 1995 decided to publish the Plan of Initial Formation as it appears here without a longer treatment of the vows.

As I indicated above, the Plan of Formation is the result of a consultative process carried out within the Congregation. Directing that work was Mario Illanes. He tirelessly wrote drafts, received suggestions and rewrote. The document we have here is the fruit of his dedication. The Congregation owes him deep gratitude. Thanks also go to all the formators who having received the various drafts took the time to reflect together and offer suggestions as to possible changes. Because of their interest and involvement, the Plan reflects the wisdom arising from the lived experience of the Congregation. Finally, thanks go to Felipe-Félix Lazcano Hamilton of the Province of Andalusia who worked with Mario on the text presented to the General Chapter and to Julio García also of the Province of Andalusia for redacting the final draft presented to the General Government.

May the General Plan of Initial Formation help us prepare brothers who can be a missionary community for a world without borders.

Sincerely in the Sacred Hearts,

Richard McNally ss.cc.
General Councilor

Rome, 18 September 2019

Dear brothers,

The General Government met in Rome from September 8 to 13, 2019 with the General Commission of Initial Formation and with the formators of the “fourth stage” to implement the decision of the 39th General Chapter to integrate the document of the « Fourth stage ” in the General Plan of Initial Formation of the Congregation (Cf. 39th General Chapter Initial Formation: “ Fourth stage ”, n° 8.1).

May this General Initial Formation Plan help us prepare the brothers who will be part of our religious family in all parts of the world.

On behalf of the General Commission of Initial Formation

Jean-Blaise Mwanda ssc

Thomas Sukotriraharjo ssc

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. *“When we enter the Congregation we commit ourselves to begin a life-long process of formation, growth and renewal. This is a process of continual conversion which involves us as persons and as a community with a view to a radical following of Christ according to our charism, and in order to advance the Congregation’s mission and the quality of its internal communion.”*¹

2. The following of Christ that leads to a radical commitment to the Gospel is the central proposal made to the candidates. In this way they discover and experience those elements which shape our Sacred Hearts identity.

3. That is why *“Initial Formation has the following fundamental objectives:*
 1. *To see to it that the candidates discern God’s call so that they might respond to it in a personal and a constantly renewed way.*
 2. *To integrate them into the living tradition of the Congregation begun by our founders, incarnated throughout our history, expressed in our own law and updated by successive General and Provincial Chapters.”*²

4. The process of discernment and growth of personal vocation as a consecration to the Sacred Hearts is the backbone of Initial Formation.³

Moved by the Holy Spirit and reliving the experiences of the founders, the candidates *“enter into the interior dynamism of Christ’s love for his Father and for the world,”*⁴ and make their own *“the attitudes, options and tasks that led Jesus to the*

point of having his Heart transpierced on the Cross.” Thus following the example of Mary they are able to “enter fully into the mission of her Son.”⁵

5. In our religious family, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary characterize and define our consecration and mission. As symbols of the Incarnation and of Divine love, of the humanity and the total surrender of our God, they manifest the essential traits of our charism and are, therefore, a source of inspiration in Initial Formation.

The Heart of Christ shows us the unfathomable riches of the mystery of Christ, demonstrating his compassion, his sensitivity to human pain, his predilection for those who suffer his unreserved surrender. The Heart of Mary is the heart of a woman, of a mother, of a believer. It speaks to us of discretion and simplicity, of life and of giving one’s life, of openness and listening, of fidelity to the Word and of a warm and motherly (welcoming and maternal) presence.

The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are inseparable in the history of salvation. Today they reveal to our Community the goodness of God and teach us to love with God’s love.

“We are called to enter with Jesus, as Mary did, into the plan of the Father for the salvation of the world through love.”⁶

6. The Mission on which those in formation are sent, and for which the entire process of Initial Formation seeks to prepare them, finds its origin in our consecration to the Sacred Hearts.⁷ This Mission characterizes our life as apostolic religious, our commitment to our vows, our pastoral ministry and charitable service.
7. The identity of the SS.CC. religious, a work of the Spirit, is shaped in the confluence of the three broad formative lines

indicated in this Plan: fraternal living, gradual participation in a variety of experiences, study and reflection.

8. The present General Plan of Formation offers criteria and orientations that guide the work of Initial Formation. It provides a common basis for developing different plans and “agreements”⁸ on formation.

I. PEDAGOGICAL ORIENTATIONS

9. Initial Formation is a process of transmission, assimilation and identification of personal and communal values inspired by our charism and Mission and based on a pedagogy consistent with the characteristics of our vocation.
10. Initial formation is structured in successive stages that have their own objectives and steps, so that the formative process has unity, rhythm and coherence.
11. The process is open to the surroundings closest to those in formation (family, friends, studies, work) as well as to the social, political, economic, cultural, religious, and ecclesial realities of their countries.⁹
12. *“Under the initiative and interior action of the Holy Spirit, each candidate is the first agent in his own formation, keeping himself open to the formation personnel appointed by the Congregation.”*¹⁰
Those in formation receive personalized accompaniment with open, respectful and unconstrained dialogue attentive to the development of their vocation. They are encouraged to assume an active role in their own formation.¹¹
13. The process of formation embraces the whole person. It helps candidates to integrate themselves holistically as they respond to the call of God. In our Congregation, this personal unity flows from the experience of God’s gratuitous love.¹²

14. *“It is in communion with our brothers that we carry on this process, since we are committed to one and the same vocation.”*¹³
*“From the very beginning of the process, community life is the most important factor in the discernment and formation of each candidate.”*¹⁴
*“The local formation community is where he (the candidate) can discover our evangelizing mission, the communal meaning of our life, and the simple, family lifestyle of our community. There he learns to share his faith experience, his human and community situation and his apostolic responsibilities.”*¹⁵
15. Formation takes special care to develop aptitudes in those in formation which enable them to live communion within the community and be, at the same time, agents of communion where ever they are.
16. Care is taken to strengthen the ability of those in formation to make decisions and commitments as well as to exercise their freedom maturely and responsibly. In this way, they will be prepared to assume the values of our religious life which they will gradually make their own for life.
17. The existence of a human and Christian basis, verified at the entrance into religious life, must be evaluated throughout the period of formation according to the development of the individuals and events.¹⁶
18. Experience, assimilated and illumined by faith, is a source of joy. It allows for a discovery of the richness and depth of the reality of life. It is the result of a long process of education oriented toward the acquisition of a specific attitude and sensitivity toward life.

19. In the transmission of our charism, pedagogical priority is given to lived experience, habitually accompanied by reflection and study.¹⁷
20. The formation process helps young persons to live out of the reality of their personal experience rather than out of imaginary ideals.
21. The personal plan, the community plan, and personal accompaniment are indispensable conditions for making the open style of formation viable.
22. Open formation must take place in an atmosphere of trust. Only then can those in formation acquire a proper experiential knowledge of the values of our charism which they will be interiorizing and assimilating until these values are transformed into profound personal convictions.
23. In a progressive formation, the style of community, prayer life, liturgical celebrations and the same rhythm of life maintain their own features at each stage. Different stages require different houses. When circumstances require an exceptions (i.e. two stages in the same house), the exceptions are temporary and arranged so that the progression of the formation process is maintained.
24. The nature of each stage is defined by specific objectives of apostolic religious formation and not for reasons of study or academic degrees.
25. The stages have a defined duration. They can only be extended for exceptional reasons and in special cases (particular cases).¹⁸

II. PRINCIPAL AREAS OF FORMATION

26. The formation process embraces a group of areas in which those in formation grow gradually and harmoniously. Each and all of them influence the development of the traits which characterize our spirituality; each, in turn, nurtures and expresses the specific living of our consecration to the Sacred Hearts.

1. FORMATION AS HUMAN PERSONS

27. The style of community described in the Constitutions requires that a series of human values such as self-esteem, knowledge of one's abilities and limitations, transparency and willingness to dialogue, freedom, and responsible creativity, be stressed in formation.
28. The Mission of the Congregation also has some importance in human and religious formation: to be "agents of communion" and "to transform the world through love," require that a religious develop a critical discernment of the world today, appreciating its undeniable values and sources of life - dignity of the person, appreciation of the feminine, international solidarity, respect for nature - while confronting its dehumanizing negative values: hedonism, consumerism, individualism.
29. Given the provisory and changeable quality of present day cultural realities, human formation must help to shape consistent personalities, able to maintain their decisions in times of personal and social crises, and capable of unconditional and

gratuitous commitment. The cross accompanies the religious as a formative and purifying element on the human level also.

- 29b. The development of the will is also important, as is self-discipline, fidelity to chosen values and cultivation of personal and communitarian habits.
30. The development of affectivity helps the religious accept his own sexuality in its psychological, social, affective and moral dimensions, and to establish free and mature interpersonal relationships which allow him to live with joy the consecration expressed in celibacy and in apostolic and communal life.¹⁹
31. The following are some of the indicators (in the context of respecting different cultures) which point to an adequate development of affectivity:
- clarity with respect to one's sexual orientation and identity and full acceptance of it;
 - continual integration of sexual identity at the emotional, spiritual and relational levels;
 - acquisition of the necessary discipline and of the capacity to maintain a tranquil renunciation without recourse to defense mechanisms;
 - empathy towards life, and with people and their everyday concerns, and an ability to relate easily with them.
 - development of a moral outlook which, without being naive, is positive, accepting and affirming of human sexuality.

All this should be of concern and permanent reflection for the Provincial Formation Teams as regards the admission of new candidates.

32. In a particular way, in Initial Formation, it is important to educate candidates in adult relationships with women.
33. Psychology is a valuable tool for understanding the personalities of the candidates, and also in giving direction to and developing their processes of maturation, personal and communal integration, as well as their spiritual growth.
Obviously the same facility to use this means does not exist in different cultures.
34. Recourse to psychological tools (i.e. tests) enriches the different dimensions of the formative process. To ensure this, it is necessary to know the objectives of these tools so that they can be used to help the personal growth of those in formation, in the development of community life, the ability to study and do pastoral service, in spiritual animation and vocational discernment (i.e. identification of pathologies which have been previously declared incompatible with our life-style and the fulfilment of our mission).
35. It is appropriate to ask for a psychological report from those in formation before the Novitiate. The information facilitates the process of human and spiritual growth of those in formation, particularly through the data it offers for their personal reflection and their dialogue with the formators. Obviously, each person's right to privacy must be respected.²⁰
36. Tests are instruments which have their own scientific value. They are a help to personal growth and in interpreting motives. Even so, only experience and good criteria allow for their beneficial use in making decisions at a vocational level. Formators are responsible for the proper utilization of these tools.

37. Those in formation mature as they come to know and appreciate their own cultures, and relativize them in a healthy way as forms -always limited- of being human and living in society. Thus, they prepare to open themselves to other cultures, which are equally legitimate and limited ways of being human.

2. FORMATION IN THE LIFE OF FAITH IN THE SS.CC. CHARISM

38. The Spirit works in the depths of each one's heart, conforming it day by day to the Heart of Jesus. *"Love is the interior principle of unity of all consecrated life,"*²¹ and is especially so in ours, with our consecration to the Sacred Hearts.
39. Throughout the stages of Initial Formation, the value and meaning of our SS.CC. religious consecration as well as its projection in the spiritual life, community life, in theological reflection and in apostolic service are gradually deepened.
40. Personal accompaniment and spiritual direction play a very important role in the path of following Jesus which those in formation have undertaken.
41. Personal and communitarian accompaniment help those in formation to know and deepen, theoretically and practically, the most significant values of our spirituality, particularly the Eucharist and Adoration.
42. Dialogue among the brothers, especially sharing faith experiences, is also a fundamental element in the assimilation of our spirituality. This sharing, the heart of the religious community,²² is a source of communion and of greater depth in our Mission.²³

43. The celebration of the Eucharist and Adoration are “*the source and the summit of our apostolic and community life.*” The objective of initiating those in formation into the practice of adoration is that, by the end of novitiate, they will understand its importance and make it a daily practice.²⁴
44. Reference to the experience of God lived out by our founders has a privileged place in incorporating those in formation into the living tradition of the Congregation. It is also important to know the different expressions of our charism throughout history and its incarnation in the most significant figures of our history, as well as its most recent formulations in the Constitutions and General Chapters.
45. In living our identity and in its actual formulation, there are a series of traits, inherited from our Founders, which are a source of dynamism, enrichment, and renewal of our SS.CC. charism: zeal for the same Mission, reparative attitude that leads to solidarity with the poor and marginalized, availability for the urgent needs of the Church, fraternity lived with simplicity and in a family spirit, the missionary dimension and internationality, the relation of Brothers-Sisters; all from a life centered on and inspired by the celebration of the Eucharist and by Adoration.
46. As we make these traits our own, we enter into the “*interior dynamism of Christ’s love for His Father and for the world*” which identifies us with Jesus.
47. The spiritual qualities of those in formation continues to be consolidated throughout the whole process of formation. That is why care is taken to strengthen interiority and the life of prayer. The following means are a great help:
 - solitude and silence;
 - spiritual retreats (personal and communitarian);

- adoration, as a regular practice in Initial Formation;
- knowledge and frequent use of Sacred Scripture;
- celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- spiritual reading;
- preparation and participation in community prayers;
- discernment made in a prayerful atmosphere;
- development of a contemplative activity which helps them to be attentive to God present in reality and to look at this reality from the perspective of God's design;
- the personal plan of life;
- the "review" of life, etc.

48. The personal spiritual structure is also supported by the theoretical and experiential knowledge of spiritual life - which is not always provided by academic studies-; pedagogy of prayer, spiritual reading of Sacred Scripture, living experience of the liturgy and acquaintance with the great masters of Christian spiritual life and those of other religions.
49. In fidelity to the Incarnation of Jesus, the Congregation is enriched through the interpretation and living of our charism within the different cultures in which it is lived. The reciprocal help, which derives from this lived experience, strengthens the international character of the Congregation.
50. Initial Formation pays special attention to the concrete way of living and expressing our SS.CC. identity, today, in service to the Church and the world. Thus, formation should be marked by the three orientations of the recent General Chapters which have been incorporated in the Constitutions: to build a more just world in solidarity with the poor, communion in mission and continual conversion.

51. Finally, Initial Formation is the privileged time in which those in formation open themselves to collaboration with our SS.CC. Sisters in our common vocation and mission.

3. FORMATION IN SS.CC. COMMUNION

A. Formation in community life

52. From the beginning of formation, the candidates' personal response to God finds its reference point in the community.²⁵ Personal growth is not conceived as individualistic self-development, but as the unfolding of a responsible freedom and a creator of communion.
53. The relational dimension of those in formation unfold within community life. This supposes a process of renunciation of personal interests and acceptance and esteem of each Brother; placing all their personal qualities at the service of the community and assuming the roles the community assigns them, fulfilling them with generosity.
54. Formation communities are characterized by their profound family spirit based in interpersonal relations of trust, solidarity, openness and spontaneity. These relations allow brothers to be accepted with their personal characteristics.
55. Before being formators and persons in formation, the members of a formation community are brothers of one and the same religious family, all disciples of Christ. The values of the life of faith permeate their way of life.
56. Formation encourages the candidates to engage in a continual search for and discernment of the will of God for each one and for the community.

57. The “community plan” drawn up by all, creates communion and cohesion in the formation community. It contains the objectives proper to each stage and responds to the concrete needs of the community. The development of the “personal plan of life” is also a vitalizing pedagogical element both for those being formed and for the community.
58. The regular meeting of the community, weekly if possible, is an expression and source of fraternity. It is a privileged time to share the life of faith, organize life together, for a communal search for the will of God; to share personal experiences of living the vows, pastoral activity, one’s own family, etc. Finally, it offers the ideal setting for the celebration of the Eucharist and the practice of communal Adoration.
59. Formation in community life also embraces a gradual integration into the regional, provincial and international community. Among other things, this supposes a development of the ability to accept different sensitivities, mentalities, and theological orientations.
60. The perspective of our Mission is present in each of the stages and areas of formation. Fraternity (life in community) is the first sign and announcement of the Reign of God.

B. A Congregation of Brothers and Sisters

61. The unity of the Congregation, made up of Brothers and Sisters with the same charism and the same mission,²⁶ is at the same time a gift and a task, which is present in Initial Formation even in those countries where our Sisters have not established communities.

62. It is up to the Formation Team to find the means through which these mutual relations might be a source of enrichment and a better and more significant service to the Church and the world.
63. The Plan of Initial Formation encourages meetings of the Formation Teams as well as of those in formation (both branches) according to the different levels and fosters collaboration in pastoral works.
64. Likewise it considers the possible participation of the Sisters on the Teams and in the interprovincial programs of Formation.²⁷

C. The international dimension

65. Our Constitutions, Statutes and the General Chapters have formulated decisions and orientations for formation in its international dimension, which constitutes an urgent task as we face the future.²⁸
66. In order to share the value of this task with those in formation, the formators themselves must deepen their understanding of the implications that our missionary vocation and the orientations of the Congregation have for the present.
67. Due to the lack of formators and the existence of small groups of persons in formation, instances of interprovincial formation are studying the creation of some common stages of Initial Formation.²⁹
68. “Common” or “interprovincial” novitiates may be considered as a valid option for the different continents.

69. The experience of those in formation living in SS.CC. Provinces/Regions other than their own - be it for reasons of study, pastoral experience, or simply to acquaint themselves with other communities - is integrated into the formation process as an important element that must be prepared and evaluated.
70. The Plan of Initial Formation must specify objectives and means that support internationality, which educate with a view to inculturation and most especially to develop the missionary spirit in those in formation. To this same end, interprovincial meetings of the professed and international experiences for formators are integrated into the formation process.

4. FORMATION IN THE SS.CC. MISSION

A. Apostolic formation

71. In each of the stages special attention is given to the theoretical, practical or experiential, and contemplative (prayer and reflection) dimensions of apostolic formation.
72. Formation is not only “for” the Mission, but also “in” the Mission. Each formation community has criteria and objectives for apostolic formation appropriate to the stage of the process. In this context, a plan of pastoral formation is drawn up for each brother.
73. Formation for the mission today requires the encouragement of a spirit of availability for the urgent needs of the People of God, an ability to adapt to circumstances and events, and of communion and critical co-responsibility with the local churches.

74. At the beginning of the congregation, the Good Father did not hesitate to send Brothers out of France *“to spread the Gospel everywhere.”* Today the Congregation feels the challenge to strengthen its international dimension. The urgency of evangelization and the needs of our brothers in the missions place before us a demanding challenge and one of great importance for the future of the Congregation. Therefore, it is necessary that, *“every effort will be made to give those in formation a significant experience of our evangelizing ministry, especially in the Third and Fourth Worlds.”*³⁰

75. Pastoral service stimulates and illumines study, but at the same time is open to critique by study, and is discerned and evaluated by the community.
Carrying out pastoral service is an important element in the discernment of the personal aptitudes of each person in formation.

76. Each of those in formation is offered a good, professional, apostolic and missionary formation with the goal of responding to the challenges of the Mission. Interest in ecumenism and in other non-Christian religions should be encouraged in all of those in formation.

77. Apostolic formation carries with it an adherence to the Plan of Apostolic Religious Life of the Province/Region and to the options of the Congregation.

78. The spirit of teamwork and a sense of co-responsibility in the work of evangelization (in particular, with SS.CC. Brothers, Sisters, and lay members, and with the diocesan clergy and other pastoral ministers) are an important part of apostolic formation.

79. In order that those in formation acquire a broad vision of pastoral ministry and of the Mission of the Congregation, they should be offered the opportunity to engage in various works and projects, even outside their own countries.³¹
80. The missionary spirit helps young people to overcome every kind of ethnocentrism and nationalism, and to avoid superiority complexes, encouraging attitudes of openness and dialogue with cultures and religions.

B. Formation for building a more just world in solidarity with the poor

81. If we “*wish to identify with the attitude of Jesus and with His reparative work,*” we must collaborate in the struggle against injustice, the sin that is so clearly manifested in marginalization and poverty, and which directly opposes the Father’s Love and disfigures his design for the world.³²
82. God’s attitude towards the poor of this world is revealed in Jesus. Following Jesus of Nazareth leads those in formation “*to share the life of the poor and take up their cause,*”³³ by living a simple and poor life-style. The Congregation’s option for a more just world in solidarity with the poor finds its evangelical motivation in the Jesus of history.
83. The primary emphasis in formation for an option for the poor falls upon spiritual attitudes and strength of character. It is a question of recognizing our littleness before God and discovering the love of Jesus for those to whom He preferentially announced the Good News of the Kingdom. In this way, those in formation contemplate the world through the eyes of Jesus and face the same conflicts he confronted.

84. Those in formation should be encouraged to gradually draw closer to the most needy and marginalized of society: the poor, the sick, the immigrants, etc.³⁴
85. Aware of the influence of surroundings on a person's way of being and thinking, the Provincial/Regional Government must pay special attention to the location of the houses of formation, which must facilitate relations with the poor sectors of society. The poor offer us a privileged place for coming into contact with the Lord.³⁵
86. Participation in the task of building a more just world demands a very good knowledge of the social and economic reality and the ability to analyse social phenomena to avoid falling into ideological postures.
87. The "*small religious communities inserted among the working class people, on the periphery of certain large cities, or in the inner city or in more remote or poorer areas of the country*" which help those in formation respect the requirements of formation, offer the candidates a suitable environment for living "*the preferential option for the poor.*"³⁶
88. Through Jesus, we also discover that nature is a creature of God, loved by Him, endowed with a dignity we must respect. Therefore, during the formation process an attitude of respect for the integrity of creation ought to be awakened, fostered and helped to mature in the person in formation. This attitude is expressed through care for nature in daily life, in commitment to movements in defense of nature, as well as in a search for new means of production and consumption which respect the delicate balances of nature.

5. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

89. Candidates for religious life should have the intellectual ability and breadth of awareness necessary to successfully complete the studies required for the apostolic religious life proper to our Congregation.³⁷
90. Philosophical, theological, biblical and social studies, etc. are a means that enrich one's experience of God. They are a help towards a better announcing of, and commitment to, the building of the Kingdom.
91. All of those in formation are offered a solid intellectual formation according to their ability, their personal vocation and the Mission of the Congregation.³⁸
Theological-pastoral education, which is usually received in Institutes and Seminaries, is enriched by other studies and experiences.
1. Study of the Congregation's charism, always in relation to the degree of theological maturation and of faith proper to each stage.
 2. Study of the social, political, economic, and cultural realities of the candidates' countries.
 3. Participation by those in formation in the academic and student life of the Higher Institutes which they attend.
 4. Participation in academic and social meetings with candidates in other religious Congregations and members of other SS.CC. communities.
92. By reason of their vocation and personal dispositions,³⁹ the candidates receive a formation suitable for the exercise of the priesthood or of other services and works, according to what the fulfilment of the Mission of the Congregation requires.⁴⁰

93. Specialization in philosophical, theological, pastoral, social, biblical, and other studies is encouraged in order to respond to the apostolic needs of our world and those of our own community.
94. The academic program must take into account the necessity or the advisability of studies in want of degrees recognized by the educational authorities of the country.
95. The program of study is properly balanced with the other needs of our apostolic religious life.⁴¹
96. All of those in formation learn and practice at least one other living language from among those most common in the Congregation, so that they may be initiated into other cultures and be ready to serve in a world without boundaries.⁴²
97. Intellectual formation also is oriented toward developing a spirit of searching for the truth and of constant renewal for the benefit of better service. Those in formation should see ongoing formation and renewal as indispensable elements in religious life.

III. AGENTS OF FORMATION

THE COMMUNITY

98. The spirit, the orientations, and the life-style of the Major Community exercise a decisive influence on the young who are joining the community. Therefore, it is very important that all the Brothers and all the communities must be aware of their direct responsibility in Initial Formation.⁴³

The testimony of renewed apostolic religious life strongly supports formation work.

THE FORMATORS

99. Those in formation are the first agents of their own formation.⁴⁴ The religious community exercises a special formative action: it is the privileged place where the Spirit is heard and the will of God is discerned. “Horizontal Formation” takes place in the mutual relations between Brothers.

Within this personal and communal process, the formators carry out their role in accordance with universal and particular law.⁴⁵

100. The selection and preparation of formators is the job of the Provincial Government, in consultation with the Formation Team. The shortage of formators does not dispense with the criteria which are essential in their selection:

1. He should be a balanced person, close to the young by his openness of spirit. He should know the Congregation and the sense of its vocation and mission. He should have had some years of experience in pastoral ministry and be open to international dimensions.

2. He must be a person who can dialogue, who can animate a community and exercise authority responsibly. He should have experience in personal accompaniment, in spiritual direction, and be able to work in a team.
 3. He should be able to maintain a closeness with those in formation and give them the trust they deserve.
 4. He must be prepared in the pedagogical, theological-pastoral, spiritual and psychological aspects of formation and willing to continue his training.
 5. In the selection of formators, all things being equal, preference should be given to Brothers native to the country.
101. Professed members who have finished Initial Formation should not be given direct responsibilities in formation communities until they have completed a period of pastoral work and had some appropriate training. In exceptional cases, however, they may help the brother in charge of formation in a particular stage of formation.
102. In respecting the young people in formation and the future of the Congregation, formators should only exercise pastoral tasks that are compatible with their mission in formation.
103. The formator supports those in formation in their responsibility for their own formation, and, consequently, respects the rhythm of growth in each person throughout the formation process. This does not mean that he neglects his own responsibility as formator to help each brother, and the community with motivation, advice, decisions in order not to lose sight of the demands of our SS.CC. vocation and mission. The formator is also responsible for asking the candidate to leave the Congregation if he thinks him unable to live the SS.CC. religious life.

104. The responsibility for formation never falls on one formator, even if only one stage of formation exists. It is the responsibility of the Initial Formation team.
105. The Provincial/Regional government ensures that the formation of a group of those in formation is not the responsibility of only one brother:
- This is for the benefit of the formator and his personal balance and so that he might exchange and contrast his opinions with regard to personal accompaniment and discernment.
 - It is also for the good of those in formation themselves, so that they might have the option of dialoguing with different formators and may experience a varied and rich view of the Congregation.

THE FORMATION TEAM

106. The Plan of Formation indicates the composition of the Team of Initial Formation. Formators belong to it by right. The Formation Team assumes the specific task of Initial Formation and ensures and encourages the integral and gradual development of the religious in the principal aspects of the SS.CC. vocation.
107. The principal job of the Team is:
1. To draw up the Plan of Formation and ensure that it is put into practice and evaluated.
 2. To see to it that the right balance among the different elements of formation is maintained at each stage.
 3. To see to it that each stage has a proper content and that there is unity and progression in the overall formation process.

4. To be attentive to the progress of each of those in formation, and to participate in the preparation of the annual evaluation of those in formation, which the formator for each stage of formation must present.
5. To stay in contact with the Major Superior and promote good relations between the formation communities and the rest of the Community.

In order to complete the above tasks, the Team must maintain a close relationship with the formation communities and those in formation.

108. The Formation Team is at the same time both a work team and an example of communion. Therefore, together with his tasks of organizing, reflecting, orienting, and making decisions, it must create an atmosphere for personal sharing, fraternal support and prayer.
109. The team ensures the achievement of a true inculturation into the respective country and the local church.
It maintains a faithfulness to the SS.CC. charism in accordance with the Constitutions and the orientations of the recent General Chapters, as well as the canonical regulations which govern formation. On the other hand, it sees to it that the formation is not limited to the reproduction of that which exists in a Province or Region at a given time, since *“we see in new vocations an invitation to grow and to renew ourselves so as to walk together towards an ever greater fulfillment of our call.”*⁴⁶
110. As needed, the Team can employ religious and lay “experts.”
111. The team maintains contact with other groups of formation: the Committee or Team of Ongoing Formation, the Sisters' Formation Team, Institutes and Universities attended by those in formation and Formation Committees and Teams of other religious Congregations.

INTERPROVINCIAL INSTANCES OF INITIAL FORMATION

112. On the general level, Interprovincial Conferences plan the integration of the Initial Formation Team into an international structure.

113. The international instances make it possible for the formators:
 1. to share experiences and information about the development of Initial Formation in the different communities;
 2. to enrich their own specific work as formator;
 3. to get to know the resources other Provinces or Regions have at their disposal;
 4. to begin international services (a common time of formation, continuity for those in formation and for the formators themselves in various places, etc.);
 5. to exchange ideas and experiences in the area of formation;
 6. to make suggestions that may help the Provincial/Regional governments in all aspects of formation;
 7. to establish a dialogue with the higher levels of government of the Congregation, particularly in regards to international collaboration;
 8. to promote collaboration with the Sisters in formation.

114. Given the international dimension of our vocation and keeping in mind the real challenges (lack of formators, paucity of vocations, intermittent vocations), the Community and the formators are open to the creation of permanent interprovincial structures of Initial Formation.

The functions proper to the Provincial/Regional Governments and those assigned to the Formation Team directly in charge of these structures must be specified in the agreements which govern these structures.

115. This collaboration is encouraged by the General Government and the Interprovincial Conferences. The support and participation of all of the Provinces' should be counted on when putting this collaboration into practice.⁴⁷
- 115b. In Initial Formation other indirect factors should be taken into account, such as: interchange between other houses or levels of formation, collaboration with the Sisters, the location of the house of formation, universities and other centers of study, relations with other Congregations, as well as relationships to the local community in which the candidates live or are involved in pastoral work, and the means of social communication.

IV. STAGES OF INITIAL FORMATION

115c. Each Province, Vice-Province, or Region should have the adequate structures necessary for an effective Plan of Formation.⁴⁸

1. PRE-NOVITIATE

116. Each community establishes a period preceding the Novitiate in conformity with the following orientations.⁴⁹

117. The Pre-Novitiate is a stage oriented to initial discernment of a vocation and a better mutual knowledge on the part of the Congregation and the candidate.⁵⁰

118. It forms a part of the process of Initial Formation. Although the candidates are not really part of the Institute, the Community assumes a moral responsibility for them.

119. It is a necessary period, especially in the circumstances of today's world, to address the candidates' lack of a good, integrated Christian initiation (sacramental, doctrinal, and moral), or their lack of a human formation necessary for a normal initiation into religious life.⁵¹

120. Aspirants to the Pre-Novitiate receive personalised attention from those responsible for the vocational ministry and, at an opportune time, have interviews with those in charge of the Pre-Novitiate.

121. The following are requirements for admission to the Pre-Novitiate: ⁵²
1. to have the intention to follow the Lord Jesus in our SS.CC. religious life;
 2. to be at least 17 years old and have completed secondary studies;
 3. to have the ability to obtain the necessary intellectual formation;
 4. to possess basic aptitudes for community life and for serving the People of God according to our Mission;
 5. to be free from debts or other obligations;
 6. to be of sound physical and psychological (emotional and mental) health.
122. Each community can specify these conditions for admission (degree of intellectual and affective maturity, etc.) or add others.⁵³ They will be conditions known and respected by all members of the Community.
123. The formators of this stage are charged with the admission of candidates to the Pre-Novitiate. They are also to write an annual report on each candidate after hearing the opinions of the members of the Formation Team.
124. For admission to Pre-Novitiate, the opinion of those in charge of the vocation ministry should be considered. In addition, information and opinions should be solicited from qualified persons so as to guarantee a good assessment of the candidates' personalities and aptitudes.
125. In the case of young people coming from other Congregations or seminaries, in addition to requesting the required reports, formators should carefully evaluate the candidates'

motivations and conditions. Reasons must be clearly favorable for admission.

126. If the aspirant is more than 27 years old,⁵⁴ the formation process should be adapted to his personal needs, paying special attention to his ability to change and to adapt to a Community which has its own style of life and work.
127. When the pre-novices go to make their novitiate in another Province or Region, the Formation Team will prepare these young people in view of their integration into a new formation community: with regards to motivation, openness of spirit, study of the language, history and culture of the country in which the novitiate is located, etc.
128. If a Province/Region decides to admit candidates for the first time or after a long time without vocations. The Provincial Government will study the conditions and requirements for the organization of the entire formation process, whether independently or with other Provinces/Regions.
In any case, the candidates should be offered the possibility of an SS.CC. apostolic religious life which significantly incarnates the communitarian and apostolic values of the Congregation.
129. At the end of the Pre-Novitiate, the candidate will make a written request to the Provincial to enter the Novitiate. The formator in charge, having made a definitive judgment of the candidate's aptitude and after listening to the opinion of the Formation Team, will present him to the Provincial Government for admission as a novice.⁵⁵

130. The following orientations are applicable when the Pre-Novitiate is made in an “SS.CC. formation community” specifically formed for this stage.
131. This is the stage of Initial Formation in which the candidate begins to experience community life in the Congregation and to seek at the same time his integral growth, the discernment of his motives, and sufficient preparation to enter the Novitiate.
132. In an atmosphere of joy, freedom and fraternity, the candidate is encouraged to develop a creative spirit, personal responsibility and participation, an openness to the cultural values of the country and an interest in the great challenges of our world today.
133. The Pre-Novitiate avoids being too closed to the world as well as situations which expose candidates to disproportionate challenges to their human and spiritual maturity.
134. The Plan of Formation determines the dynamics of community life in the Pre-Novitiate. Its program includes formation in the charism of the Congregation. Further-more it considers initiation into personal and communal prayer, pastoral commitment and shared refection on apostolic activity, cultivation of personal relationships, work and study, access to different psychological tools, open-ness and contact with the environment, etc. It also pays attention to the postulants relations with his family and establishes a financial statute.
135. The length of the time spent in the Pre-Novitiate community should be no less than one year and no more than three years.

2. *NOVITIATE*

136. *“The Novitiate is a privileged time for the candidates’ initiation into a deep spiritual life, both on the theoretical and practical levels, as well as into religious life and the charism of our Congregation, to which they must gradually conform their hearts and minds.”*⁵⁶
137. To ensure that the novitiate can be lived as a stable experience of faith and of religious life,⁵⁷ the following conditions are required:
1. a degree of maturity appropriate to the age of the candidate, physical health, and psychological equilibrium (especially affective);
 2. a clear decision to follow Jesus Christ, to deepen his call, to open himself to a better knowledge and experience of our vocation and mission;
 3. a readiness to deepen his experience of personal and community prayer, interpersonal relationships, apostolic service and knowledge of the Congregation;
 4. sufficient ability to proceed with his intellectual formation (having satisfactorily completed secondary education or its equivalent).
138. The duration of the Novitiate is normally one canonical year.⁵⁸
139. The Novitiate house,⁵⁹ by its location and activities, ensures the novices sufficient time, space and help to deepen their relationship with the Lord in personal and communal prayer.⁶⁰
140. In so far as possible, the Novitiate house will be located in the environment, culture of the novices where their own language is used.⁶¹ However, for serious reasons, such as the lack of formators or a low number of novices, “common” novitiates (admitting novices from another Province to the Novitiate of

a given Province) or “interprovincial Novitiates” (creation of one Novitiate for the Provinces and Regions participating in it) are presented. In these cases, the competent authorities establish the common criteria for the admission of candidates to the Novitiate and to religious profession and clearly delineate responsibilities, always while safeguarding the authority of the Novice Master.

141. The direction of the novices is exclusively reserved to the Novice Master. He must be free from all other obligations that would impede him from fulfilling, completely, his function as a formator. If there are collaborators, which is advisable, they should be dependent on him as regards the formation program and the running of the novitiate. Together with the Novice Master they play an important role in the discernment and vocational decisions of the novices.⁶²
142. During the Novitiate, the novices will not engage in studies or work that does not contribute directly to the specific objective of the Novitiate.⁶³
143. The program of the Novitiate, established by the Plan of Initial Formation, takes into account the experience and formation acquired in the Pre-Novitiate. It continues the integral initiation into the SS.CC. religious life and establishes objectives and pedagogical methods proper to the Novitiate year.
144. This means:
 1. continuing the process of human and spiritual growth that allows the verification of aptitudes, and clarifies the real motives of opting for Christ in our SS.CC. religious life;

2. discovering and deepening the sense of religious consecration and living out the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience;
 3. deepening the experience of the evangelical attitudes of our spirituality, living a profound experience of God;
 4. progressing in the “practical training” of balancing life and prayer;
 5. discerning, with complete freedom and generosity, God’s calling to a commitment for life.
145. The novice lives with an attitude of openness to the action of the Spirit which transforms hearts and nourishes commitments. Within the process of formation, this is the stage which places the strongest emphasis on the contemplative-spiritual dimension and on the assimilation of the vocation and mission of the Congregation, all done under the direction of the Novice Master.
146. The novices become familiar with the history of the Congregation, with our Founders, with our tradition and spirituality, with our Constitutions and Statutes and with our Rule of Life.
147. They have the opportunity to be in direct contact with the Major or Regional Community as it is and as it lives today.⁶⁴
148. Manual work complements formation during the Novitiate.
149. The novices have the chance to participate in experiences of apostolic ministry. They are accompanied in the tasks of discovering and deepening the faith dimension of their pastoral work, and at the same time continuing to integrate their life and prayer.⁶⁵

150. In accord with the possibilities of each country, the novices are also able to participate in the formation activities and meetings that Religious Congregations offer for this stage.
151. A special period of time is dedicated to preparation for profession.⁶⁶
152. At the end of the Novitiate, the novices and formators evaluate the fulfilment of the objectives of this stage.
The Novice Master writes a report on each novice which, after consulting the Formation Team, is presented to the Provincial Government.
153. The extensive universal and particular legislation regarding the Novitiate is duly taken into account.⁶⁷

3. STAGE OF THE PROFESSED

154. After first profession, a new stage of formation begins.⁶⁸ It consists of gathering the fruits of the preceding stages, and of achieving the specific objective of this new stage: to mature as an SS.CC. religious through human and spiritual growth, living his commitment with a view to perpetual profession in the Congregation.
155. To achieve this objective, *“as he takes his place in the professed community, a religious must be helped to continue integrating the experience of God, community living, apostolic activity, study and reflection, in the context of our life and mission as religious of the Sacred Hearts.”*⁶⁹
156. In this stage, *“there is particular emphasis on a suitable adapted systematic theological-spiritual formation, essential for a mature faith life and for a fruitful apostolic ministry.”*⁷⁰

157. The Province/Region offers the newly professed “*a vigorous formation community and the presence of competent instructors.*”⁷¹ Only in exceptional cases and with the judgment of the Provincial Government, is a religious formed in another community with the condition that the latter has a project of apostolic religious life, and always under the direction of an appointed “ad hoc” formator.⁷²
158. The local formation community fosters a spirit of dialogue and participation, of openness and acceptance, of service, work and availability. Thus, through interpersonal relationships between the formators and those in formation, as well as relationships among those in formation themselves, the community is built and enriched.
159. In the unfolding of this stage, the personal accompaniment of the professed is ensured. They draw up their “personal plan of religious life,” that will help them integrate their experiences in the overall formation process and in their faithful response to God.
160. Apostolic activity in this stage has a marked formative orientation. It is planned and evaluated to maintain the necessary balance between the distinctive elements of formation.
161. The Plan of Initial Formation establishes periods of pastoral experience which may partially or totally interrupt studies. These periods of service are integrated into the overall formation process.

162. The Professed continue to progress in achieving their personal synthesis of religious life and in their identification with the Provincial Plan of Religious Life and with the Congregation by means of:
1. an experiential and theological depth of their religious profession through living the vows;
 2. active participation in the life and mission of the Major or Regional Community;
 3. intensification of the sense of belonging to an international Congregation of Brothers and Sisters;
 4. development of the sense of Church, the People of God;
 5. inculturation into the world in which they are to serve.⁷³
163. In order that the professed might receive all the help necessary in their formative process and open themselves to the missionary and international spirit of the Congregation, the Provinces/Regions plan collaboration among themselves.⁷⁴
164. This General Plan proposes the establishment of two differentiated periods in the stage of the Professed:
1. The first, of a three year duration, takes place in a specific formation community. It is a time in which priority is given to systematic study.⁷⁵
 2. The second, is the “Fourth Stage”.

4. FOURTH STAGE

165. Definition and covering period
1. The Fourth Stage corresponds to the second period within the professed stage. “In this period the emphasis falls on the integration of the professed in the apostolic religious life of the Province and of the Congregation,

providing the necessary conditions for those who are continuing in following academic studies."

2. The beginning of this stage should be between the third and fifth year of temporary profession and conclude with priestly ordination or with perpetual profession for those who are not destined for priestly ministry. (Stat. 39.2)

166. Objectives

1. Facilitate the process of full incorporation of the brother -with all the rights and duties- into the apostolic religious life of the Major Community/Region/Congregation with emphasis on his availability.
2. Complete a solid initial philosophical and theological formation. Create a personal theological synthesis that involves a dialogue with the process of faith of the professed and the apostolic work that he undertakes.
3. Focus on the learning of, at least, a second language among those used in the Congregation. (Cf. Stat. 34.3; General Plan of Initial Formation 96)
4. Become acquainted with and share in the type of life that the professed will find when IF ends in regards to both the fraternal life in a local community and the apostolate in a pastoral community.
5. Strengthen the definitive religious consecration of the professed. Discern and prepare for perpetual profession.
6. Offer a theoretical and practical formation for priestly ministry and adequate accompaniment for the discernment of this vocation in the context of our SSCC religious life.

167. The 'Where' of the Fourth Stage

1. The most suitable setting to carry out this stage is the Major Community/Region to which the brother belongs. The community becomes a decisive formation agent, firstly, by proposing a real experience of life and mission and secondly by helping the brother discover what is his personal contribution to the mission of the group.
2. It is advisable that for this stage the brother in temporary vows lives in an apostolic community in order to facilitate his integration into the real and practical life of his Major Community/Region, especially in regards to the fraternal and pastoral life.
3. The apostolic community that welcomes the brother to the Fourth Stage is a community that seeks to live faithfully what the Major Community aspires to - as reflected in its PARL.
4. Before welcoming any brother to this stage, the local community becomes conscious, in dialogue with the Provincial Superior and the formation team, of what the Province is asking of it regarding the brother in formation and will inform itself as to what is necessary to carry out this task.
5. If the brother in temporary vows undertakes this stage in a formation community, special care will be taken to ensure that his formation plan facilitates some type of contact with an apostolic community, fostering a qualitative growth in the pastoral life of the professed and his progressive integration into the PARL of the Major Community/Region.

168. The Formator

"During this second period, the professed are under the immediate responsibility of a Formator in every-thing that

concerns the process of formation and study. The Formator, together with the community, helps them in the discernment of their personal commitment in the Mission of the Congregation." (164 & 3) The Formator of this Stage forms part of the Formation team.

His functions are:

1. Ensure that the objectives of this stage are complied with.
2. Offer individual or group/formation activities that are intended to help the brothers live more deeply the objectives of this stage.
3. Undertake personal accompaniment (formative) in a systematic way, ensuring that the brother in the Fourth Stage has spiritual accompaniment.
4. Maintain an open and regular dialogue with the apostolic community to which the brother belongs in order, when appropriate, to request reports about him.
5. To request from the person who is in charge of the community's pastoral work an evaluation of the apostolic activities of the brother in Fourth Stage.
6. It is for the Formator to draw up reports for the Provincial and his Council. (Stat. 35)
7. It is for the Formator of the professed brother to prepare a programme for final vows and, where appropriate, for ordained ministries, having listened to the views of the Formation team and other interested parties.
8. Reflect with the candidate on the steps that lead from Initial Formation to Ongoing Formation.

169. Contents

The contents of this stage should revolve around the SSCC religious life and the SSCC priestly ministry. They would be complementary to the contents for the preparation for final vows.

170. Preparation for final commitments and Ongoing Formation

1. We consider it worthwhile that the Major Communities and formation teams look for suitable pedagogical ways to ensure the discernment and preparation that each step requires.
2. "The profession of perpetual vows must be preceded by a period of prolonged preparation. Its duration and modality must be approved by the Provincial Government." (Const. 83) The Formator of the Fourth Stage will make a program proposal to the Provincial Government for this period. (Cf. General Plan of Initial Formation, 168 g) The program will include, among other elements, participation in the congregational meeting preparing for perpetual vows (with the necessary preparation beforehand); a retreat prior to profession; and preparation for the liturgical celebration of the perpetual profession.
3. Preparation for priestly ordination is of the utmost importance and careful thought must be given to this by the Major Communities, offering space, time and accompaniment to the brother who is in this moment of discernment. (Const. 84; Stat. 39)
4. In the same way, we must not neglect the steps leading to Ongoing Formation and the accompaniment of the first years of the priestly ministry. Experience tells us that these are challenging years, where important personal adjustments take place that affect the brother's vocation and pastoral style.

V. PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL PLAN OF INITIAL FORMATION

171. The Major and Regional Communities prepare their own Plan of Initial Formation drawn up by the Provincial or Regional Initial Formation Team.⁷⁶
Permanent or temporary interprovincial structures for Initial Formation draw up their own “agreements”.
The Plans and “agreements” follow the criteria and orientations of this document and the other official stipulations that regulate Initial Formation.
172. In drawing up the Plan, the Initial Formation Team requests the participation of the whole Province/Region, and consults especially those responsible for the youth and vocation ministries and those in formation. The Plan is approved by the Provincial Government or by the Provincial Chapter as established by the Provincial Statutes.
173. The Plan of Initial Formation is inspired by the Provincial/Regional Plan of Apostolic Life.⁷⁷ It is also coordinated with the programs of the Vocation Ministry and of On-Going Formation.
174. The Plan is flexible and realistic, so as to be adaptable to the number and type of candidates and to the new challenges posed to the Congregation and the Church.

175. The Plan determines the way in which new members are gradually integrated into the SS.CC. Community. It has as its aim:
- to describe all the process of Initial Formation, specifying the objectives of each stage and the principal means to achieve them;⁷⁸
 - to consider the principal areas of formation and the distinct means of achieving an integral maturation in the physical, psychological, ethical, intellectual, artistic, social, etc. dimensions of those in formation;⁷⁹
 - to describe the roles of the different agents of formation;
 - to apply the principles embodied in this General Plan to concrete reality.
176. The Plan considers and integrates the social, religious and ecclesial realities. It pays special attention to the cultural factor, taking into account popular religious expressions.
177. The Plan is open to interprovincial collaboration and to collaboration with our SS.CC. Sisters.⁸⁰
178. The Plan of Initial Formation establishes the time when the process of Initial Formation ends, which may never be before perpetual profession. It supposes that by then the young religious have achieved the apostolic and religious maturity that allows them to be incorporated into the ordinary life of the Provincial/Regional Community.
179. At the end of Initial Formation, the young religious are integrated into an apostolic community. The superiors give special attention to religious in this situation.

180. Both the formators and those in formation know and undertake the Plan of Initial Formation, and base their evaluations, decisions, and reports on its orientations and principles. In evaluating and planning its Apostolic Religious Life, the Province keeps the Plan of Initial Formation in mind.

181. The Plan of Formation is evaluated periodically and is modified or renewed according to the needs. In as much as possible, all members of the Provincial/Regional Community participate in this evaluation.

LEXICON

ACCOMPANIMENT

“Personal” accompaniment refers to the accompaniment that the formator provides in his role as formator throughout the entire process of formation. Article 72,2 of our Constitutions refers explicitly to this form of guidance.

The term is also used in a wider sense, “communitarian” accompaniment. In this case it refers to the animating and orienting presence of the formator, who assists those in formation to read in the light of faith all that they experience. It can also refer to the same action fulfilled by the community as a whole (horizontal formation) in regard to each of its members.

“Spiritual” accompaniment refers to the characteristic assistance that the candidates receive in their life of faith and that they receive through “spiritual direction.”

In any case, this expression does not designate the role of the confessor, who may be the one accompanying the candidate spiritually, or a personal director or other priest who may or may not be an SS.CC. religious. The General Plan does not repeat the common norms of the Church regarding the confessor.

COMMUNITY

The term “Community” or “SS.CC. Community” refers to the Province, Vice-Province or Region. We often use the term “Province/Region.” The terms “community” or “formation

community” refer to the local community. “Major Community indicates a Province or Vice Province.

In this General Plan, reference is made to “inserted religious communities” where a professed can have an apostolic experience (no. 87). We are not referring to these communities when we speak about the fact that houses of formation should permit those being formed to be in contact with the poor and to feel that they are part of them (no. 85). Rather it is a question of establishing a community of formation in modest, poor sectors in accord with the possibilities of each place (cf. Stat. 33). In any case, it is supposed that those in formation receive a formation that allows them to integrate themselves into an “inserted community.”

DEGREES/CERTIFICATES

These terms indicate the official approbation that an education institution grants at the end of studies, for example, “secondary studies.” The titles of degrees and certificates vary from country to country.

FORMATION TEAM

This expression designates the group of Brothers who are given the responsibility of carrying out the process of Initial Formation by the superiors. One of the Brothers is named as “coordinator.” The members fulfill their assignment in full solidarity (with a “team spirit”).

The General Plan supposes that there is always a “team” in charge of Initial Formation.

In some Major Communities there is a Formation Committee in which some formators in Initial Formation participate with other brothers. The Committee is concerned with the

“general formation” of all the Brothers. It must be understood that in this Plan the term is alluded to only if all the Initial Formation formators are a part of the Committee and it has the responsibility for the Initial Formation process.

FORMATION, THOSE IN

This term refers to young people, from their entrance into one or other stage of Initial Formation until their completion of the entire formation process. Sometimes the word candidates is used in referring to the members in the Pre-Novitiate; at other times the term professed is used if they have already taken religious vows.

FORMATORS

This term designates the religious who, named by the Provincial Government, assume the direct responsibility for Initial Formation. As such, the professors who teach those in formation are not formators, nor are the religious who live in a formation community, etc.

MISSION

By “Mission of the Congregation” is meant what is described in the first Chapter of Our Constitutions. In the final analysis, Initial Formation is carried out with a view to our Mission. This General Plan considers the Mission to be the basic core of our renewed religious life and, as such, indicates what we must “be” rather than what we must “do.”

NOVITIATE

The “international” Novitiates have actually been established in two different ways: those open to novices from other Communities (“common Novitiates”) and those organized by diverse Communities with a much more international character and at times with formators from different Communities (“interprovincial Novitiates”).

PASTORAL

In the text, expression like pastoral ministry, pastoral experiences, pastoral work, pastoral service are used in a broad sense; they are not restricted to the pastoral work of priests.

The same must be noted with regard to apostolic service, apostolic activity, apostolic commitment or evangelizing ministry. These are always used in the broad sense.

PEDAGOGY

Here, this term simply means “the art of teaching,” and is not restricted to the teaching of children. It is the improper meaning habitually given to this word, although in the official documents of the Holy See, in DFRI no. 51, the expression “pedagogy of formation” is used.

PLAN

This term is used in different expressions:

The Plan of Apostolic Religious Life (Nos. 77, 162, 170), which designates the “apostolic religious plan” or the “common plan of apostolic religious life” (see Statutes 42, 43).

The community plan (see nos. 21, 57), which refers to the one the community draws up in accordance with its needs in order to live the values of our Mission better.

The personal plan of life, which is a means each religious uses to order his life in accord with internal and external needs in the framework of the community plan, and which he evaluates with the community and with the one who accompanies him spiritually (nos. 21, 47, 57, 159). This is the planning of time concretely so as to assume the values of the religious charism and to be able to follow Jesus according to the religious' own consecration, freedom and will.

PLAN OF FORMATION - “AGREEMENTS” OF FORMATION

The term “Plan of Formation” designates the overall orientations and criteria that regulate Initial Formation on the general level and in each Major or Regional Community.

In the case of interprovincial structures, such as Novitiates or Stages of the Professed, which suppose an explicit understanding among the communities concerned about important aspects of Initial Formation, the term “agreement” is preferred to indicate the consensus of criteria and orientations.

PRACTICAL TRAINING

The term “practical training” is used to stress the fact that in the process of training, the candidate learns to assimilate his prior experiences, connecting them with his interests and motivations. From this starting point he can gradually broaden and enrich his knowledge.

PRE-NOVITIATE, POSTULANCY

Unless new norms are established, this Plan of General Formation designates the period of preparation for the Novitiate as the Pre-Novitiate. It suggests the constitution of an SS.CC. community, with official formators and an objective process of formation, following the example of what is already being done in some Communities.

The stage of the Pre-Novitiate, lived in an SS.CC. formation community, may be called the Postulancy.

PROVINCE/REGION

The terminology is clear in the Constitutions. The problem arises in concrete cases. For example, the delegation of faculties is different in different Regional Statutes. It is, therefore, necessary to appeal to the Statutes for the application of certain orientations of this General Plan.

PSYCHOLOGY

This text avoid using technical terminology because “psychological terms” have different meaning in different countries and in different schools of psychology. Moreover, this is something that must be determined by the Provincial/Regional Plans of Formation.

NOTES

- ¹ Art. 66,1
- ² Art. 71.
- ³ Cf. Art. 2.
- ⁴ Art. 6.
- ⁵ Art. 3; cf. no. 38-51, 136, 146, 155, ...
- ⁶ Art. 13.
- ⁷ Art. 2.
- ⁸ Cf. no. 114 and 168.
- ⁹ Cf. DFRI, no. 90 (Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes, Rome 1990).
- ¹⁰ Art. 72.
- ¹¹ Cf. DFRI, 29.
- ¹² Cf. Stat. 29; DFRI, 9.
- ¹³ Art. 66. 2.
- ¹⁴ Art. 73.
- ¹⁵ Art 73, 1, Cf. no. 27, 121.4.
- ¹⁶ Cf. DFRI, 33.
- ¹⁷ Cf. DFRI, 6 and Stat. 29,3.
- ¹⁸ Cf. no. 135, 138, and 164.
- ¹⁹ Cf. DFRI, 39-41.
- ²⁰ Cf. DFRI, 43.
- ²¹ Cf. DFRI, 18.
- ²² Cf. Art. 73.
- ²³ Cf. Art. 51,2.
- ²⁴ Art. 5; cf. Art. 53,4,b.
- ²⁵ Cf. Art. 7 and 38.
- ²⁶ Cf. Arts. 1 and 8.
- ²⁷ Cf. Stat. 31,2.

- 28 Cf. Art. 60; 73,2; Stat.; 31; 34,1; 58; Recommendations of the General
Chapter of 1988, no. 12, 14.
- 29 Cf. DFRI, 60.
- 30 Stat. 34,2.
- 31 Cf. Art. 60, 61, 82.
- 32 Cf. Art. 4.
- 33 Cf. Art. 25,1.
- 34 Cf. Art. 30.
- 35 Cf. Stat. 33.
- 36 Cf. DFRI, 28.
- 37 Cf. Stat. 39, Art. 82.1.
- 38 Cf. Stat. 39,2.
- 39 Cf. c. 234,2.
- 40 Cf. DFRI, 101-109.
- 41 Cf. Art. 82,2.
- 42 Cf. Stat. 34,3.
- 43 Cf. Art. 69, Stat. 40,3.
- 44 Cf. Art. 72.
- 45 Cf. Art 72,2; Stat. 32,2 and Art. 82,2.
- 46 Art. 68.
- 47 Cf. Stat. 31.
- 48 Cf. Stat. 44, 62, and 65.
- 49 Cf. Stat. 36.
- 50 Cf. Art. 73.
- 51 Cf. DFRI, 42.
- 52 Cf. Stat. 37; DFRI, 43.
- 53 Cf. c. 641-645.
- 54 We have opted for the admittance of candidates between the ages of 17 and
27 years, following the criterion that a person is more malleable during these
ten years. (cf. no. 121,2).
- 55 Cf. Art. 75; 74,2.
- 56 Art. 75.

- ⁵⁷ Cf. Stat. 37.
- ⁵⁸ Cf. Art. 76.
- ⁵⁹ Cf. Art. 77.
- ⁶⁰ Cf. Art. 75,1.
- ⁶¹ Cf. DFRI, 47.
- ⁶² Cd. DFRI, 52.
- ⁶³ Cf. c. 652,5; Art. 75; DFRI, 48.
- ⁶⁴ Cf. Art. 75,2.
- ⁶⁵ Cf. Art. 75,3.
- ⁶⁶ Cf. Art. 83.
- ⁶⁷ Cf. DFRI, 45-53; c. 641-653.
- ⁶⁸ Cf. Art. 83; DFRI, 60.
- ⁶⁹ Art. 82,2.
- ⁷⁰ Art. 82,1.
- ⁷¹ DFRI, 60.
- ⁷² Cf. Stat. 38.
- ⁷³ Cf. Art. 82,3.
- ⁷⁴ Cf. Stat. 31.
- ⁷⁵ Cf. DFRI, 60.
- ⁷⁶ Cf. Art. 67 and Stat. 31-32, 62,5.
- ⁷⁷ Cf. Art. 67.
- ⁷⁸ Cf. Art. 70; Stat 32,2; Cf. nos. 63, 70, 106, 107, 134, 143, 161, and 164 from this General Plan of Formation.
- ⁷⁹ Cf. DFRI, 34.
- ⁸⁰ Cf. Stat. 31,1-2.